

**Topic:** Cultural Adjustment  
(IOM Nepal)

**Activity:** Being On Time: A Quiz and Discussion

<b>Objective</b>	This short quiz will test the participants on how well they understand the “American” perspective on time. You can make up your own situations to suit your particular needs using the same format.
<b>Time</b>	20-30 minutes
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Quiz sheets (see sample included, or make your own to suit your participants)</li><li>• Pens</li><li>• Smiley faces (see samples included)</li></ul>
<b>Practice</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Discuss with the whole group their perceptions of time. In their culture or community, are things done exactly “on time”? (e.g., meeting a friend; going to school, work, or place of worship; arriving at a party) How much leeway is there? What are the consequences of breaking your culture’s rules regarding time?</li><li>2. Tell participants that you will give them some situations that will help them explore the concept of time in the United States.</li><li>3. Put participants into small groups of 3-5 people and hand out a quiz sheet to each group.</li><li>4. Ask groups to discuss each situation and select the best answer. Allow about 5-10 minutes for groups to complete their quiz.</li><li>5. After all are done, convene the large group to discuss their responses.</li><li>6. Tell participants the scoring system:  –3 for a very wrong answer –2, –1 for wrong answers 0 for a response that is neither good nor bad +1, +2 and +3 for good answers  (If this scoring system is too complicated for the group you are working with, you can cut out and laminate pictures of the smiley faces to indicate a good, neutral, or wrong answer.)</li><li>7. Go over the quiz questions one by one. For each question, read aloud and:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Ask for a show of hands as to which option participants think is the best, or</li><li>b. Designate a corner of the room for each of the 4 multiple choice options. If participants think (a) is the best answer, they go to the (a) corner; if they think (b) is the best answer, they go to the (b) corner, etc.</li></ol></li></ol>
<b>Practice</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>8. Once people have let their choice be known, go over each of the options. For each option selected, give the score (–2, +3, etc.) or show the smiley (or neutral or</li></ol>

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unhappy) face.

### Discussion Questions

9. Explain the reasons why each option is a good or bad one, and the potential consequences of making that choice.
10. After you've finished all situations, you can hold a discussion on the discussion questions provided.
  - What did you notice from this exercise? (Does your culture have the same time values as in the United States? What are the differences?)
  - How do you feel about this?
  - Is it normal that different cultures have different values regarding time?
  - Why might different cultures have different values regarding time?
  - What could be some of the consequences of your not being in tune with the U.S. time rules?
  - What are you going to do as a result of the knowledge you gained in this lesson?

### Note for Trainers

Feel free to adjust the scores if you feel that they do not accurately reflect the generally-accepted views on time in your community. The main idea is that the situations generate discussion.

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## Being On Time Quiz for Participants

- 1. A new American friend invites you for supper with her family. She asks you to come at around 7pm. What time do you come?**
  - a) 6:30pm
  - b) 7:00pm
  - c) 7:15pm
  - d) 8:00pm
  
- 2. An American friend invites you to a party at her home. She tells you to come anytime from 8pm on. What time do you come?**
  - a) 7:30pm
  - b) 8:00pm
  - c) 9:00pm
  - d) 10:00pm
  
- 3. You were invited to a dinner at 7pm on a Thursday night. What time do you leave?**
  - a) 9:00pm
  - b) 10:00pm
  - c) 11:00pm
  - d) 12:00pm
  
- 4. A job interview: Your interview is at 10:00am. What time do you arrive?**
  - a) 9:30am
  - b) 9:50am
  - c) 10:00am
  - d) 10:10am
  
- 5. You have met an attractive young American woman and have asked to meet her again. You agree to meet at a certain coffee shop downtown at 8pm. What time are you there?**
  - a) 7:30pm
  - b) 8:00pm
  - c) 8:30pm
  - d) 9:00pm
  
- 6. You have a doctor's appointment at 9:15am. What time do you arrive?**
  - a) It's raining heavily when you wake up so you stay home.
  - b) 9:45am (it's raining!)
  - c) 9:00am
  - d) 9:15am
  - e) It's raining heavily when you wake up so you call the doctor and cancel your appointment.

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## Being On Time Quiz and Answers for Trainers

1. A new American friend invites you for supper with her family. She asks you to come at around 7pm. What time do you come?

- e) 6:30pm
- f) 7:00pm
- g) 7:15pm
- h) 8:00pm

**You answered:**

- a) -2 points. Too early. Your friend will still be cooking and getting ready. She will be embarrassed trying to entertain you and cook at the same time.
- b) 3 points.
- c) 3 points.
- d) -3 points. Your meal requires a certain cooking time and your friend has planned this carefully. The meal may be spoiled if you come too late.

2. An American friend invites you to a party at her home. She tells you to come anytime from 8pm on. What time do you come?

- e) 7:30pm
- f) 8:00pm
- g) 9:00pm
- h) 10:00pm

**You answered:**

- a) -3 points. Much too early. Your friend will be getting dressed; she'll be very surprised to see you.
- b) 1 point. You didn't do anything wrong, but chances are you will be the first guest at the party.
- c) 3 points. People will start coming in at about 8:30. By 9:00 there should be a fair number of guests.
- d) 2 points. Americans are usually quite punctual and don't stay up too late. If none of the guests had shown up by 10 o'clock, your hostess would be a bit concerned.

These times can vary considerably, depending on the age of the group, the size, and the style of the party. For a small, intimate party, it is more important to be on time than for a large, noisy party.

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**3. You were invited to a dinner at 7pm on a Thursday night. What time do you leave?**

- e) 9:00pm
- f) 10:00pm
- g) 11:00pm
- h) 12:00pm

**You answered:**

- a) 1 or 2 points. On a weekday, you could leave an hour or so after the eating is done, but if you leave too early she may think you are not enjoying yourself.
- b) 2 or 3 points. Your hostess will likely have to work the next day and she still has to clean up.
- c) 2 points. If other guests have left, you should have left by now, too. People have to work the next day.
- d) -1 point. On a weekday, this may be kind of late unless you have been specifically invited to stay later. Don't be the last guest to leave unless you are very confident of the social rules.

On a Friday or Saturday night, you can extend these times by an hour or two as people may not have to work the next day.

**4. A job interview: Your interview is at 10:00am. What time do you arrive?**

- e) 9:30am
- f) 9:50am
- g) 10:00am
- h) 10:10am

**You answered:**

- a) -2 points. Too early. You will have to sit in the waiting room for half an hour and perhaps this will not be convenient to the employer. Better to walk around outside before you come in.
- b) 3 points. Perfect, you will have time to sit and calm yourself before you have the interview.
- c) 1 point. This is cutting it just a bit too close. The employer may have started to wonder if you will be on time.
- d) -3 points. Even one minute late is too late. The employer may think that if you can't make it to the interview on time, you certainly won't make it to work on time. If for some reason you must be late, phone and explain the reason.

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5. You have met an attractive young American woman and have asked to meet her again. You agree to meet at a certain coffee shop downtown at 8pm. What time are you there?

- e) 7:30pm
- f) 8:00pm
- g) 8:30pm
- h) 9:00pm

**You answered:**

- a) 1 point. You are certainly eager enough! No need to arrive this early as she won't be there yet, but at least you will be there when she arrives.
- b) 3 points.
- c) -2 points. She will be in a bit of a bad mood by now, so your evening will not have gotten off to a good beginning.
- d) -3 points. Better to have stayed home; it's unlikely she will still be waiting for you.

6. You have a doctor's appointment at 9:15am. What time do you arrive?

- f) It's raining heavily when you wake up so you stay home.
- g) 9:45am (it's raining!)
- h) 9:00am
- i) 9:15am
- j) It's raining heavily when you wake up so you call the doctor and cancel your appointment.

**You answered:**

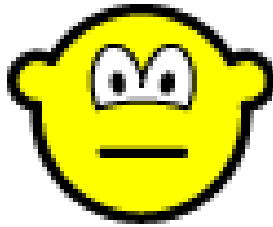
- a) -3 points. This is not a good excuse for missing an appointment. It is too late for the doctor to schedule someone else at this time.
- b) -2 points. Too late and the rain is not an excuse. Because you are late it might put the doctor's schedule out for the rest of the day. You may not even be seen by the doctor.
- c) +3 points. It's good to arrive a bit early, so you can check in with the receptionist.
- d) +3 points.
- e) -2 points. At least you called so the doctor's office can schedule someone else.

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## Smiley Faces



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