
DEALING WITH MAÑANA

Overcoming drawbacks formed in cross-cultural negotiations through higher awareness of intercultural differences and skills training



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Sincerely,

Elizabeth

Executive summary

This research project served as base for the development of a communication advice for Italy Vacation Specialists (further referred to as IVS). IVS is a tour operator specialized in designing customized tours in Italy. The goal of IVS is to deliver a smooth and reliable service to the travel agents all over the world. Recently IVS started to serve Colombian travel agents and received a complaint regarding the service provided. It appeared that the problem for this was their delayed confirmation of the proposal that caused complications in the booking of the reservations.

Consequently, IVS asked for advice on how to overcome this problem with the Colombian travel agents. Since she is not that familiar with them yet, she wants know to how to better approach or communicate with them. Consequently, this project aimed to develop an advice on just that, however from a cultural angle.

Based on a list of points of interests derived from a desk research in academic literature, the research focused on diagnosing the causing factors for delays to occur. The diagnosis was executed by collecting primary data via a survey from the two research objects being, the owner of IVS and the Colombian travel agents regarding their opinion on the list of points of interests developed. The sample of the Colombian travel agents was narrowed down to 200 travel agencies in Bogota and Medellin. From the 200 only 61 participated in the survey. The opinions of the two objects were put against each other and analyzed. From this a few common trends were identified that explained why delays occur in negotiations between the two objects.

The two major findings turned out to be that IVS and the Colombian travel agents have a different approach to building trust in business negotiations, and a different way of processing information.

Consequently, given that they differ in the way of building trust, implies that they also have different expectations as to how a business partner should behave for them to be able to trust him or her. They establish their trust on dissimilar aspects and have dissimilar views as to how the process of trust-building should be treated. In brief the research showed that, IVS has a task oriented approach while the Colombian travel agents have a relational approach for dealing with people in business. Based on this, a list of guidelines is developed to guide IVS in building a more personal relationship with them, that evokes interest in long-term partnership and cooperation.

This serves to obtain the necessary trust to close a deal more efficiently and thus, overcome delays. The guidelines generally focus on how to prepare before the first interaction, set an approachable mood, seek engagement with Colombian travel agents without being perceived as a typical salesperson, and plant to seed for a long-term partnership.

With regards to information-processing technique, the research indicated that they have different decision-making approaches. This implies that, IVSs' communication style is not congruent with the intuitive decision-making approach of the Colombian travel agents, which likely affects their speed to decide. Furthermore, inconsistency regarding risk attitude was also diagnosed as influencing the speed in which deals are closed in negotiations between IVS and the Colombian travel agents. Given that the Colombian travel agents are risk-averse, they feel the need to avoid risks as possible. In contrary, it becomes difficult for them to close a deal. Proceeding from this, a second list of guidelines was developed to guide IVS in effectively framing proposals that fit the decision-making approach of the Colombian travel agents to overcome delays. Subjects covered are the minimization of perceived risks, connecting with the travel agents through relatable experiences, tapping into emotions, and communicating collaboration.

Finally, the research indicated that their inconsistent way of perceiving time is also likely a causing factor for delays to occur. In brief, it was argued that given the inconsistency in the way they manage their time, it is hard to entirely prevent delays. Therefore, the advice also includes helpful tips to use to overcome delays when they are already expected to happen. The tips involve tricks to setting deadlines, skillfully exert pressure, encourage cooperation, and being mindful.

The cross-cultural communication strategy is designed to help mediate the communication between IVS and the Colombian travel agents. The advice is meant to be developed into a skills training for IVS to become more competent in serving the Colombian travel agents optimally. Since a skills training requires constant evaluation and feedback to obtain optimal results, it is recommended to hire a professional cultural mediator to assist in implementing the cross-cultural communication strategy.

Table of Contents

Research Report	7
1. Project context	7
2. Organizational context	8
3. Theoretical framework.....	10
3.1 Trust building.....	11
3.2 Decision-making	12
3.3 Information processing	15
3.4 Research perspective.....	19
4. Research objective	19
5. Research framework	21
6. Research questions.....	22
7. Research strategy	23
8. Research methodology.....	24
8.1 Research steps	25
9. Limitations	26
9.1 Activity modification	26
10. Research Findings and Analysis	27
10.1 Summary of data collection outcome	27
10.2 Research analysis and results.....	28
10.2.1 Trust-building	29
10.2.2 Decision-making	33
10.2.3 Information processing	37
10.3 Interpretation of results	44
10.3.1 Trust-building	45
10.3.2 Decision-making	46
10.3.3 Information-processing.....	46
11. Conclusions and recommendations.....	48
Cross-cultural communication strategy	50
11. Overcoming delays	50
11.1 Link between research results and advice.....	51
11.2 Implementation plan	54

11.2.1 How to build effective interpersonal relationships with the Colombian travel agents.	55
11.2.2 How to effectively frame the proposals to fit the decision-making approach of the Colombian travel agents	58
11.2.3 Tips to deal with delays when they are already expected to happen	60
11.3 Spreading the new skills to the rest of the team.	62
11.4 Conclusion	62
11.5 Planning & organizing	63
11.6 Budget	64
12. Reference list	65
13. Appendices	67
13.1 Preliminary research	67
13.2 Operationalization of key concepts	77
13.3 The sample list	80
13.4 Survey Questions	89

Research Report

1. Project context

Italy Vacation Specialists, also known as IVS, is a small S.A.R.L. tour operator company which was established in Rome since 2003. IVS is specialized in customized tour packages for people traveling to Italy. Its primary source of clientele was always and is still currently the market of North America. Still, IVS is open to serve anyone located elsewhere whom needs its services for designing customized tour packages in Italy.

However, serving such a diverse group of clients brings many challenges. A feedback received from a South American travel agent, specifically from Colombia, expressing dissatisfaction in the way the service is packaged or presented in the end product, i.e., the itineraries, has shed light on a deficiency in the communication quality between IVS and the travel agent. The itinerary was not considered completely satisfactory, i.e. well organized nor professional. In dispute of that, Jesse Andrews upholds by mentioning that there was an inconsistency in the perceptions of doing business. IVS admits however, that she does not have much experience working with the Colombian travel agents and therefore lacks knowledge on how they do business (Jesse Andrews, personal communication, February 10th, 2016). Seeing that this is a weakness, IVS wants to know what will contribute to creating good relations with travel agents during negotiations.

Regarding experience with Colombian travel agents, Jesse claimed that they were very pleasant, relaxed, and courteous, but that there were often a lot of time delay and they had a different perception when it comes to making changes (Appendix 1). It is worth noting that, delays in closing deals and change requests after the confirmation of deals in turn, brings problems for later tasks, particularly the making of reservations considering the influence of high-season and limited amount of services available (Jesse Andrews, personal communication, February 10th, 2016). Consequently, the question of how to best approach or effectively communicate to the travel agents to avoid these drawbacks surfaced.

Given that IVS and the Colombian travel agents have different cultural backgrounds, chances are that there are culturally driven behavioral differences involved in the formation of the delays. Moreover, since behavioral differences tend to be the cause of communication problems, this must be first investigated (Becker, 2004). For this reason, it is necessary to know what the causes of the

behavioral differences are, related to the business approach of IVS and the travel agents, since these are not known yet.

Considering that these activities are all related to the negotiation process, the main subject of the project will be the negotiation process between IVS and the Colombian travel agents.

For IVS a good relation with travel agents is one that evokes trust, and professionalism. This project therefore, aims to develop a cross-cultural communication strategy that will provide IVS with guidance on how to develop good relations with the travel agents. Being perceived as trustworthy and professional by a travel agent in this project refers to the extent that a travel agent feels he or she can rely on a tour operator to deliver a smooth and reliable service. This in turn, is also the organization goal of IVS.

The group of focus is that of travel agents in Colombia, as it was the group from which the feedback originated from.

According to Verschuren & Doorewaard (2010), the intervention stage chosen for this research project will be that of a diagnosis. Thus, this project will look for factors ingrained in intercultural interactions that impacts the speed with which deals get confirmed in cross-cultural negotiations.

The result of the diagnosis will ultimately turn into recommendations for a cross-cultural communication strategy to help IVS reduce the lack of knowledge on how to better approach and communicate with Colombian travel agents in negotiations, in order to overcome delays that bring difficulties in delivering a smooth and reliable service.

2. Organizational context

Deriving from the project context, the problem statement involves a lack of awareness about the factors ingrained in the business relations between IVS and the Colombian travel agents that are likely causing misconceptions in business negotiations. Yet, before delving into the assignment there are a couple of information worth addressing that will form a clearer view of the project scope.

IVS is a tour operator that is specialized in designing customized vacation trips destined throughout Italy. Authenticity, extraordinary, and worth the money are the kind of perceived characteristics IVS aims to evoke from the vacation experiences given to customers. The ability to

provide this is due to a vast network base of peculiar suppliers in Italy from which bargaining power is earned and personal inspection is enforced. This, along extensive years of experience in the sector is what supports IVSs' competitiveness in the market.

As the owner and president of the company, Jesse Andrews, is Canadian, the first market to reach into was that of North America. Thanks to pre-established familiarity and significant knowledge on this market this decision was made. IVS does serve clients from all over the world, however, the market of North America remains by far its main source of clientele.

Through personal communication (February 10, 2016) with Jesse, the following orientation to her perception of doing business in the sector was attained. She is aware that travel agents have a very difficult job and are therefore very demanding. They have to do their best to please their clients as much as possible, guarantee a well-organized trip with no unexpected inconveniences. Precision in the travel sector is essential. Everything has to be carefully organized in details or reputation is likely to receive damage. Reputation of good organization skills is remarkably a decisive factor for clients whom are first off purchasing a high-involvement product involving high risk that is solely based on promises.

Moreover, the value of the service provided by travel agents depends as well on the speed with which they are able to close deals. The customers expect a pleasant experience of exciting ideas flowing smoothly back and forth, while gradually coming towards an agreement for an ideal vacation trip. Therefore, a prompt response from IVS to the travel agent is of crucial importance. Inability of IVS to respond fast to a travel agent could cause the loss of not only an end client, but also repeat end clients from the travel agent.

These required characteristics within the relation between the travel agents and the end-clients underline the high value placed on trustworthiness and professionalism within the relationship between IVS and the travel agents during negotiations. To avoid not being able to guarantee the promises made to the end-client, it is important for a travel agent to work with trustworthy tour operators who can deliver good quality services. In this project the focus will be solely on the relationship between IVS and the Colombian travel agents.

3. Theoretical framework

This section contains discussions about the relevance of theories and concepts aimed to increase awareness about the root of culturally driven behavioral differences within a cross-cultural negotiation that affects the speed with which deals are closed.

Cross-cultural negotiation is subject to a communication environment that involves many conflicting behavioral differences. A cross-cultural negotiation as defined by Weiss (1993), is a conscious and deliberate interaction between two persons originating from different national cultures, who are trying to establish an agreement to cooperatively make ends meet for a business matter. To come to an effective intercultural communication strategy, it is believed that, the more culturally aware a person is, the more he/she is able to understand how his/her own biases can influence the behavior and intentions of a counterpart (Siedl and Hancock, 2011). Misconceptions as a result of a lack of awareness are therefore likely to bring along difficulties and frustrations for IVS when doing business with Colombian travel agents.

To reach an understanding of the causing factors influencing the conflicting behavioral differences, a research perspective must be developed. The research perspective consists of a list of factors to diagnose the influential underlying factors forming delays in closing deals between IVS and the specific target group. However, to get there a well-grounded understanding of the processes contributing to the eventual closing of deals is fundamental. There are numerous factors that can be playing a role on the formation of delays in closing deals such as external barriers e.g. language, the level of professionalism of the travel agents, cultural differences, communication styles used, the mere proposal content or layout structure, level of trust, decision-making policy of the agencies, and the way they process information differently. Even though these factors can all be considered potential causing factors, only three are chosen to be the most suitable to narrow down and direct the research. Since, to diagnose the root of delay formation the angle chosen was that of IVS's lack of knowledge on the Colombian culture, the following three themes are chosen to be the most relevant. The approach to trust-building, decision-making policy of the agencies, and the approach to information-processing. Consequently, from these three themes, the list of diagnostic factors will be derived. This in turn, will help increase IVSs' awareness of the cause and effect relationship of certain behavioral differences, in order to make adjustments to reduce or avoid delays to occur.

3.1 Trust building

Trust is necessary in any negotiation, as a lack of it can trigger either withdrawal or delays due to vulnerability of opportunistic behaviors where one participant will come out exploited. Opportunistic behavior refers to the practice of exploiting circumstances in self-interest, especially without regard to moral principles or others' interests (Business Dictionary: Opportunism, n.d.). A negotiation consists of coordinative actions of minimum two parties aimed to achieve mutual benefit. Coordinative behavior however includes vulnerability, as one party must make a move before the other and hope that, that person will follow with the same level of commitment (Kronman, 1985). Trust is thus relying on the believe that one can predict the others' behavior in doing what is right. However, to do something that is right or wrong in the context of cross-cultural negotiations, is dependent on the moral relativism of each party which might be divergent. This perspective supports the idea that the way people value, display, and expect to receive trust from counterparts in negotiations is not universal. The phenomenon of trust in an intercultural environment is thus, subject to moral relativism, which is determined among other things by the internalized cultural norms and values that influence a persons' judgement of its opponents' trustworthiness (Foot, 1982).

In line with the latter, Hsu (1983) believes that how people display their trust to others differ based on their culture being either high- or low-context. According to the categorization of Hall (1970), the Colombian culture is high-context and collectivistic, meaning they highly value belongingness to a group. Hsu (1983) claims that, as in the high-context culture people communicate meaning in a more indirect way through nonverbal cues taken out from the surrounding, this can be seen as the way they avoid at all cost to humiliate a person in-front of a group in confrontational situations. However, for people from individualistic and low-context culture this is different. They are more straightforward and explicit in the way they approach confrontational situations. For them saving face of the other person is not a concern. As a consequence, a negotiator from a high-context culture might feel more hesitant to place a level of trust on a negotiator from a low-context culture, as he/she might risk being humiliated or disrespected by the low-context negotiator, perhaps even without the low-context individuals' awareness (Elahee, Kirby, & Nasif, 2002). Carte and Fox (2008) claim that, effects of influence on behavior related to high- and low-context can be seen by looking into the value attached to contracts, the value of the ideal time spend on the building of trust, and size of bargaining range.

This thus, gives support to the idea that national culture has an influence on delays in closing deals, due to its direct influence on the way people build trust in negotiations, as well as the different value they attach to it. The way people perceive, build and display their trust before closing a deal varies between cultures. Therefore, given its necessity in negotiations, the degree of inconsistent perceptions and processes of trust building between the participants can help determine the causing factors for the delays in closing deals. Hence, increase IVSs' awareness about behavioral differences related to trust building before closing a deal with the specific target group.

3.2 Decision-making

Decision-making as an activity within the context of this research covers the process with which the closing of negotiation deals is facilitated within a business organization. Decision-making is an area that includes many interacting factors. However, since the internal goal of this research is to diagnose causing factors for low speed in closing negotiation deals particularly from a cross-cultural angle, this area is narrowed down to examine only the underlying causing factors that may have an impact on the decision-making policy of a company considering potential cultural influences. This area seeks to look into what in the organizational procedure. Consequently, from this area, span of control and hierarchical structure alongside, attitude towards the status of negotiation participants are derived. In the following, the influence these two factors have on the pace with which decision-making is carried out through an organization structure will be argued.

Span of control and hierarchical structure

The span of control within an organizational structure influences the speed with which decisions are made in an organization. Span of control may be classified according to Rishipal (2004) into a range of wide and narrow. A wide span of control stands for a structure in which a manager has many employees reporting to him/her relative to the company size. On the contrary, for a narrow span of control counts the opposite. The type of span of control is dependent on the size of the company as, the larger and complex a company is the taller the organization must be (Rishipal, 2004). The reason for this is the fact that it becomes more effective to have a few upper-level managers report to the top management than dozens of lower-level employees.

A distinction, given by Rishipal (2004), between tall and flat organizational structure has been described as following. A tall organizational structure is one that has many levels of management relative to the company's size, and involves a long chain of supervision which decision-making

must go through. This slows down the speed of decision-making, which ultimately triggers the formation of delays in closing deals to occur. A flat organizational structure on the other hand, has fewer levels of management relative to the company's size, and involves a short chain of supervision which means that, decisions can often be made more quickly as there are only few levels. Hence, directives and feedbacks can be communicated more quickly for necessary changes.

Thus, this supports the idea that span of control within the organizational structure influences the speed with which decisions are made in an organization. An assessment of the type of organizational structure of the Colombian travel agents may reveal an underlying factor(s) influencing the formation of delays in closing deals regarding the span of control of an organization.

Attitude towards the status of negotiation participants

The attitude towards the status of negotiation participants influences the pace with which decision-making is carried out through an organizational structure. Hofstede, Jonker, and Verwaart (2008) suggested a link involving attitude towards risk. They acknowledged that, there is a preference for dealing with familiar relations in both, uncertainty avoiding i.e. South American culture, as uncertainty tolerant cultures i.e. North American culture. However, in uncertainty tolerant as opposed to uncertainty avoiding cultures, people do not tend to hesitate in dealing with strangers, if dealing with familiar relations is inconvenient. In uncertainty avoiding cultures, this is seemed as a waste of the value of the experience gathered in previous interactions with the familiar individual. A possible explanatory link to this is their need to minimize risks as a result of their risk-averse characteristic. Unless there is no external justification, based on for example group membership or a good reputation, uncertainty avoiding individuals prefer to deal with counterparts whom hold equal status. Otherwise, acceptance of new partner will be difficult (Hofstede, Jonker, and Verwaaart, 2008).

In addition, preference to deal with counterparts with equal status can be also related to a society's preference for leaders to either hold or share their power. Looking into attitude towards leadership in this project serves to examine the reliance of approval of superiors that in turn can have an effect on the speed of closing deals. Matusitz and Musambira (2013) classify the society's preferences for leaders to either hold or share their power by, societies led by attitudes and behaviors subject to conformity, i.e. following the norms and values, and societies led by attitudes and behaviors

subject to autonomy, i.e. being self-reliant and acting out of ones' free will. It is argued that, this is influenced by the paternalistic ideology within a society; where a society expects the state to be responsible for the people and protect them from being exploited by the more privileged, instead of the people protecting themselves independently and taking responsibilities, and vice versa. The paternalistic ideology is reflected in the different households. Namely, one where an individual usually lives a large part of his/her life in a house with several generations, or leaves the house at an early age to follow his/her independence (see article for further references). The South American culture is characterized by the former, whereas the North American culture is characterized by the latter.

Thus, this supports the notion that the speed in which deals are closed together with Colombian travel agents can be influenced by behavior subject to the encounter with unfamiliar negotiation partners and their status. An empirical assessment of the behavior of the two research objects respective to this factor, will indicate its degree of influence on the formation of delays in closing deals.

3.3 Information processing

As the closing of a deal is the result of a state of conviction, the way of processing information is likely to play a role on the speed with which deals are closed in cross-cultural negotiations. Derived from this area, concepts worth considering are reasoning systems, problem-solving approach, risk attitude, and time processing orientation.

Reasoning systems

Studying the differences in **reasoning systems** across cultures, might enable IVS to understand what, related to the way she formulates proposal contents, triggers the Colombian travel agents to take longer in evaluating the deal. Sloman (1996) distinguished two forms of reasoning using dichotomies (see figure 1).

In line with this, Smith and DeCoster's (2002) integrative model of dual-processes of information, states that there are two types of systems humans use to construct meaning from messages. Namely, associative and rule-based processing systems or also intuitive and analytical. These two systems processes message cues differently. The associative processing system uses knowledge that is retrieved from memory such as, past experiences, observations, and others' and ones' own affective reactions to a similar situation, in response to the current available cues (Smith & Collins, 2009). The rule-based processing system on the contrary, "uses symbolically represented and intentionally accessed knowledge as rule to guide processing" (Smith & DeCoster, 2002).

This model in turn, is in line with the widely-believed concept of high- and low-context cultures. Hall (1970), distinguished two types of communication styles influenced by ones' culture. High-context culture refers to a communication style in which the message is "implicit and conveyed in the surrounding nonverbal cues". Whereas in the low-context culture, the message is explicit and conveyed by language and rule-based knowledge. A persons' communication style is considered to be matching with a persons' reasoning process. Applying this to the subject of the

Characteristic	Associative system	Rule-based system
Principles of operations	Similarity and contiguity	Symbol manipulation
Source of knowledge	Personal experience	Language, culture, and formal systems
Nature of representation		
Basic units	Concrete and generic concepts, images, stereotypes, and feature sets	Concrete, generic, and abstract concepts; abstracted features; compositional symbols
Relations	(a) Associations (b) Soft constraints	(a) Casual, logical, and hierarchical (b) Hard constraints
Nature of processing	(a) Reproductive but capable of similarity-based generalization (b) Overall feature computation and constraint satisfaction (c) Automatic	(a) Productive and systematic (b) Abstraction of relevant features (c) Strategic
Illustrative cognitive functions	Intuition Fantasy Creativity Imagination Visual recognition Associative memory	Deliberation Explanation Formal analysis Verification Ascription of purpose Strategic memory

Figure 1: Characterizations of two forms of reasoning.

research, the Colombian travel agents belong to the high-context culture, and IVS belongs to the low-context culture (Hall, 1970). Following this, it can be argued that a person with an analytical processing system has a low-context communication style, which when communicating to a person with an intuitive processing system the messages will not be decoded in a similar way. Meaning that, this can lead to either misunderstandings or insufficient information to reach the state of conviction. This thus, requires more time to get to a final decision.

Assessing the extent that the Colombian travel agents differ from IVS in their reasoning processing systems will hence show the degree of influence this has on formation of delays in closing deals.

Approach to problem

Problem-solving can be approached in ways which are dependent on cultural influences. To better understand the influence of ways of processing information and its effects on behavior, Darke (1979) analyzed the influential factors on peoples' behavior in relation to information seeking. Cross et al. (1994) considered the (in)ability to deal with uncertainty and value on time efficiency to be the corresponding influential factors. Based on this, a stronger focus on the structuring of the problem thus indicates a correlation with high-level of risk-aversion. This in turn is supported by Hofstede's (1980) work, in which the South American culture was classified as scoring high on uncertainty avoidance. High-uncertainty avoidance is believed to be connected to the tendency to focus more on not repeating past or well-known problems rather than taking the risk with a new idea (Hofstede, 1980).

In combination with value on time efficiency, Colombia seems to be identified as having a polychronic approach to time (Hall, 1970). That is, they do not have a high value on time efficiency. This supports the idea that, they would prefer a longer and more elaborate presentation rather than a short and concise one, as his might be perceived as superficial. Linking this to the aspect of being risk-averse, a longer and more elaborate proposal presentation will be more effective in receiving a faster confirmation of agreement on a proposal. Hence, this reduces or avoids the chances of delays to develop.

Diagnosing the degree of influence differences in approach to problem-solving have on the attainment of a final trip proposal, will help increase IVSs' awareness of the influences triggering

the formation of delays in closing deals. This will in turn, help IVS determine what kind of information the Colombian travel agents do expect to receive in satisfying their information needs and desires.

Attitude towards risk

The way people behave, in dealing with uncertainty, influences the way how they process information prior to decision-making.

Hofstede, Jonker, and Verwaart (2008) created a model to show the way how culturally driven attitude towards the unknown influences decision-making in negotiations. The model is based on Hofstede's cultural dimension of uncertainty avoidance, and can represent the way in which attitude to risk can influence information-processing behavior before closing a deal (for further references refer to Hofstede, Jonker, and Verwaart, 2008).

Risk attitude was divided in two type of groups namely, uncertainty avoiding and uncertainty tolerant societies. The South American society belongs to the former while, the North American society to the latter. Hofstede, Jonker, and Verwaart (2008), portray uncertainty avoiding societies as being rather conservative in that, they are skeptical towards trusting strangers and are thus, constantly on the look-out for the chance of people deceiving them. Consequently, they base their trade selection on the minimization of risks, which in turn makes the progress towards the final decision slower, as only known risks are taken they are willing to sacrifice deadlines for certainty.

Uncertainty tolerant societies, on the contrary, are characterized as rewarding exploration. This means that, they are open to trade with strangers without any problem for the benefit of convenience and profit i.e. they follow an opportunistic strategy. This rather risk-taking attitude towards decision-making involves less hesitation in the stage of information processing thus, making the progress towards the final decision faster.

Obtaining a view of the behavioral differences in negotiations, among the two research objects, regarding risk attitude and respective behavior to cope with it, will indicate the degree of influence this factor has in the formation of delays in closing deals.

Time processing orientation

The time processing orientation of a person influences behaviors with which a person processes information prior to a decision.

Time processing orientation refers to how people manage the use of time in relation to accomplishing tasks (Hall, 1983). This has been divided in two types, namely, monochronic and polychronic time. Hall (1983), classified the North American culture as having a monochronic time orientation, and the South American culture a polychronic time orientation. Swee Hoon Ang, & Teo, G. (1997) defined the two types as the following. Monochronic time processing is characterized by the tendency to compartmentalize time, follow preset schedules, place higher priority on schedules than relationships. On the contrary, people with a polychronic time processing orientation tend to avoid rigid schedules as they believe that the development of relationships are more important. This indicates a link between level of flexibility and type of time processing orientation.

Differences in such time preferences was supported by Abramson *et al.* (1996, 1993) as being linked to characteristics of cognitive processes. In these studies, monochronic people were more thinking and judging oriented while, polychronic time people showed to be more feeling and perceiving oriented. The former is subject to logical, explicit and impersonal messages. While, the latter is likely to be influenced by group values that guide the processing of information of which early closure of information gathering for a faster decision making is not inclined (Abramson *et al.*, 1996, 1993).

The relevance of this to the project is that, in the case that the Colombian travel agents fail to receive the correct type of information sought for that is compatible with their cognitive process characteristics, this is likely to lead to a longer decision-making process thus, delays in closing deals.

This gives support to the idea that time processing orientation does also in a way influence behavior pertaining to the processing of information prior to decision-making. By assessing the behavioral differences respective to time orientation among the two research objects, IVS will be able to determine the degree of influence this factor has on the formation of delays in closing deals.

3.4 Research perspective

Trust-building	<u>Points of interest:</u> Perceived value attached Expected duration of process Perceived value in size of bargaining range
Decision-making	Span of control and hierarchical structure Attitude towards the status of negotiation participants
Information-processing	Way of processing information Way of approaching problems Attitude towards risk Time processing orientation

Deriving from the theoretical framework, the value in evaluative opinion of the two research objects on the above list of points of interest were justified. The resulting evaluative opinion collected will draw the conflicting behavioral differences in play that cause delays in closing deals with Colombian travel agents. The points subject to the biggest differences can be considered as the influential factors. This in turn will serve as basis for the communication strategy thus, final research objective.

4. Research objective

- (a) To provide recommendations for a cross-cultural communications strategy for IVS, to overcome difficulties in doing business internationally, (b) by collecting evaluative opinion of 200 Colombian travel agents and IVS, regarding the degree that a list of factors (see research perspective here above), derived from literature about trust building, decision-making, and information processing factors, in relation to cultural differences, play a role in the formation of delays in closing deals between Colombian travel agents and IVS.

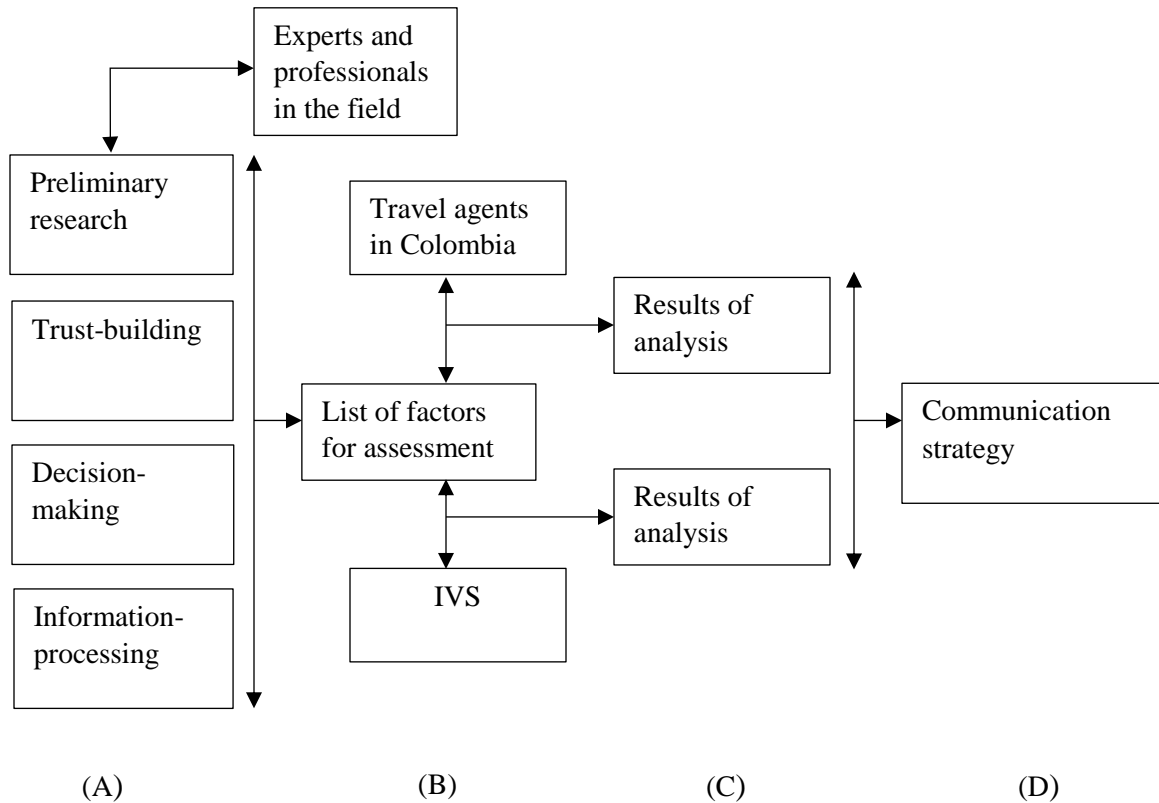
This objective yields the Verschuren and Doorewaard's (2010) "effective research objective criteria in the following manner.

It is useful and informative, since the diagnosis will shed light on factors that contribute to developing a more suitable communication approach in serving travel agents in Colombia. Thus, increasing IVSs' awareness on significant factors to regard when designing a communication strategy to avoid difficulties in doing cross-cultural negotiations will solve the research problem. It is realistic and feasible as the internet makes the gathering of the proposed data by the chosen research technique in the given time frame possible, which in turn will serve as base for the development of recommendations. It contributes as a start towards becoming mindful in cross-cultural business interactions with travel agents in Colombia. It is clear in that; the target group of this objective is only the Colombian travel agents and owner of IVS. Given that the prices of the customized tour packages are not cheap, most affluent cities were chosen in agreement with Jesse Andrews, being Bogota and Medellin.

As mentioned in the project context, "*good relations with travel agents*" is referred to one that evokes a perception of trustworthiness and professionalism in the Colombian travel agents.

5. Research framework

The research framework represents the blueprint destined to achieve the research objective of the project.



The research framework can be read as the following. It begins with, a scan through relevant existing research articles and interview with experts and professionals in the field. Subsequently, an analysis of the communication environment between IVS and Colombian travel agents, by means of theoretical insights covering factors likely to induce delays in closing deals in cross-cultural business negotiations, provides a research perspective (a). Next, the research perspective consisting of a list of factors, is evaluated by the opinion of the two objects, in the form of a self-assessment test, regarding the degree that the factors describe their behavior (b). This provides a description of the behavior of both research objects in business interactions involving the closing of deals. (c) A confrontation of these two analyses indicates the behavioral differences. This in turn, (d) provides insights to determine a more suitable approach that will help avoid delays to occur. That is, a communication strategy to overcome difficulties in doing cross-cultural negotiations between IVS and Colombian travel agents.

6. Research questions

This section introduces the research questions that will be answered throughout the research process. In accordance with Verschuren and Doorewaard (2010), the method used for formulating the central questions and their subsequent sub questions was that of corroborative types of knowledge. These research questions serve the functions of steering-ness and efficiency as they indicate the required knowledge and activities that are to be carried out to ultimately solve the research objective. The central research questions here below are designed to give exploratory knowledge; as causing factors will be identified, and their degree of influence on the formation of drawbacks evaluated. This aims to ultimately increase awareness about how to better communicate with the Colombian travel agents during negotiations.

1. Why do delays in closing deals occur in negotiations between IVS and the Colombian travel agents?
 - 1.1 What does the literature say about trust building in closing deals across cultures?
 - 1.2 What does the literature say about organizational decision-making in closing deals across cultures?
 - 1.3 What does the literature say about information processing factors in closing deals across cultures?
2. Why do the Colombian travel agents and IVS differ in the speed with which they build trust?
 - 2.1 What is for them the value of trust-building in negotiations?
 - 2.2 What is the process of building trust like for them?
 - 2.3 What technique in the negotiation process is used to build trust?
3. Why do the Colombian travel agents and IVS differ in the speed with which decisions are made in their company, considering their corporate governance?
 - 3.1 What is their organizational structure like regarding span of control?
 - 3.2 What is their view regarding the status of negotiation partners?
4. Why do the Colombian travel agents and IVS differ in the speed with which they make decisions, considering the way they process information?
 - 4.1 What is their way of reasoning like?
 - 4.2 What is their approach to tackle problems?

4.3 What is their attitude towards risks?

4.4 What is the order in which they approach tasks?

7. Research strategy

Success in answering the research questions through the gathering of the required knowledge, which will ultimately lead to the achievement of the research objective depends on the correct selection of the research strategy. Suitable for this project is the strategy of survey research and interview with experts. Meaning, the research will be based on abundant empirical data. The research follows a deductive approach involving the testing of theoretical predictions with empirical data gathered by the research.

To achieve the research objective, first a study in relevant literature, tested by experts, will lead to a list of factors that are likely to play a role in the formation of the drawbacks within the communication environment.

It has been decided to use the method of interview with experts to help fine-tune the theoretical insights found in literature that will subsequently be used in the survey research. The objects for the interviews will be an expert in the field of intercultural business communications and a professional working in the field of destination management. The prior is familiar with the theoretical concepts of business to business communications, while the latter is more familiar with the practical aspect of the travel sector itself.

Their opinion on the list of factors chosen to examine the drawbacks subject to the project will be gathered. Subsequently, these will be taken into consideration for adjustments in order to give support to the reliability of the survey results.

Subsequently, primary data will be gathered regarding evaluative opinion on the above-mentioned list of points of interest. Note, that this list of points of interest is the research perspective. This forms into a type of self-assessment test covering the two research objects' perspective regarding the degree of influence the list of factors has on their behavior in business interactions, that tends to lead to the formation of the delays. The result of the confrontation of the two assessments will indicate the behavioral differences to be considered for the cross-cultural communication strategy. Finally, the behavioral differences will be next confronted with the theoretical framework to

interpret the results of analysis and form these into insights that will serve as recommendations to include in the foundation of a communication strategy which will ultimately reach the research objective.

8. Research methodology

This section aims to justify, in accordance with Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill (2009), the intend in ensuring the gathering of correct information, along its validity and reliability, to answer the research questions that ultimately answers the research objective.

In the initial stage considering the deductive approach, desk research is used to gather secondary data to form the theoretical framework. Additionally, to give more validity to the theoretical framework it was fine-tuned by collecting primary data through a survey and a semi-structured interview with experts (see appendix 4 and 5).

For the main data collection stage, as the internal research objective is to diagnose causing factors, descriptive empirical data is collected. The chosen data collection method is that of structured quantitative survey consisting of multiple-choice and rating questions, as well as, 5-likert scale questions used to measure the respondents' position in relation to two opposing statements. This method allows a large collection of data from which generalizations can be taken out regarding the points of interest aimed at investigating the approach and behaviors of the two groups in relation to doing business. Furthermore, this method will also overcome the obstacle of the geographical distance, as the surveys were developed and filled in via an online software called Google Forms. The nature of the data processing and analysis was quantitative to validate the formed generalization. As consequence of this choice, there are limitations in depth, elaboration, complexity and sound foundation of the results. Due to time limitation and occupied travel agents, it is expected that the collection of 200 responses from travel agents is likely to fail considering that the contribution is voluntary.

The two research objects are, the owner of IVS and Colombian travel agents. The latter is represented by a probability sampling of Colombian travel agents in the two most urbanized cities in Colombia. The two most urbanized cities, i.e. Medellin and Bogota, were chosen given that the prices of the services provided by IVS corresponds to the medium- to high social class which is most likely found in these two cities.

8.1 Research steps

This section includes a step by step presentation of the data collection process till the final research objective.

1. The first step in this process was to revise and polish the survey questions for any vagueness or grammatical mistakes.
2. As was decided in the research methodology, the technique used is that of probability sampling involving voluntary participation. It was the best suitable technique for this research project given the time and financial limitations. This technique however does bring some limitations as voluntary participation requires to rely on the fact that the participants must be genuinely interested to help and have the time to participate.
3. The sample list followed two requirements; they had to be established in Colombia, specifically in either Bogota or Medellin, and on top of that they also had to offer international destinations out of the continent of South America. This served to increase the chances of getting participants that might be potential clients for IVS in the future and thus, gives support to the reliability of the research results.
4. The online channels used to find the Colombian travel agencies were Paginas Amarillas, Google search, Google maps, and Facebook. The last channel to use was Facebook which turned out to be the most effective one as well. As it is a less formal channel, it enabled the chance to check if the company was recently active and provided the option of instant messaging.
5. At the end of step four the sampling list consisted of a list of emails, Facebook links, WhatsApp numbers, and links of contact forms found on the company websites. As the technique involved voluntary participation, it was crucial to write a welcoming and motivating invitation that promoted a good cause and the chance of sending them the resulting insights afterwards. The invitations were tailored for each channel used. The sending times and dates were strategically planned and spread out to increase the chances of reaching the goal of 200 responses. Furthermore, reminders were also send as the response rate was increasing slowly and resulted unsatisfactory. Consequently, additional agencies were added to the sampling list.
6. Once the data collection was finalized, only 61 of the 200 surveys were filled. The results gathered from IVS and the Colombian travel agents were summarized and analyzed quantitatively

against each other resulting in a presentation of the behavioral differences between the two objects. Afterwards, this was confronted with the theoretical predictions included in the theoretical framework.

7. Finally, from this, new insight was formed to serve as foundation for a communication strategy for IVS to overcome difficulties in doing cross-cultural negotiations which at the same time also solved the final research objective.

9. Limitations

As a normal part of research, this section will discuss the limitations faced throughout the process.

Regarding the stage of data collection, the amount of responses received failed to meet the proposed amount which was 200 responses, only 61 responses were received. Considering the different efforts put in achieving this, during the process it was noted that a potential cause for the low participation rate might be due to the language barrier. The participants whom replied to the invitation revealed to have a low level of English writing skills. Moreover, another factor responsible for the low participation rate is limited time availability, as the time of the year in which the data collection took place turned out to be high season for them.

As for the reliability of the research results, it must be considered that the data collected is subjective and thus, the results cannot be taken as objective truth. The research aimed at identifying a trend of the common behavioral differences. This means that the situation can be different per person whom attitudes and behaviors might be influenced by unknown factors not considered in the research. Furthermore, the mood of the participants, the position of the participant, the level of understanding the English language, the degree of effort put in filling in the surveys accurately, and the time and date in which the survey is filled can affect the reliability of the research results and thus, are worth taking into consideration. These limitations are a common part of research as they are not in control of the researcher.

9.1 Activity modification

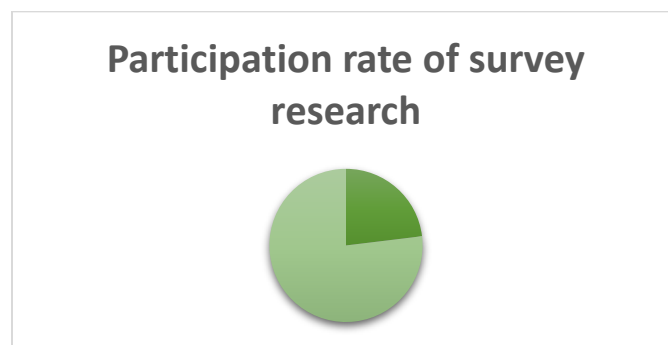
This research underwent multiple iterations, yet the most significant one took place in the initial stage of developing the theoretical framework. From the preliminary research where the theoretical framework was put under the test for fine-tuning by experts and professionals in the field, the

feedbacks received were put into action and directed the research towards a more to the point theoretical framework, which is the present one used to reach the objective.

With regards to the stage of analysis of results the plan was initially to rank the degree of influence the factors have on the formation of delays in closing deals. The purpose of using the method of ranking was to measure the size of the gap between the two objects. However, when summarizing the survey results it appeared that categorizing them by the ranking method did not provide a clear enough description of the behavioral differences. Consequently, the initial analysis technique of ranking was modified by a nominal data analysis. As a result of this, the precision of the measurement of the data suffered.

10. Research Findings and Analysis

10.1 Summary of data collection outcome



From the amount of responses expected, which is 200, only 61 surveys were filled. In total, over 300 companies were invited to participate. From this, around 40 gave a reaction to the invitation message. About eight said they couldn't participate in the survey as it was written in English. Furthermore, as was expected a few promised they would participate later due to lack of time. Finally, only one demanded a fee for his participation in the survey research.

87 percent of the survey participants were male, and the most repeated job titles were, manager positions and company owner. Also, the rate of participants with either a Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin was very high with 91 percent.

A curious observation taken during the interaction with participants was that they had a low level of English writing skills. Even though the research does not include poor language skills as a diagnostic factor, it can be taken as a potential area for further research respective to the project context.

Important note about the questions is that most of the survey questions were rating questions, consisting of two opposing statements that convey two opposing points of views or behaviors. Even though the ratings were served by a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents could share their position, the ratings results were decoded into three categories, i.e. agreement with one of the two opposing statements, or neutral. Moreover, the survey was made and its results were calculated by google forms.

The final goal of the following survey results is to answer the main research question of “*Why Colombian travel agents take longer in closing deals*”. However, to reach this goal relevant aspects to the closing of deals are diagnosed for their degree of influence in the formation of delays.

This is approached by first forming a profile of associated behaviors and attitudes of both the Colombian travel agents and IVS, by means of a list of points of interest which will be evaluated. This list covers the way they perform in negotiations. Secondly, the data gathered will reveal the behavioral and attitudinal differences between the two. Thirdly, the resulting profile of the differences will cover the last three research questions, which will in turn serve to answer the main research question. Through the main research question the resulting profile of the differences will be shaped into explanatory insights, as result of a confrontation with the theoretical framework. With this, the research objective is reached as the underlying influential factors of the formation of delays in closing deals are diagnosed and formed into building blocks for a communication strategy.

10.2 Research analysis and results

This section focuses on answering the sub-questions by the data results gathered from the survey. Below there are in total nine sub-questions that together aim to answer the three central questions in the subsequent section and finally the main research question. As each central question represents one of the three research areas chosen in the research framework, the structure of this

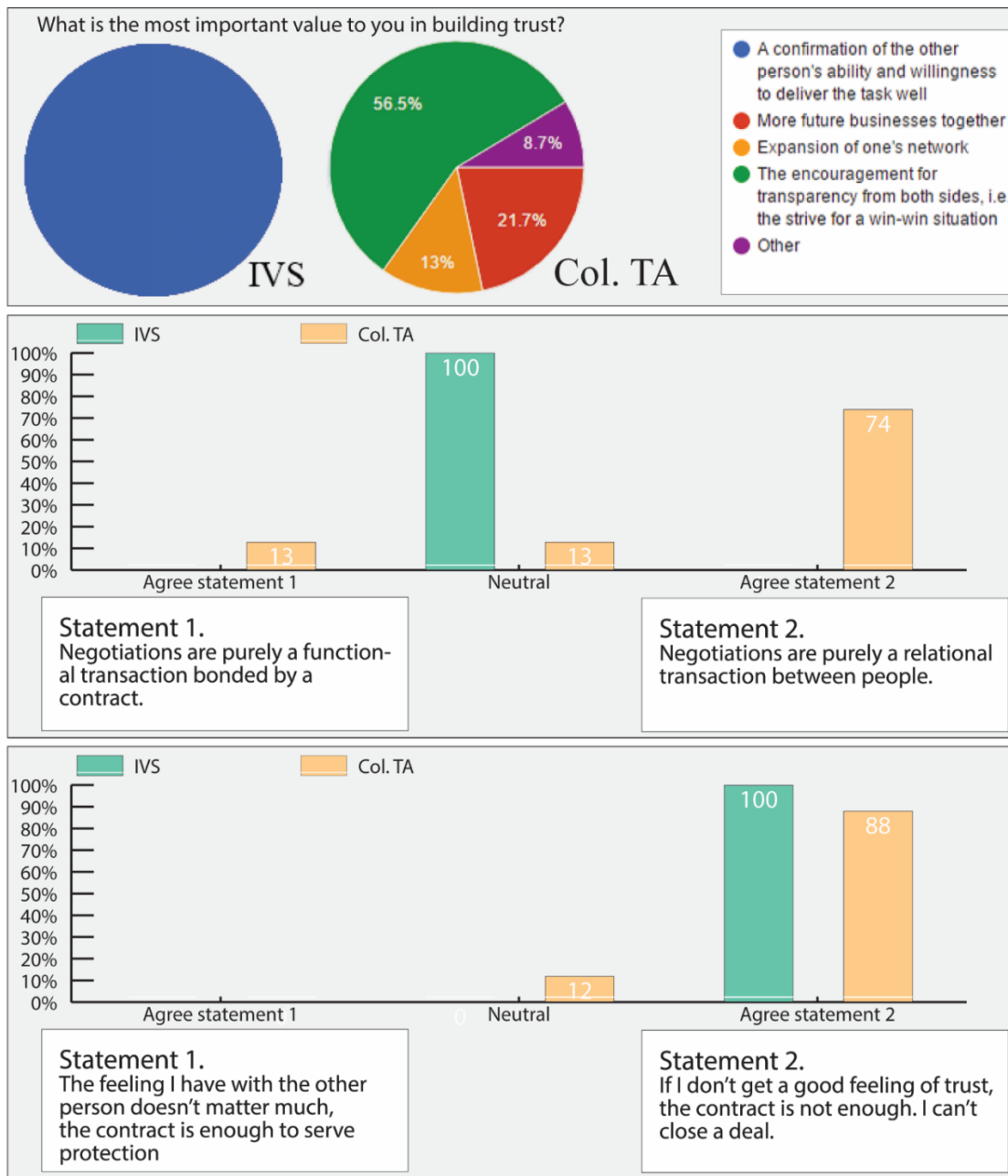
section will be also divided by the three areas, namely trust-building, decision-making, and information-processing.

10.2.1 Trust-building

This area includes sub-questions 1 to 3.

2.1. What is for them the value of trust-building in negotiations?

Below are the data results of the survey for sub-question 1.



1. When respondents were asked, from a set of four multiple choice options, what trust-building in relation to negotiations mean to them most of the Colombian travel agents answered that it is a process used to encourage transparency from both sides, i.e. the strive for a win-win situation. The second most agreed with answer was that the meaning of trust-building is the creation of assurance for more future business together.

As for IVS the perceived value in building trust is believed to be a means to test the counterparts' ability and willingness to deliver the task well.

2. Subsequently, as contracts are a necessary element in negotiations, it is important to also know what for them the perceived value attached is. From the results, 74 percent of participants claimed to share the view that a negotiation is "*a relational transaction*" and not "*a functional one purely bonded by a contract*".

IVS on the other hand showed to have a neutral opinion on contracts based on two opposing statements being; "*Negotiations are purely a functional transaction bonded by a contract*" and "*Negotiations are purely a relational transaction between people*".

3. Opinion regarding having a good feeling or not towards relationships within a negotiation was evaluated. Nearly all the participants, 91 percent, agreed that to close a deal a contract is not enough if there is not a good feeling of trust with the other person.

In relation to this matter, the results of the survey show a consistent view between the two groups, as IVS also shares the same view.

By doing a quantitative analysis of the results outlined above, the answer to the sub question of "*What is for them the value of trust-building in negotiations*" is formed as follows. While for Colombian travel agents it is a feeling of security related to the business relationship, for IVS it means a feeling of assurance related to the likelihood of having her expected standards met. In addition, the Colombian travel agents view negotiations as being a relational transaction, while IVS views it as being partly a relational and a functional transaction. For this reason, the Colombian travel agents do not put as much value on contracts. They prefer to base the trust on the quality of the relationship. IVS on the other hand, have a neutral attitude and prefers a balance between basing the trust on the relationship quality and the contract. Yet despite all of this, at least

the mere minimum presence of trust-building is considered by both to be the fundamental in closing a negotiation deal.

2.2. *What is the process of building trust like for them?*

Below are the data results of the survey for the sub-question 2.



4. A representation of the perceived expected length of the process of trust-building needs to be gathered, as an inconsistency in this might help explain the formation of delays in closing deals. For this reason, their perception of how they see the process of trust-building to be like was examined. The results reveal that the Colombian travel agents do not see it as having “a brief and fixed procedure”. Instead, they believe it is “dependent on the natural flow of the interaction with the negotiating partner”.

The perception of IVS turned out to be consistent.

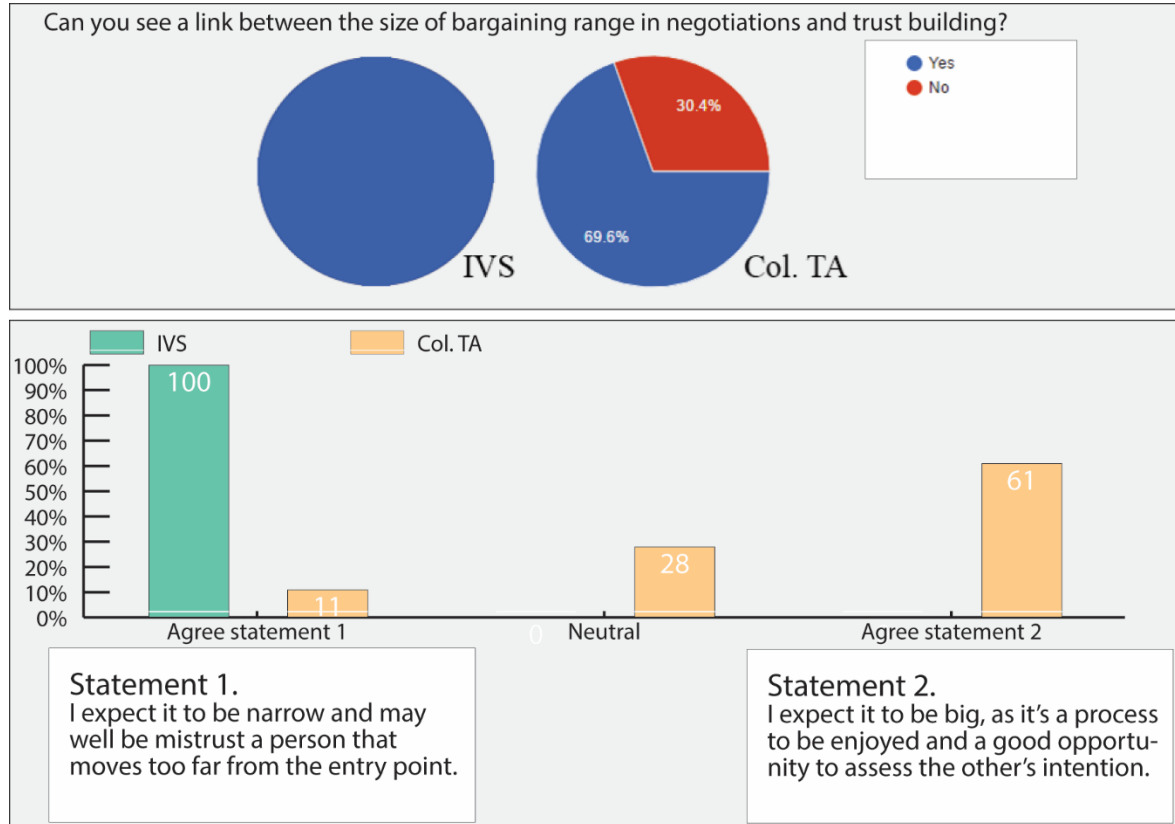
5. Next, the perceived importance of being time efficient was put against the importance of building trust. The results show that the two objects have opposing views on this matter. Most of the Colombian travel agents claim that the nurturing of business relationships is more important.

IVS on the other hand claimed to place more importance on being time efficient instead.

From these two survey results combined the sub question “*What is the process of building trust like for them?*” is answered as follows. Both groups agree that the process of trust-building should flow naturally instead of being linear, meaning they expect the process to be flexible. However, IVS further contradicts this idea by adding afterwards that she places more importance on being time efficient than on building trust. This brings doubts to the reliability of IVSs’ former response. At the end, the two have inconsistent opinion when it comes to what is more important; being time efficient or building trust. The Colombian travel agents placed more importance on building trust in the business relationship, while for IVS being time efficient is more important.

2.3. *What technique in the negotiation process is used to build trust?*

Below are the data results of the survey for the sub-question 3.



6. First, the respondents were asked if they perceive or not a connection between the size of bargaining range and trust-building. According to the outcome, both the Colombian travel agents and IVS agreed that there is a connection.

7. Subsequently, as a follow-up of the previous answer they were also asked to express the meaning of the size from their point of view. From the results, the two groups seemed to have opposing views. Most of the Colombian travel agents, representing 61,1 percent, expects it to be broad, and see it as a process to be enjoyed and a good opportunity to assess the others' intention.

IVS in contrast, expects the size of a bargain range to be narrow, and may well mistrust a person that moves too far from the entry point.

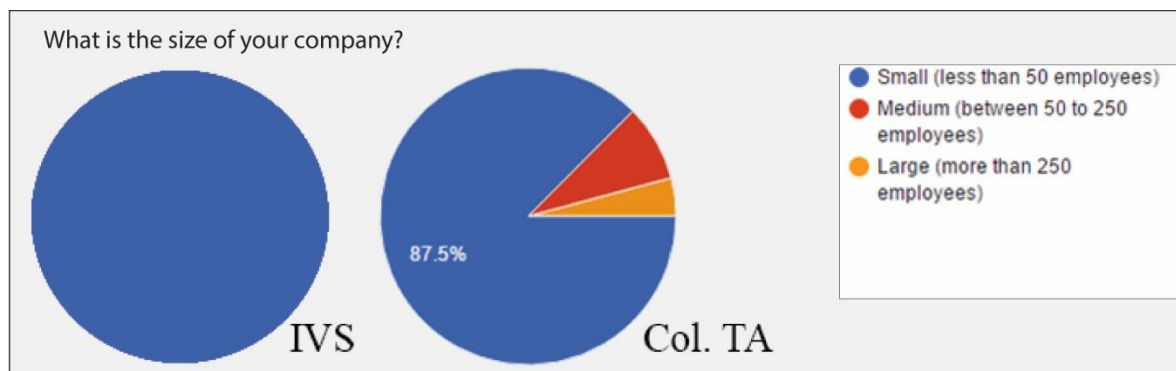
By the results outlined above it is now possible to cover the sub question “*What does the size in bargaining range mean to them in relation to trust-building?*”. The two groups agree in that there is a link between the size of bargaining range and trust-building, but disagree in the interpretation of the associated meaning. IVS expects a small bargaining range and considers the contrary as suspicious, while the Colombian travel agents expects a broad bargaining range and perceives it as a technique to test the opponents' intention.

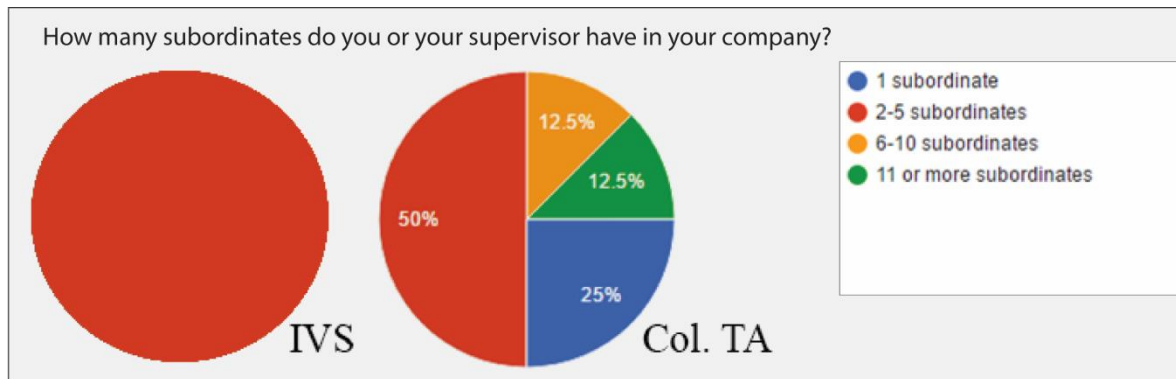
10.2.2 Decision-making

This area includes sub-questions 4 and 5.

3.1. *What is their organizational structure like regarding span of control?*

Below are the data results of the survey for sub-question 4.





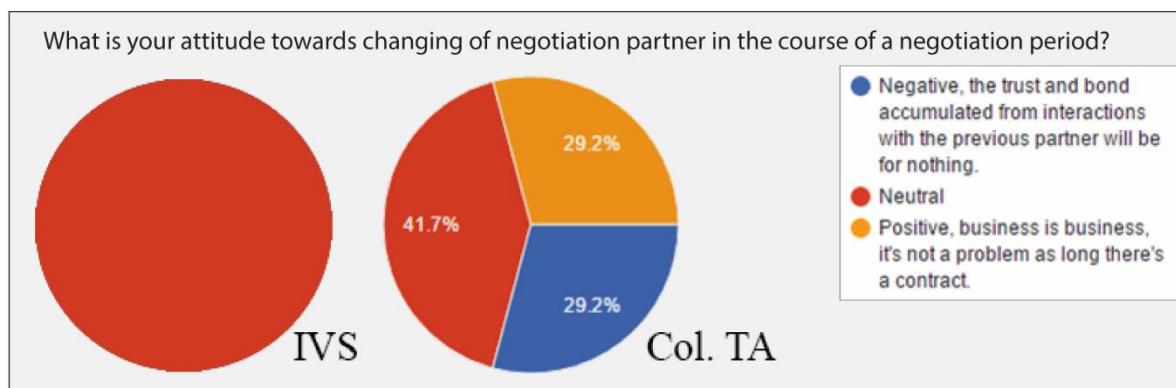
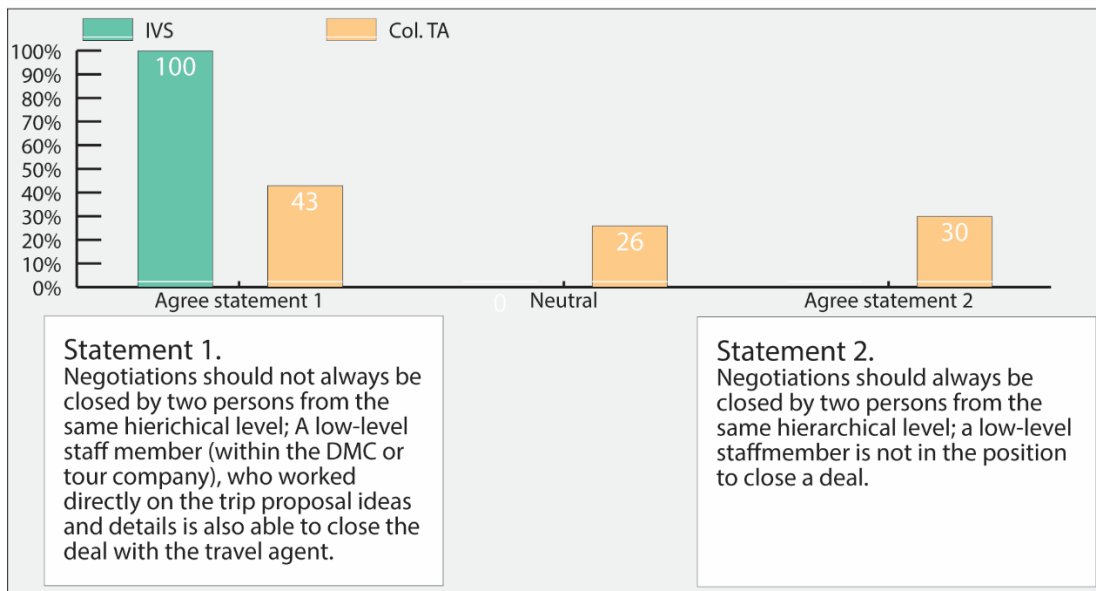
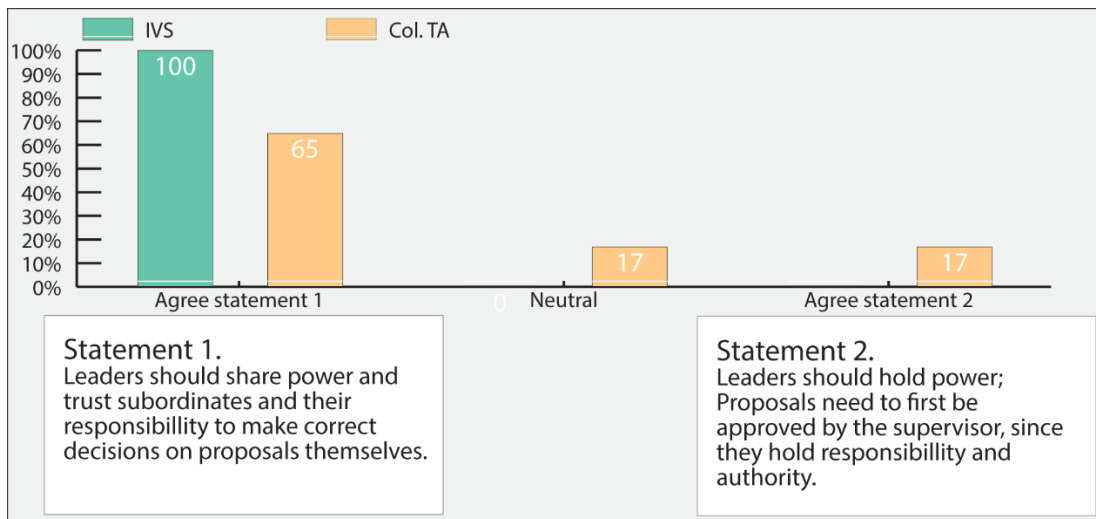
The span of control and hierarchical structure was considered a point of interest since it showed to have an influence on the speed with which the deals are closed within an organization. Through the survey research a summary of certain aspects of the organizational structure of the Colombian travel agencies was obtained.

1. 87 percent of the Colombian travel agents worked in a small company of less than 50 employees. This counts the same for IVS.
2. In addition, half of them said that their superior has two to five subordinates and a quarter said their superior has only one subordinate. IVS reported that she has two to five subordinates.

Subsequently, the answer to the corresponding sub question “*What is their organizational structure like regarding span of control?*” is formulated in the following manner. The most popular type of organizational structure among the Colombian travel agents that participated in the survey was similar to IVSs’, small sized companies containing less than 50 employees, and having managers that are responsible for two to five subordinates. Consequently, the span of control is considered intermediate.

3.2. What is their view regarding the status of negotiation partners?

Below are the data results of the survey for sub-question 5.



This point of interest seeks to evaluate the perception regarding authority within the organizational structure in relation to the making of decisions.

3. A summary of the results received from the survey research indicate that, more than half of the Colombian travel agents believe that leaders should share power instead of holding it and subordinates should be given trust and the responsibility to make correct decisions independently.

IVS was in line with the majority of the Colombian survey participants in that she also thinks that leaders hold power.

4. More related to the status of the participants taking part in a negotiation, the attitude on cross-level negotiations was asked. The majority, counting for 44 percent of the survey population, reported to have a positive attitude on it, claiming that a front-line officer should also be able to close a trip proposal deal with a tour operator or DMC in possession of a higher hierarchical ranking. It is worth noting that a significant 30 percent, representing the second biggest chunk, said to have a negative attitude. Another 26 percent of respondents, claimed they have a neutral attitude on this matter.

In accordance with the 44 percent of Colombian participants, IVS also shares a positive attitude on cross-level negotiation.

5. Finally, the survey aimed to gather data on the attitude towards the changing of negotiation partner when still in course of a negotiation period. From the results, the majority representing 42 percent of the respondents share a neutral attitude regarding this matter. As for the two alternative options being a positive or negative attitude, they equally represented 29 percent of the survey population.

As for IVS, she also reported to have a neutral stand on this concern.

Following the results outlined above, the next sub question “*What is their view regarding the status of negotiation partners?*” will now be addressed. IVS and the Colombian travel agents believe that leaders should share power and let front-liners make decisions in closing deals. Nonetheless, a curious observation is that when it comes to a negotiation where a front-liner must deal with a company representative with a higher hierarchical status, the points of view of the Colombian travel agents regarding this issue were relatively spread. This questions the reliability

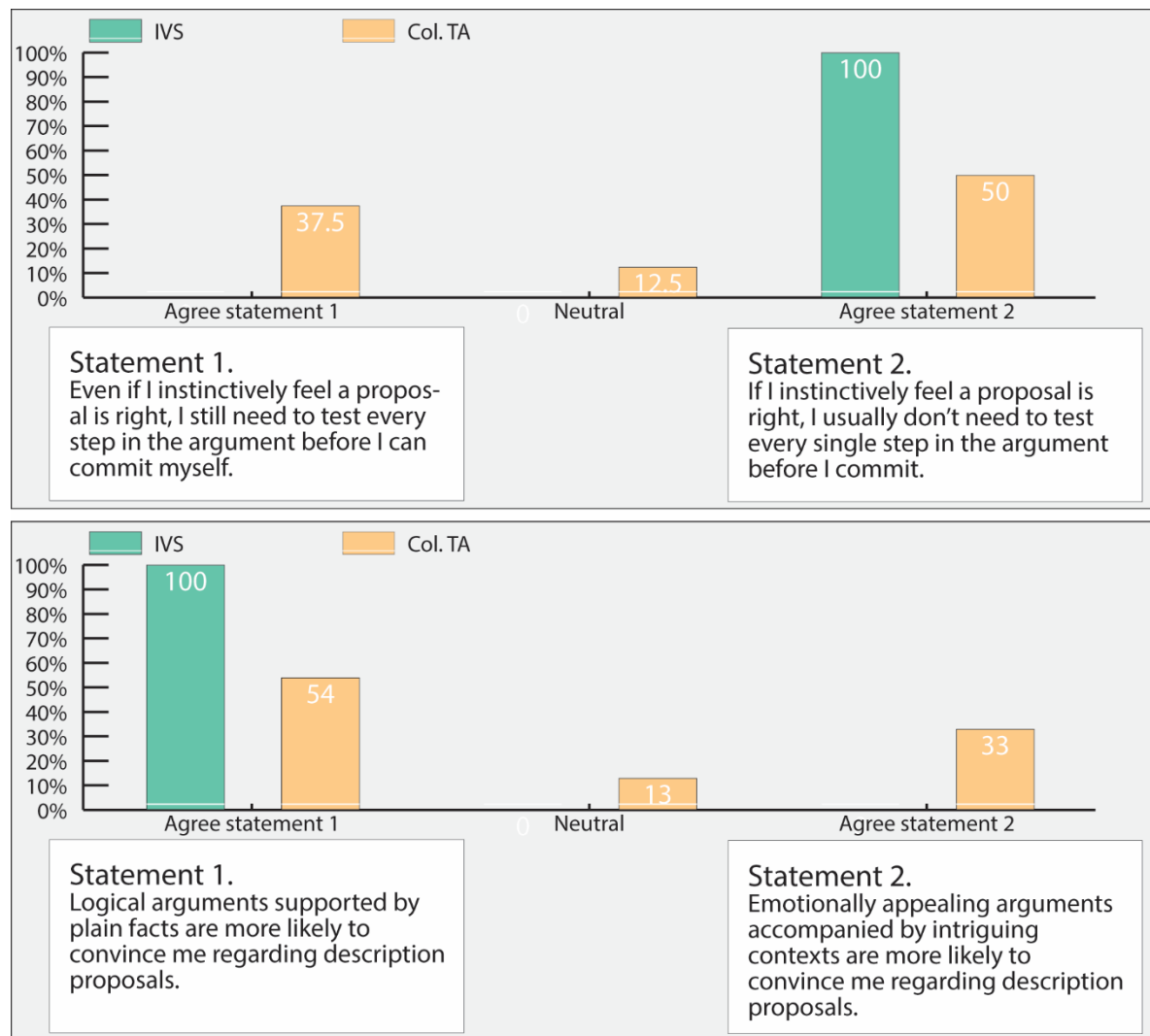
towards the reported believe Colombian travel agents have about leaders sharing power instead of holding it. Even though the majority agreed the neutral stand of IVS, a quite even distribution of opinion also counts for the idea of changing company representatives of the opponent in the middle of the course of a negotiation. Consequently, for this point of interest the identification of trends is a bit weak and difficult.

10.2.3 Information processing

This section includes sub-questions 6 to 9.

4.1. What is their way of reasoning like?

Below are the data results of the survey for sub-question 6.



13. First their way of reasoning had to be evaluated by two opposing statements representing an intuitive and an analytic reasoning system. The results reveal that most of the Colombian travel agents are identified by an intuitive reasoning system.

The results demonstrate that IVS is aligned with the Colombian travel agents in that, her way of reasoning is also best identified with the intuitive system of reasoning.

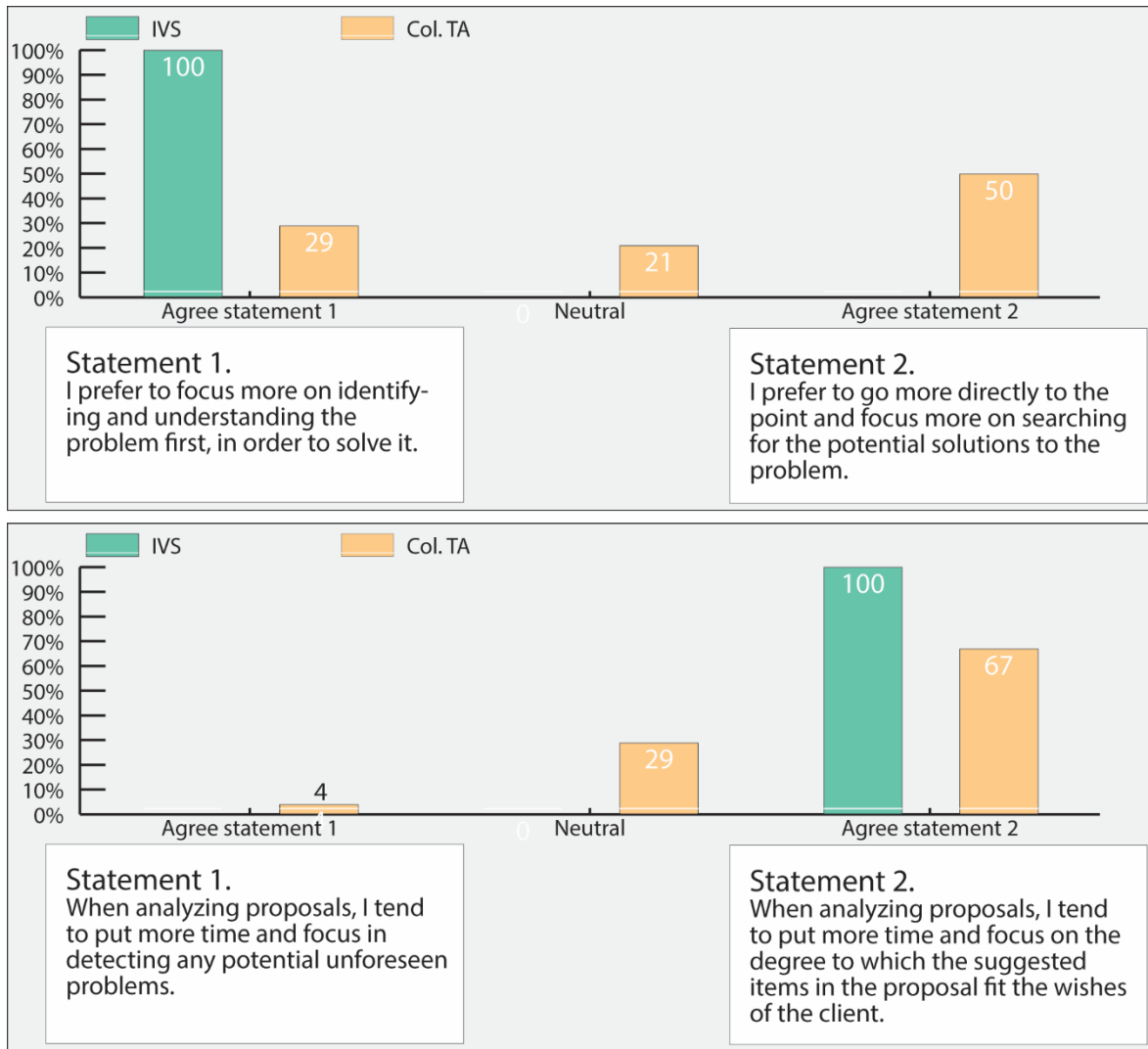
14. The second survey question served to examine two kind of arguments for the one that have a higher tendency to persuade them with regards to the content of proposal deals. The results demonstrate that the majority are more sensitive to logical arguments supported by plain facts. Nonetheless, a significant chunk said to be more sensitive to emotionally appealing arguments accompanied by intriguing contexts.

IVSs' response on the other hand, also indicate a preference for logical arguments in comparison to emotionally appealing arguments.

The above data combined answer the sub question "*What is their way of reasoning like?*". Both feel best identified by having an intuitive way of reasoning. Moreover, both claim to be mostly persuaded by logical arguments, yet the Colombian travel agents tend to also be reactive to emotionally appealing arguments.

4.2. What is their approach to tackle problems?

Below are the data results of the survey for sub-question 7.



15. In the survey the Colombian travel agents were asked to evaluate their approach to problem solving. From the results, it appears that most of the Colombian travel agents believe they usually go directly to the point and focus more on searching for the potential solution to the problem.

This contradicts the view of IVS whom identifies herself with the opposing approach, i.e. putting more focus on identifying and understanding the problem before going directly into the search for solutions.

16. Next, the two groups were asked to evaluate their opinion on two opposing statements for the one that identifies their approach to analyzing proposal suggestions of tour operators or DMCs like

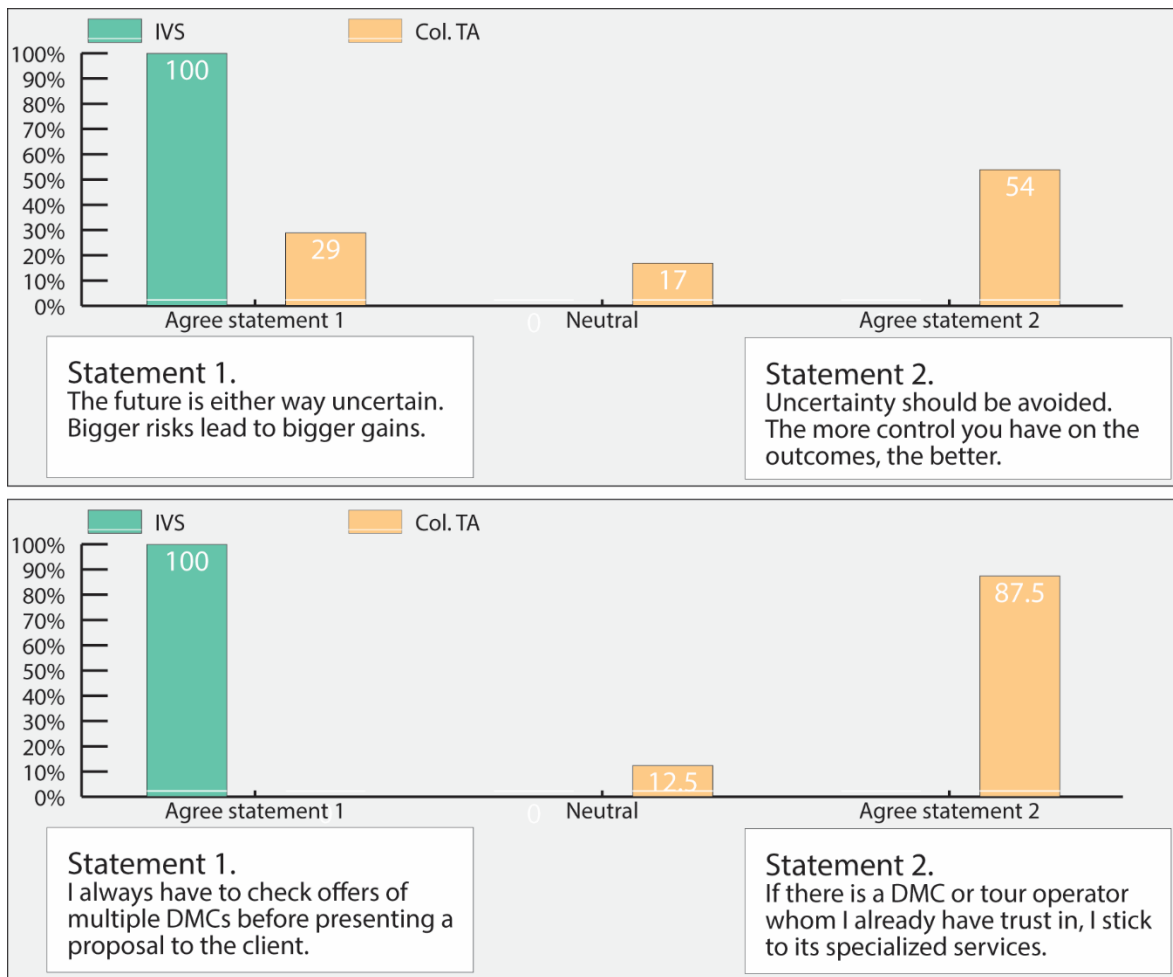
IVS the most. Results showed that, they highly share the same approach. That is, focusing more on having a proposal fit the clients' wishes, in contrast to, focusing on detecting any potential unforeseen problems in the suggested proposals.

On this matter, IVS claimed to agree with the view of the majority of the Colombian travel agents.

Finally, these findings can be put together and answer the sub question of "*What is their approach to tackle problems?*". The two groups have an inconsistent approach to tackling problems. The Colombian travel agents prefer to go directly to the point, while IVS prefers to focus more on identifying and understanding the problem before going into the search for solutions. In other words, the Colombian travel agents have a solution-oriented approach and IVS has a problem-oriented approach. Then again, related to the evaluation of trip proposals specifically, the two share the same approach that is, a solution-oriented approach. Focusing more on having a proposal fit the clients' wishes instead of focusing on detecting any potential unforeseen problems in the proposal.

4.3. What is their attitude towards risks?

Below are the data results of the survey for sub-question 8.



17. Through the survey a representation of both groups' attitude towards risk was formed. That is, from the survey participants the majority consider themselves as being risk averse. They share the idea that uncertainty should be avoided as much as possible and that, the more you can control the outcomes, the better. In this respect, IVS shared the opposite point of view.

IVS considers herself to be a risk-taker and believes that the future is uncertain either way. Therefore, bigger risks lead to bigger gains.

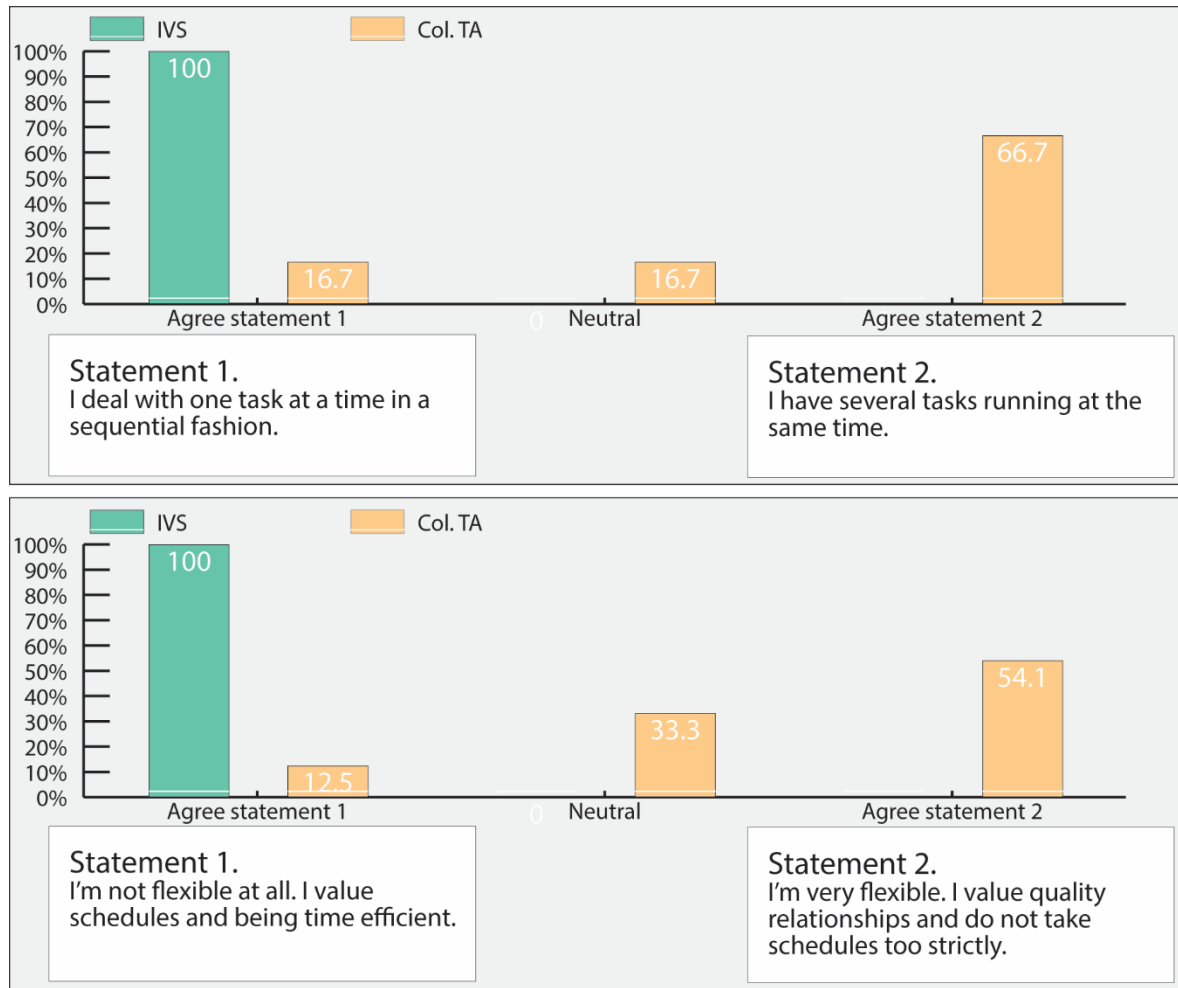
18. Additionally, regarding a question more closely related to the way of dealing with customized proposals, the most Colombian travel agents showed to have the tendency to stick to the services of tour operators or DMCs they have trust in.

IVS was asked the same question and responded by saying that if she were to be a travel agent working on a customized trip proposal request, she would still contact multiple tour operators or DMCs to compare the offers in order to assure a best fit for the client.

Following the results outlined above, the sub question “*What is their attitude towards risk?*” can now be answered. Their attitude towards risk when compared with each other showed to be inconsistent. The Colombian travel agents considers themselves to be risk-averse whilst, IVS considers herself a risk-taker. This is further supported by their behavior when dealing with customized request proposals. The Colombian travel agents tend to stick to the suppliers they have trust in, while IVS prefers to make comparisons between several suppliers.

4.4. What is the order in which they approach tasks?

Below are the data of the survey for sub-question 9.



Finally, with this last point of interest the aim is to check if there are any causing factors deriving from the way how they manage tasks differently. In the survey research two questions covered this point.

19. The first one was about if they go through their tasks by multi-tasking or not. Results showed that nearly all Colombian travel agents are multi-taskers.

As for IVS, she described her approach as being more linear.

20. The second question related to this point was aimed at evaluating their degree of flexibility over the extending of meeting duration. The Colombian travel agents reported that they are quite flexible with time planning.

As for IVS, she felt more identified with being less flexible.

Considering these two findings, the corresponding sub question “*What is the order in which they approach tasks?*” can now be answered. Colombian travel agents prefer to use a non-chronological order, while IVS prefers a chronological order. As additional support for the former classification, the Colombian travel agents consider themselves to be flexible with regards to time planning of meetings, while IVS relates instead to the opposing view. Thus, concerning the way they go about executing tasks is inconsistent.

10.3 Interpretation of results

This section will provide answers to the central research questions.

This section presents the interpretation of the result analysis into new insights about the probable cause(s) of the behavioral differences between the two objects. This represents part C in the research framework.

The points of interest evaluated were derived from theoretical insights which played a couple of key roles, i.e. directing and predicting the behavioral differences as well as explaining the underlying cause and effect relationships. Based on the points of interest, the research later aimed to gather the evaluative opinion of the two objects with the intention to detect the inconsistent points of view predicted by the theories. As the final goal is to increase awareness about the underlying cause(s) for the formation of delays, the analysis served to present the behavioral differences or similarities worth considering for adjusting IVSs’ communication approach. Afterwards these will be interpreted by pinpointing the causing factor(s) with the support of the theories. At the end, the conclusion of the following three central research questions will result in the answer to the main research question “*Why do delays in closing deals occur in negotiations between IVS and the Colombian travel agents?*”.

10.3.1 Trust-building

Why do the Colombian travel agents and IVS differ in the speed with which they build trust?

The theory of moral relativism argues that the underlying root of behavioral differences in general across cultures can be understood by the fact that there are no such things as universal morals (Foot, 1982). Morals are believed to be dependent among other things on the cultural norms and values of a person. This in turn can be very different to another person yet, not better. Thus, despite the differences between the two groups, neither one of the two can be said to have a better approach than the other. It can thus be agreed that due to the influence of each objects' cultural norms and values their perception, expectations and judgments about the process of trust-building are shaped differently.

1. From the research results it can be argued that the root of the differences can be explained by the fact that the two objects have inconsistent approaches in doing business, that is, the Colombian travel agents are relationship orientated and IVS is task orientated. This orientation in turn, guides a list of attitudes and behaviors throughout the negotiation process, such as how they perceive the process, how to go about the process, and what to expect from the opponent related to trust-building. Thus, a reason why Colombian travel agents and IVS differ in speed with which they build trust can be due to the fact that, as opposed to IVS they value giving time to nurture the relationship more than being time efficient. Closely related, based on the perceived value in trust-building, it can be argued that in building trust the Colombian travel agents strive and hope for a long-term business relationship, compared to IVS that strive more to guarantee completion of the current deal. This also indicates the difference with regards to relationship versus task orientation between the two groups that influence the speed with which they build trust.

2. Also, the Colombian travel agents rely more on the trust developed by the nurturing of relationships instead of that established by a contract. According to the theoretical support it is argued that, this is due to the influence the concept of saving face has on the Colombian travel agents (Hsu, 1983). As the Colombian travel agents belong to a high context culture, they dread the thought of being attacked or humiliated in a direct way, especially in-front of a group, during a confrontational situation. An example of this are threats based on the reliance of contracts. This counts as well for the opposite situation. When faced in a confrontational situation, they tend to avoid at all cost to humiliate a person in-front of a group. To avoid this, they prefer to nurture their

relationships in a way that establishes mutual respect and a feeling of interdependency that will serve to hold back the risks of being directly attacked in a way that will make them lose face in front of a group or vice versa.

3. Finally, another reason why they differ in speed when building trust is due to the inconsistent expectation the two objects have regarding the size of bargaining range. Since the Colombian travel agents expect the size of bargaining range to be broad and see it as a method to test the intention of the opponent, it can be argued that if an opponent offers a smaller bargaining range, this may raise a feeling of mistrust and thus slows down the speed with which a satisfactory level of trust is reached. This is also supported by Hsu (1983) in that, the way people display trust and expect the other to show their trust differs based on their culture being high- or low-context.

10.3.2 Decision-making

Why do the Colombian travel agents and IVS differ in the speed with which decisions are made regarding closing deals in their company?

In relation to the view of the decision-making process within the company, the research results did not identify any significant difference between the two groups. In addition, the results also did not support the theoretical predictions. Given the relatively spread opinions regarding the attitude towards the status of the negotiation partners, further research is needed related to cross-level negotiation and leadership to diagnose if this factor has or not an influence on the speed with which deals are closed.

10.3.3 Information-processing

Why do the Colombian travel agents and IVS differ in the speed with which they close deals considering the way they process information?

1. In relation to reasoning systems, the research results demonstrated that IVS and Colombian travel agents do not differ from each other. However, their answers contradict with the theory. They both claim that they feel identified by the intuitive reasoning system. Yet, they feel they are more likely persuaded by logical arguments supported by plain facts. According to the theory, the intuitive reasoning system is guided by associating one's experiences and emotions to the available cues and not by logical and factual arguments. Consequently, for this point of interest the research result failed to deliver insights as it turned out weak on reliability.

2. Still, when looking at another point of interest of, the approach to problem solving, the data gathered from the research indicate that the Colombian travel agents do follow an intuitive reasoning system while IVS follows an analytical reasoning system. Hence, basing this on the theory, the research results reveal that it is likely that the two groups differ in the speed with which they close deals because the inconsistent reasoning systems between the two make that, the communication style of IVS in interaction with the reasoning system of the Colombian travel agents, is likely to bring either misunderstandings or insufficient points of arguments to reach the state of conviction. Thus, more time is needed to gather the necessary information to close the deal.

3. Moving to the point of attitude towards risk, the research results indicate that the Colombian travel agents and IVS differ in this aspect. This suggest that, since the Colombian travel agents are risk-averse they are skeptical beings and thus strive to minimize risks as much as possible (Hofstede, Jonker, and Verwaart, 2008). This supports their high value placed on trustworthy business relationships and difficulty working with new partners. Given that IVS was confirmed be pro risk-taking and to not have problems working with new partners as do the Colombian travel agents, it can be argued that in the case that IVS is to approach a new Colombian travel agent their risk-averse attitude is likely to influence the speed with which deals are closed in comparison to IVSs' expectations.

4. Regarding the point of interest of the order in which they approach tasks, another reason why the two differ in speed with which deals are closed is because they have opposing time orientations. It can be argued that IVS expects a faster speed compared to the Colombian travel agents since while evaluating a deal she prefers to follow schedules chronologically, whereas the Colombian travel agents have the tendency to do multiple tasks simultaneously and are not that strict with time schedules. This in turn, likely causes a slower pace in closing deals. In addition, the two groups also demonstrated to have opposing attitude towards flexibility which is also considered to influence the speed, since this implies that IVS has a highly strict view on this concern, while the Colombian travel agents share a less strict one.

5. Lastly, the inconsistent time orientation of the two groups also give further support to the idea that the two groups have opposing reasoning systems and its effect on the speed. Based on the theory, the monochronic time orientation of IVS is driven by the cognitive process of thinking and

judging while, the polychronic time orientation of the Colombian travel agents is driven by feeling and perceiving (Abramson et al., 1996, 1993). Exchanging of information for this reason does not always succeed in one time due to the same reason mentioned under the point of reasoning systems

11. Conclusions and recommendations

Following the interpretation of results, this section finally answers the main research question “*Why do delays in closing deals occur in negotiations between the Colombian travel agents and IVS?*” Looking back to the research framework this section represents part D, which is also the final part of the entire research project.

Before all else, it is important to note that the analysis provided in this research does not represent the whole group of Colombian travel agents nor the selected sample. As can be seen in the summary of results, on some points the opinions were more varied than on others. Nonetheless, the research findings managed to identify a trend of the main influential causing factors for the formation of delays that IVS should be aware of when developing a communication strategy to better approach and communicate with the Colombian travel agents. Even though trends are helpful tools to increase awareness by giving an idea of how things are in real life, they cannot be taken as objective truths. Each persons’ attitudes and behaviors are dependent on numerous factors not mentioned in the research and thus, re-evaluations and adjustments might need to be considered to obtain the best results.

In a nutshell, the internal aim of this research project was to raise awareness about casual relationships worth noting, that have an influence on the formation of delays in closing deals in negotiations between the two objects. The result of this in turn is set to serve the external goal of the project which is to provide recommendations for IVS to include in a cross-cultural communication strategy to overcome the difficulties in doing business internationally. Thus, by answering the main research question below, this section will provide a couple of recommendations, to use as foundation for a cross-cultural communication strategy.

Based on the research results, the reason why delays in closing deals occur in negotiations between the Colombian travel agents and IVS is because the two groups have a different approach in doing business. In general terms, this is mainly influenced by the fact that the Colombian travel agents use a relationship oriented approach, while IVS uses a task oriented approach. In addition,

differences related to the way they process information also influences the formation of delays in closing deals.

1. With regards to the relationship oriented approach of the Colombian travel agents, the research results indicate that for the Colombian travel agents it is paramount to have a feeling of trust with their negotiation partner before saying yes to a deal. For the Colombian travel agents to have a feeling of trust, the relationship they have with their negotiation partner should **feel personal, evoke interest for a long-term relationship, and cooperation**. IVS on the contrary has a more straightforward task oriented approach that includes securing the deal by means of an official contract. Given that the two groups have a different approach to building trust in business relationships, this is likely to trigger the formation of delays in closing deals.

2. In addition, formation of delays may also be triggered by the Colombian travel agents' reaction to IVSs' approach **in relation to the contract and the size of the bargaining range**. For this reason, **IVS should be aware of this and act carefully**.

3. In relation to the differences in the way they process information, the tendency for delays in closing deals to occur is because the messages resulting from the communication style of IVS does not work as effectively on the intuitive or associative processing system of the Colombian travel agents. Consequently, for IVS to communicate more effectively to them she should **adjust and organize the content** of her trip proposals more in accordance with the information-processing approach of the Colombian travel agents. It is recommended to **use emotional appeals and personal experiences** that the Colombian travel agents can relate to.

4. Moreover, considering that the research results indicate that the Colombian travel agents are uncertainty avoidant oriented when evaluating the proposal deals, it is important for IVS to put a lot of attention on **risk-management regarding the justification of choices and her reliability**. **Promoting a collaborative approach** helps to help them overcome the perceived difficulty to work with new partners. This will help to cover the holes of doubt that they tend to have, and in this way, reach the state of conviction faster.

5. Finally, the research results also revealed that the Colombian travel agents and IVS have a different time orientation. This helps to explain why the Colombian travel agents revealed to be more flexible with time schedules in contrast to IVS. The Colombian travel agents also showed to

multi-task more than IVS. The theory claims that these behaviors are related to their cognitive processing systems being mostly driven by feeling and perceiving. Consequently, all these things combined makes avoiding delays to occur difficult for them.

This, especially for a person with a monochronic time perception such as IVS, is difficult to deal with considering her expectations. For this reason, it is important for IVS that the strategy includes **tips and tricks to help avoid delays even when they are already expected to happen**. In this way IVS will still be able to maintain her core standard values.

Connecting this back to the project context, these recommendations serve to help IVS develop a cross-cultural communication strategy to reduce the lack of knowledge on how to better approach and communicate with the Colombian travel agents, in order to overcome delays that bring difficulties in delivering a smooth and reliable service.

Cross-cultural communication strategy

11. Overcoming delays

Following the results of the research, the advice for IVS can be now put together in the form of recommendations for a cross-cultural communication strategy. This cross-cultural strategy is developed to reduce the lack of knowledge IVS has on how to approach and communicate with the Colombian travel agents to overcome or deal with delays in closing deals.

The problem of IVS was that she encountered difficulties in doing business with the Colombian travel agents, because of delays coming from the side of the Colombian travel agents in giving the last confirmation to close deals. This generated many complications in the tasks following the closing of a deal, i.e. the booking of reservations. This made it difficult for IVS to successfully execute its organizational goal which is, to deliver a smooth and reliable service to the travel agents. To deliver a smooth and reliable service refers to providing organizing services that is timely and involving as few inconveniences possible in delivering the trip agreed upon.

After the complaint received from a Colombian travel agent regarding the service received, **IVS wants to gain knowledge in how to avoid delays in closing deals when negotiating with the Colombian travel agents**. This is believed to reduce the chances of getting complications in booking the reservations which in turn, will enable IVS to successfully deliver a smooth and

reliable service to the travel agents. IVS is not that familiar with serving the Colombian travel agents, and thus lack knowledge in the way they do business.

That is why, the objective of this research project is to reduce the lack of knowledge IVS has about the business approach of the Colombian travel agents, to improve IVSS' external communication approach when dealing with the Colombian travel agents.

Acceptable and barriers

Despite the complaint received, IVS is still interested in doing more future business with the Colombian travel agents. Given that she already has a step in the Colombian market, she aims to further expand on this. For this reason, after conversing with the owner, Jesse Andrews, about the idea of implementing a strategy to improve the approach and communication towards the Colombian travel agents to overcome the mentioned difficulties, it was considered welcome.

Even though, Jesse Andrews is interested in the idea of implementing the cross-cultural strategy, the foreseen barriers discussed about were the limited time she has available, and a limited budget to invest in the implementation of the advice. Additionally, another barrier mentioned was that the peak season for IVS is about to start, meaning that, the time that is possible to start implementing the advice would be after this. These barriers were considered when developing the implementation of the advice.

11.1 Link between research results and advice

The advice is divided in three segments and is based on a couple of valuable findings derived from research conducted on why delays in closing deals occur in negotiations between IVS and the Colombian travel agents.

To develop a cross-cultural communication strategy for IVS to overcome difficulties in doing business with the Colombian travel agents, knowledge had to be gathered regarding the reason why the delays tend to occur in the first place. Through a preliminary research, three themes were chosen to form a diagnosis for potential causing factors. The causing factors that turned out to be uncovered are targeted at reducing the lack of knowledge IVS has on the way the Colombian travel agents do business differently. Concepts of; trust-building across cultures, decision-making within an organization, and the influence of culture on information-processing styles were used to help gather the necessary information.

Consequently, regarding the first segment, based on the research results, the advice considers that, IVS and the Colombian travel agents have a different approach in building trust in negotiations. This implies that, the expectations regarding the behavior of the other are also different from both sides.

For instance, for the Colombian travel agents to close a deal it is fundamental to have trust in the other person. Since they see negotiation as a relational transaction the trust should be established on a personal level, a contract does not suffice.

In addition, the Colombian travel agents look for signs of opportunities for long-term partnerships and fair cooperation during the interactions with their prospective partners. These two characteristics are considered one of the values on which their trust is formed. IVS on the other hand, secures her trust mainly through the contract. Caution is recommended in relation to this inconsistency between the two groups, since being too focused on treating the negotiation as a mere transaction can be considered by the Colombian travel agents as not giving enough importance to the building of a relationship hence, triggering delay in the building of trust. The relationship oriented approach of the Colombian travel agent and the task oriented approach of IVS, is considered in the advice.

Moreover, the Colombian travel agents expect the duration of the process of relationship building to not be rushed. This indicates that, to spend time on building a good relationship is more important than following schedules tightly.

Aim of segment one

For the advice to be effective in improving the relationship-building approach of IVS towards the Colombian travel agents, the strategy should include the following to help prevent delays. It should include guidelines to build a more personal relationship with the Colombian travel agents that shows interest in long-term partnership and cooperation.

Proceeding to the second segment of the advice. The difference in the way the two groups process information was investigated, to develop an advice on how to frame the proposal in a manner that complements the way the Colombian travel agents reason and thus, make decisions. This will facilitate IVS in reaching her goal as, the faster the Colombian travel agents can go

through the phase of evaluating the proposal, the faster they will be able to decide. Thus, the lower the chances of delays.

To successfully develop an advice to achieve this, the following findings functioned as base.

IVS and the Colombian travel agents have different approach to decision-making; IVS was identified as an analytical decision-maker, while the Colombian travel agents were identified as intuitive decision-makers. It can be argued that due to this inconsistency, IVS should adjust the way she frames the proposals. Considering that IVSs' communication style is congruent to her analytical decision-making approach, affects the speed with which the decision of the Colombian travel agents, on closing deals are made. It can be argued that the messages resulting from IVSs' instinctive communication style does not work effectively on the Colombian travel agents' decision-making approach.

Bearing in mind the associative-based processing system intuitive decision-making approach of the Colombian travel agents. The research revealed that, the Colombian travel agents are more likely to reach the state of conviction by means of arguments that appeal to emotions, experiences that they can relate to, and arguments that target the minimization of risks. By not providing these kinds of arguments it can make the decision-making process for the Colombian travel agents slower.

In addition, the Colombian travel agents were identified as being risk-averse. Therefore, it can be argued that they have difficulty deciding, when there are still holes of doubts or trust associated with the proposal.

Finally, since the bargaining price is also part of the proposal, the advice also considers the inconsistent approach the two groups have regarding the size of the bargaining range. Research findings indicate that the Colombian travel agents prefer to use and expect a big range. Theory claims that it is their way of testing the other persons' true intentions, being either to cooperate or exploit them. This can also influence their trust in the person.

Aim of segment two

The aim of segment two is, to develop an effective way to frame the proposals to help prevent delays. Thus, the advice should aim to harmonize the framing of the proposals to the intuitive decision-making approach of the Colombian travel agents, together with their risk-averse attitude.

Finally, for the third segment, the advice also includes tips to consider when delays are already expected to happen. This segment of the advice focuses on the fact that delays are likely to occur given that, IVS and the Colombian travel agents have a different time orientation. IVS was identified by a monochronic time orientation while the Colombian travel agents were identified by a polychronic time orientation. This implies that the Colombian travel agents are by nature more inclined to be flexible with time in comparison to IVS. An example is that they tend to carry-out many tasks simultaneously, among them also evaluating proposals. This in turn tends to result in delays in closing deals.

Aim of segment three

Since it is difficult for one of the two to always give up their standards and habits to do business effectively, it can be argued that to prevent delays to occur entirely is not realistic. Therefore, to develop an advice to help IVS overcome delays in closing deals, this segment of the advice provides tips to consider when delays are already expected.

11.2 Implementation plan

To implement the advice and facilitate the communication between IVS and the Colombian travel agents, three deliverables are developed in the form of guidelines for a skills training, to help IVS improve her competence in communicating with Colombian travel agents more effectively. As mentioned, the advice is divided in three segments.

- How to build effective interpersonal relationships with the Colombian travel agents.
- How to effectively frame the proposals to fit the decision-making approach of the Colombian travel agents.
- Tips to deal with delays when they are already expected to occur.

11.2.1 How to build effective interpersonal relationships with the Colombian travel agents.

The recommendations point out the need to build more personal relationships with the Colombian travel agents that shows interest in long-term partnership and cooperation. The following list of guidelines is developed to give an overview of the steps necessary to facilitate IVS in achieving this. The logic underneath this part of the strategy is that, the more competent IVS is in gaining their trust, the faster they will be to confirm the deal. Hence, the lower the chance for delays. This ultimately, facilitates IVS to successfully deliver a smooth and reliable service to the travel agents.

- Be prepared
- Be approachable
- Encourage information exchange
- Search for common interest
- Follow up

Be prepared

Considering that the goal here is to build a more personal relationship it is important to have a list of topic ideas to talk about during conversations. Safe examples for topics can be family, sports, travel experiences, the diverse nature of Colombia, food, and popular positive local current affairs. With regards to the last one, it is recommended for IVS to familiarize herself a bit by searching for free online local newspapers in English.

Aside from that, it is also helpful to search online for advice on what is safe to say or talk about and what is not. Examples of things to avoid can be as simple as mispronouncing the name of the country, to talking about local politics or religion, or not greeting properly (Becker, 2004). These types of mistakes could irritate a Colombian travel agent and trigger him or her into a defensive mood.

With regards to the proper way of greeting, it is advised for IVS to greet them formally by last names and formal titles. Formal titles include; Señor/a, and Licenciado/a. Be aware that all Colombian last names consist of two names. Colombia has a very status-based society and thus, significant value is given to formality when communicating (IOR n.d.). Being informed about these kinds of things before the first interaction facilitates the execution of the following point.

Be approachable

To come across as approachable to the other person, the other person should have his or her guard down. IVS should avoid sending any signs that might be perceived as an attack or irritation to the Colombian travel agent. Since based on the research results, the Colombian travel agents expect a more personal feeling in business relationships, IVS should adjust her mindset to one of having a conversation with a potential new friend. Displaying the feeling of pleasure in having the conversation helps to set the right mood. This in turn will help the Colombian travel agent to let his or her guard down.

The goal here is to avoid sales pressure by not appearing like a salesperson. No one likes to feel like he or she is being sold by a friend. Being perceived as a salesperson can make it hard for them to relate to IVS from the position of trust (Galper, 2017).

An example for an introduction phrase can be; “Hello Señor Martinez Ramirez, I’m Jesse Andrews a tour operator specialized in customized vacation trips throughout Italy. I called to see if you are maybe open to hear some fresh trip ideas. Might this be something that can help you serve your current or future clients?”

This will give them a chance to save face if they wish to reject the conversation which can hopefully trigger voluntary interest in them to proceed. In addition, it shows that IVS is focused on helping him solve his clients’ problems, which evokes a feeling of cooperation. Furthermore, by mentioning current or future clients, communicates an interest in not specifically doing business right now, but also in the future if right now is not the time. This indicates interest in long-term partnership.

Aim not to stretch this introduction too much, when it feels appropriate round off this topic and give room to the next topic.

Encourage information exchange

After having their attention and genuine interest, just like getting to know a new friend, IVS should encourage them to talk about themselves. Whatever you do, in this phase, do not direct the conversation towards your business. This shows patience and interest in connecting on a personal level.

Encouraging the other person to talk about her or himself is beneficial as it enables you to show interest in them as a person. Ask questions about their pastime activities, about family members, about hobbies, sports, positive current affairs in their country. Listen carefully and take mental notes, as useful information can effectively be included in the framing of the proposal (Becker, 2004). Finally, in the case you are having a skype meeting, don't forget to paraphrasing and send non-verbal cues corresponding to actively listening, such as nodding.

Search for common interests

During the exchange of information, IVS should pay attention on identifying common points of interest. Once a couple are identified, take the opportunity to nourish the relationship by engaging on a personal level with them. Eventually when the conversation moves back towards business matters, try not to be the one who made the move.

It is advised for IVS to get into the mindset of finding out if the Colombian travel agency fits well with her company.

This is done by focusing on identifying the problems that she can help solve. If it turns out that she cannot help, this should not be the end. If IVS knows someone in her network that can help, it is in her benefit to show interest to still cooperate by voluntarily connecting the two together. One never knows who the Colombian travel agent knows that do fit well with the services IVS offers. If IVS hopefully receives a similar favor back in return, being endorsed in the Colombian culture is of great value (Becker, 2004). In this way, IVS will still benefit from expanding her network in the Colombian market though they did not fit.

Finally, since sending signs of being rushed is likely perceived as disrespectful and not being genuinely interested. To show patience, in the case that IVS must leave the conversation, it is advised to make it clear that she genuinely enjoyed the conversation and looks forwards for a next one, but is unfortunately already running late for another appointment. This is effective as it can appear like IVS sacrificed a bit of extra time from her schedule to invest in nurturing the new relationship.

Follow up

Shortly after the first meeting, IVS should send an email to the Colombian travel agent to show gratitude for their time taken to meet her. The more IVS keeps in contact, the more the relationship is nourished, hence, the higher your chance of evoking a more personal feeling within the relationship. In addition, if you managed to help them connect with someone from your network, inform them about the favor in the email. It is very important to make sure it is understood as a voluntary favor (Warner, 2016). This will set the base of a potential long-term cooperative relationship, which in turn will likely facilitate IVS in obtaining the trust of the Colombian travel agents in a more efficient manner.

11.2.2 How to effectively frame the proposals to fit the decision-making approach of the Colombian travel agents

Since the first segment of the advice focuses on how to build a more effective interpersonal relationship with the Colombian travel agents, this second segment of the advice will focus on how to frame the proposals for the Colombian travel agents in a way that complements their intuitive decision-making and risk-averse characteristics.

From the research results, it was recommended to use more emotional appeals and relatable experiences as it is believed that this complements their particular way of processing information being, the associative-based processing system. In addition, substantial relevance was given to the minimizing of perceived risks. Research showed that, they have a risk-averse attitude including issues regarding trusting people. To make clear how to implement this advice, the following list of guidelines to consider when framing a proposal is developed.

- Minimize risks and provide confidence
- Make it relatable
- Tap into emotions
- Promote collaboration

It is important to remember that this advice is based on general trends derived from the research conducted, meaning it might not work the same for every Colombian travel agent.

Minimizing risks and providing confidence

Since it is important for the Colombian travel agents to try to avoid risks, when presenting the proposal, IVS should aim to make them feel confident about approving the proposal.

IVS should back up the quality of her proposal with her expert skills and years of experience operating in the industry. This will help them acknowledge her as a respectable person that knows how things work (Becker, 2004). Furthermore, IVS should give them some peace of mind by ensure them to take the personal responsibility to take care of the clients once they are abroad, including keeping the travel agent up-to-date at all times in case of any inconveniences. The more confident they feel that IVS is the right person to help them avoid their perceived risks, the faster it will be for them to approve the proposal.

Make it relatable

Considering their associative-based processing system it is important for them to be able to imagine that the trip was proved to be successful for someone else already (Williams and Miller, 2002). If you can find a testimonial about a group of clients that are similar to the travel agents' clients' demographics, the better. This will help the travel agents to envision their clients feeling satisfied during their trip.

Tap into emotions

To tap into their emotions, it is important for IVS to make it clear what benefits they could gain with the proposal provided. This does not refer to the logical and factual benefits, but to emotions and feelings the travel agents or their clients may get from the trip experience. Connick (2017) claim that, this can be facilitated by two approaches, namely, a negative and a positive approach.

The negative approach focuses on the ability your service has in help curing or preventing the travel agent from its biggest pain. For example, we will be the guardian angels of your clients when away from home.

The positive approach on the other hand focuses on the positive things the service can bring in the future for the company of the travel agents. An example can be, a life-long memorable experience for his or her clients who might spread word of mouth for months after about the travel agency. The most effective approach depends on how risk-averse the Colombian travel agent is. For

instance, in the case the travel agent is very risk-averse it is recommended to go for the negative approach.

Communicate collaboration

To show that you are a team player, words like *we* and *our client* are very effective. In relation to the bargaining, another way to show collaboration is through giving concessions, and present it as being a special offer aimed at making room for a win-win result (Becker, 2004). Hence, to do this, IVS should consider starting with a big bargaining range that allows space to give concessions.

11.2.3 Tips to deal with delays when they are already expected to happen

While the other two segments are more preventive strategies for delays, this segment focuses on how to cope with delays when they are already expected to happen. Considering that the research results indicate that IVS and the Colombian travel agents have inconsistent time orientation, it is hard to expect or hope that delays can be 100 percent prevented. The Colombian travel agents by nature have a more flexible perspective towards time schedules than does IVS. As much as IVS cannot push the Colombian travel agents too much in being on time, it is not realistic either for IVS to adjust her ways to the pace of the Colombian travel agents and still deliver her optimal quality service. Giving up her core standard values, being punctual and organized, will only build up frustrations with time and make it difficult for IVS to endure in serving the Colombian travel agents for long. For this reason, these following tips can be helpful and do not require IVS to give up her core standard values.

Choosing a date or time

Give them a deadline for a week or two before your actual deadline. Do not forget to consider the days that they are not available such as, their numerous religious celebrations and national holidays. With regards to setting a time to make a call reminder, bear in mind their long lunch hours. They happen usually between 12.00 and 14.00. Lunch time is also a prime time for the Colombians to have business meetings, this implies that the tendency for them to prolong their meetings if needed is likely to happen during the hours after lunch time (IOR, n.d.). For this reason, it is recommended to aim for calls or meetings in the morning before lunch time.

“I’ll get back to you tomorrow”

When you hear “I’ll get back to you tomorrow about it” do not feel offended if they fail to do so tomorrow. Moreover, do not tell them off on it either. For them “tomorrow” rarely actually means tomorrow, it could mean in two days or even in a week (Becker, 2004). Therefore, when you hear “tomorrow” take the chance to politely and in combination with a cooperative tone, explain your worries with regards to not being able to serve him properly if delays occur.

Being empathetic

When sending reminders, talk about what worries you in terms of the final result for *our client*. While doing that still show empathy about their hectic schedules. This will make you appear as if you are a team player and understanding, instead of, cold and self-centered.

Identify the final decision-maker

Another tip is to try to identify the final decision maker for the closing of proposal deals during the initial conversations. IVS should use the trust obtained in the relationship building, to politely ask the travel agent to let her help by letting her speak directly to the final decision-maker, if that is cause of the delay. This will increase the chances of closing the deal before IVSs’ final deadline and thus, still be able to successfully provide them the standard quality service of IVS.

Place the source of pressure on a third party

Furthermore, another tip can be to explain that the reason for the deadline is due to the pressure received by a third party that is not IVS. An example can be the limited availability of certain services desired such as, a specific hotel, attraction etc. IVS should show the travel agent that she wants to help avoid that trouble. By doing that she will appear once again cooperative, which in turn, could motivate the Colombian travel agent to do the same.

Be conscious to behave sensitively

Finally, it helps to consider that as much as the problem of flexible time standards irritates you, so does your schedule-precise standards to the Colombian travel agents. This is because both are culturally programmed differently with different rules and values. Understanding this, helps to facilitate cross-cultural negotiations.

11.3 Spreading the new skills to the rest of the team

Since Jesse Andrews is the head of the company she is also the one who deals with implementing new ideas and chasing new opportunities. Considering that serving the Colombian market is not that familiar to IVS, it is considered a new opportunity. The other employees focus more on working with familiar travel agents within their main target market being, North America. For this reason, the advice is only for Jesse to execute. Once she masters the skills she can pass it on to the rest of the team.

11.4 Conclusion

The developed cross-cultural communication strategy is not straightforward. It requires many evaluations, adaptations, time, and effort to get to something effective. For this reason, it is recommended to hire a professional cultural mediator to assist in supervising the process to guarantee the best results. Implementing the strategy enables IVS to avoid making unnecessary mistakes by helping her become more culturally aware of the differences and thus, behave in a more culturally sensitive way. Jesse is an excellent communicator, therefore, the skills training provided in the advice will not be difficult for her to take on. Successful execution of the advice will not only help to reduce the chances for delays and its subsequent difficulties, but also build stronger business relationships, which will facilitate the delivering of a smooth and reliable service to the Colombian travel agents.

11.5 Planning & organizing

	Dec '17	Jan '18	Feb'18	March '18	April '18	May '18
Block 1						
Building interpersonal relationships	Six consultation sessions; One every two weeks					
Block 2						
Framing proposals and using supportive tricks				Six consultation sessions; One every two weeks		

A multi-layered strategy

Since the research results highlighted the importance of building trust before doing business, the first segment is implemented during the first three months of the planning. In the following three months, segment two will take care of the communication during the actual negotiation. Finally, as segment three also corresponds to the negotiation process, it is put together with segment two in the planning.

The schedule

12 consultations with a professional cultural mediator will be spread over six months, one session every two weeks via Skype. Six consultations for block one and six for block two. It is advised to start the first consultation in the first week of the month, exact dates should be discussed between the two. To start the implementation process in December is ideal because, the aim is to acquire good relationships with the travel agents right before the busy season of planning trips starts, namely March. A more immediate starting date is not possible due to the barriers mentioned.

Milestones

In block one, before every session, IVS should aim to contact five new prospective Colombian travel agents. For block two IVS should aim to get minimum two proposal requests before every session. In this way, during every consultation the interactions or the proposals will be discussed, evaluated, and turned into feedback for adjustments. This will help to monitor the progress of the

skills training and encourage enough practice. The sample list in the appendix can help in selecting travel agencies in Colombia to approach.

11.6 Budget

Below is an approximate estimation of the costs to fully implement the advice. Since it is about skills training and IVS have only a limited amount of time to invest in it, the total cost is not that high. Luckily, the outcome of the implementation can be long-term benefits if implemented with genuine efforts.

Budget items	Costs per month	Total costs for complete implementation process
Skype calls (landlines) *	€ 7,87	€ 47,22
Whatsapp calls (mobiles)	€ 0	€ 0
Mediator services fee for 12 hours in total **	€ 50	€ 300

* Depending if IVS already has a skype business account the cost can be even eliminated from the budget. The cost price is taken from the official skype website (Call Colombia directly, n.d.).

** The hourly service fee for a mediator is based on an average calculation of a starter fee made by statistics bureau 2010 (Starting Salary for, 2017). Meaning, among other things, a more recent up-date of average fee, the amount of years of work experience and language skills can influence a higher price.

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13. Appendices

13.1 Preliminary research

Appendix 1: Email from client

Her experience with travel agents in Colombia.

Hi Elizabeth,

Please see my answers to your questions below:

1. Was it different to work with them as compared to North American travel agents regarding needs, expectations, communication, problem solving? If so, how was it different?

It wasn't really very different dealing with them than dealing with North American travel agents. Mostly all of them speak English.

2. Were there any complications/difficulties/barriers during the process of working with them?

Time delays. They were often slow to get back and they had different expectations of changing things.

3. What kind of positive points can you give from the experience you had of working with them? Or what did you like about working with them?

Usually they were very relaxed and pleasant to deal with. Mostly they had high-end clients and they were very courteous.

Appendix 2: Chosen drawbacks of focus

The exact drawbacks chosen to focus on in this project were delay in responses or confirmations requested by IVS and difficult or impossible requests from Colombian travel agents for changes in reservations already made or tour itineraries.

First of all, the reason for choosing these drawbacks is that for a tour operator it makes the process of making reservations a mess. Delay in responses and difficult change requests that takes many back and forth negotiations leads to a smaller chance of guaranteeing the availability of the proposed service. Its availability is time sensitive often depending on the market demand, meaning that it can become sold out. Especially during high season. This can make the closing of a deal go slower and costing more time and effort. This in turn, causes frustrations for Jesse when working with Colombian travel agents.

Second of all, when the process of organizing the trips and making reservations becomes a mess, this can reflect as having weak organizing skills and a lack of professionalism. For a tour operator to have this image within the travel sector is very unfavorable and can thus, harm the development of good business relationships.

Appendix 3: Organizational context analysis

By being present in the office of IVS on a daily basis, it was possible to collect the following summary of the current marketing efforts done by IVS.

Corporate communication efforts/activities

The concept of sustainability has been in the spotlight since about two decades ago already and has been claimed to be crucial for businesses and the environment to co-exist (Barbier, 1987, Hawken et al., 1999, Holliday et al., 2002 and World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). Jesse Andrews shares this same point of view. IVS's efforts in sustainability can be seen in its operations which also focuses on contributing to the promotion of peculiar local family-based suppliers within the tourism industry. This in turn, is exactly how Jesse Andrews started the company in the first place, by helping little towns in Italy that were not so known, to promote themselves in international markets as a travel destination. Moreover, supporting efforts in agritourism is also a part of the focus of IVS's business strategy. Jesse, believes in that Italy has much more to offer on the aspect of tourism if the local family-based businesses in the tourism

sector are given extra support in promoting themselves on a more international level. In this way both the tourism industry as well as the travelers will be able to enjoy the benefits of Italy's culture and beauty.

As the travel industry mainly offers a service or experience that is based on promises, is the possession of a good reputation a necessary factor to survive in the business. To secure a good reputation IVS focuses a lot on reviewing its suppliers in person to know for sure that what they are promoting and offering is indeed what the clients of the travel agents will get. This is also shared on IVS's social media accounts for the travel agents to be able to see Jesse's personal visits to the suppliers throughout the country. These personal visits also serve to show the travel agents that Jesse's vacation proposals can be guaranteed a good quality. Often times when Jesse herself meets up with a group of travelers she also uploads videos and pictures of these on the internet to show travel agents the travelers experiences on the trips organized by IVS. This could be considered a support for the building of trust and credibility from the point of view of the travel agents currently working or interested in working with IVS in the future.

Given that IVS is a cyber-based company, communication between IVS and the stakeholders, being travel agents and the local suppliers, highly relies on IVS's website, intranet, emails and phone calls. The customized tours are all coordinated on the intranet of IVS and result in the final form of an itinerary. The system is constantly being improved by the elimination of bugs and the development of new ways to facilitate the process of executing and coordinating the reservations in the itineraries. Jesse wishes to develop the company website in a way that makes it possible for the travel agents to directly be able to purchase tours from IVS's website, but it is not there yet. Therefore, the current process of ordering and negotiating happens solely via emails and occasional phone calls when necessary.

Jesse thinks that the current way of doing business takes much more effort and is more time consuming than she would like it to be. In the future Jesse would like to have the catalog on IVS's website linked to the supplier's website in order for the checking for availability and ordering of the services to go automatically. In this way the only process in which IVS's staff members will have to focus on is the initial phase of consultancy for the designing of the ideal itinerary for the clients of the travel agents. Nevertheless, by the system not being so developed yet, means a high

frequency of interaction between IVS and the travel agents. Which in turn means more chance to develop a strong relationship with the travel agents.

IVS's positioning is mostly based on its vast network of peculiar local family-based suppliers. Aside from that, the brand of IVS aims to come across as adventurous yet educational for the medium to high-end social class. It mostly targets medium to large-sized groups, but it also serves the single individuals, couples or small groups. As IVS operates in the niche market of customized tours, they cover a large range of vacation themes such as, honeymoons, anniversaries, singles trip, trip of friends, corporate team-building trips, etc. Last but not least, they also position themselves as quality focused. This can be proved in the way that, constant efforts are put in adding interesting touches that are currently trending to the trips designed, and also for the fact that the owner herself is constantly on the road doing check-ups of the service quality offered by the suppliers and giving personal companionship during trips to make sure the clients receive a top quality experience.

Current marketing communications of IVS

The following section covers the aspects of media used to communicate about the services offered.

First of all, all of the marketing communication efforts done so far has been done solely by the owner of IVS, Jesse Andrews.

Jesse uses several media to communicate with the market about IVS's services. The most important communication medium used is Facebook. Jesse Andrews uses her own name for the Facebook account used for IVS. This could either be perceived as being an informal approach or as branding the company on her specialized skills of designing customized trips. The presence of IVS on Facebook looks like a specialist that goes around sharing her thoughts and experiences as she goes through regular business trips and events. Most of the time Jesse finds herself traveling around the country visiting suppliers to do reviews of the accommodations and services of new or existing suppliers. During these visits Jesse does not only go through check-ups but also takes video footage and pictures to later on share these on social media platforms. Twitter, Pinterest are also used, however not as much as Facebook.

As for the messages posted on social media, they consist of a wide variety being either photos, videos or inspirational texts. Some posts show the sights of the environment or the establishments of the services to be expected. Furthermore, there are also videos providing tips about how

travelers should more efficiently use their time and money while traveling in Italy. Other posts can also include footages of Jesse in companion of the travelers enjoying the excursions organized by IVS. Last but not least, the tone used in all of these posts are positive, welcoming with a touch of poetry to represent the Mediterranean charm.

Aside from social media, a very important media of communication if not the most important is that of the company website. The company website includes all of the tour and accommodation descriptions, prices, pictures, and blogs about interesting topics on the Italian culture, cuisine, history, and nature. The links of the tour descriptions, accommodations, and other service suppliers on the company website are always included in the proposals send to travel agents thus, they are very important and a direct source of communicating about the services.

Public relations

One of the ways how IVS operates in the aspect of public relations is through the weekly newsletters. In the newsletters Jesse writes about multiple topics, to mention a few: current events such as issues on an international level having direct or indirect effect on the tourism industry, current trends, specific holidays, and messages of empowerment. These type of topics show her interest as a business person in the overall industry, team work, proactivity, and innovation. According to personal communication with Jesse (February, 2016), these newsletters attract the most prospective travel agents. They are send weekly to a list of emails of travel agents accumulated throughout the years. The purpose of this is to create and maintain a favorable image of IVS by its stakeholders and maintain a presence in their mind that will hopefully stimulate new future businesses.

In the case of negative rumors or corporate changes, Jesse uses the newsletters as well as Facebook to give direct clarifications and defend the image of IVS.

Appendix 4: Survey for professionals in the field

This survey is part of the preliminary research; particularly the interview with experts. The initial plan to conduct an interview had to be transformed into a survey due to the distance and limited time availability of the participant. The purpose of the survey was to test the degree of relevance

of the theoretical areas chosen for the theoretical framework. The survey result is presented here below.

1. How much influence do you think that difference in time perception has on delays in closing deals? (On a 7-point scale; score was 1)

- It has nothing to do with it. Travel agents who take longer to confirm proposal deals are simply unprofessional
- If a travel agent takes longer in confirming proposal deals is due to his cultural background and this should not be completely negatively judged

2. How much influence do you think trust and relationship building have on delays in closing deals? (On a 7-point scale; score was 6)

- If experience and credentials are shown in writing it's enough for me to do business
- A feeling of trust needs to be built before I do business

3. How much influence does power distance have on delays in closing deals? (On a 7-point scale; score was 1)

- Sales agents can also make decisions; leaders should share power.
- Only those in the manager's position can make decisions, leaders should hold power.

4. How much influence does information processing have on delays in closing deals? (On a 7-point scale; score was 7)

- If a person tries to persuade me in a different way than how I usually reason this has no influence on the speed in which I close deals.
- If a person tries to persuade me in a different way than how I usually reason this has no influence on the duration in which I close deals.

5. How much influence does the visible layout design and content structure of the proposal have on delays in closing deals? (On a 7-point scale; score was 3)

- Not at all
- Extremely a lot

6. Please, prioritize these factors by the most to the least probable to cause delay in closing proposal deals.

7. Could you think of another reason why delays usually occur in closing proposal deals?

In case there is a 3rd party involved. F.e. Travel Agent to DMC ..DMC to hotels and other operators .If hotels and TO's delays in answering the DMC...the Travel agent need to be put on hold for the answer.

Appendix 5: Interview for ICC expert – Question list

Topic: Difficulties in doing business within an intercultural environment.

Your opinion is needed on: the relevance of a list of probable causing factors for a diagnosis, aimed at finding the actual causes triggering a specified drawback found within the particular communication environment specified below.

Unique drawback¹ → Delays in proposal negotiations leading towards a complex coordination process, that could ultimately lead to a negative image of trustworthiness and professionalism. Especially within the industry of travel/ event management where precision is key.

Unique communication environment² → Business interaction between a (Colombian) travel agent and a (North American) DMC/tour operator. (DMC³ stands for, destination management company.) Phase of focus → negotiation phase of proposals.

You were chosen, because you have theoretical and/or practical knowledge in intercultural business communications and are familiar with the problems that tend to arise and understand the why.

Please, see page 4 “**List of definitions**” for more clarity on the referred meaning of the factors.

Differences in way of communicating

① Having the communication environment² in mind, do you think that the communication of an individual could be the cause of drawbacks¹?

If yes, to what extent do you think the way one communicates plays a role in the formation of the drawbacks¹?

Answer: Organizational structure might be an influential cause for the drawback. Silent pauses on the phone calls. There is a distinction between culture and skills. The first two are connected to culture and the others are related to skills. Dialogs and listening skills is based partly on the cultural values you were brought up with. They have a typology related to three dimensions. F.e. silence especially when you talk about making phone calls, I find that it's already difficult because how can I tell that the other person is finished, or if I am interrupting the other or especially when you have a different communication style, are you expecting to interrupt each other because that is how you show that you are listening and interested, or do you have a lot of quiet time before the other speaks because you have to think. And that's exactly the case with the Japanese and with the Finish. Silence is good and that's not an awkward thing. So yes, you are right this is interesting to consider, but you can also use hall and hall, the term is called multi active. So, the Colombians are multi active, meaning they talk through each other almost. That is again categorized together with warm, impulsive, loquacious, so you talk a lot... chaotic. Take for example in Japan we know that first they are silent and then they react, they are good listeners. So, I can imagine that if you are considering perhaps both the oral communications

styles based on cultural differences and how that is like this or it's overlapping or it's almost the same then you can identify already possible problems. In addition, if you also think about writing or using emails, that's another area. And that's also more in relation to high-low context. For example when a Colombian travel agent writes a very lengthy email the Canadian business woman would think like, can't the Colombian just get to the point? Or also when talking about business the Colombian person starts to mention stuff about his or her family. The Canadian lady would probably go like why are you talking about this, it has nothing to do with the business. But you can also look at it as you want to partly cover the problem by dimensions and then the other part with skills, and that could be connected to culture as well.

② Please check the factors related to communication style which you believe might have the strongest influence on the formation of the drawbacks¹?

- ☐ High-low context oriented
- ☐ Fast-slow messages
- ☐ Competence of dialogic listening skills
- ☐ The extent of being receiver-oriented in messages

③ Would you change or add another possible causing factor for drawbacks ¹?

☐ Yes or ☐ No.

If yes, which?

Answer: Time orientation. The polychronic/ monochronic time perception. If you're monochronic you want to do one thing after the other. The Canadian client might feel she wants everything to go in a chronological order. Another factor I can think of now is that of, when is a deal considered a deal and is a plan final. And I can imagine that for us, we are not the same, for example we Dutch are like the Canadians in that, we want everything to be well organized and have everything clear so we can be in control. However, if you're from another culture you might feel like you want to explore, experience and see how things flow by themselves.

You might also want to look at Kluckhohn, particularly to the dimension of dominating versus in harmony or subjugated. Thus, referring to your case, the Canadian client is more dominating and wants to control everything. This in turn, can be maybe linked to avoiding uncertainty. So, that is a bit confusing I feel. Looking at the different models, that they sometimes speak a little differently but they are describing the same principles. So, uncertainty avoidance or sometimes even the long-term orientation or short-term orientation they all might be related to this. But I can imagine it plays a role. And like also with the examples of when is a contract a contract. Is it when you have agreed on it by phone or do you have to sign it. Take for example the well-known example of the USA that is so different from South America or Asian countries, when it's oral it's when it's binding or personal relationships is binding. And I can imagine that for this Canadian lady it is important to know a little bit about that. Also, about trust. When do you trust each other when you do business together? Would you also say that the aspect of knowing each other personally is important? I don't know how far you want to go with your advice but you can focus

on how she can make the communication more personal despite the long distance. Maybe by having skype meetings, in that way they can at least know who she is. Best situation would be that she goes there in person.

Intercultural communications

④ In general, do you think that culture plays a role in someone's perception of trustworthiness and professionalism in a business setting? If so, could you explain how?

Answer: Very much, because certain behaviors are differently interpreted. Take for example in some cultures you have the strict separation between private and personal life, while in some it's a combination or see it as your work is your family for example.

⑤ Please check the factors which you believe has the strongest influence on a person's perspective of trustworthiness and professionalism within an intercultural environment?

If yes, to what extent can you see them playing a role? How can you describe that in visible behaviors?

Answer: Yes, interesting! So, in this way you are more talking about the professional culture behavioral styles. I recommend to use the book of bridging the gap. This book will give you a couple of examples and cover exactly the points you're mentioning here. And then it's funny that you are in... because I can imagine many chapters are all related to "okay how do you establish the relationship and then how do you make agreements.

What do you mean with the fourth one exactly? I feel like the other three factors are more interrelated to cultural aspects... how they deal with trustworthiness and professionalism and making deals, while the fourth one here is different. Yeah it might be an aspect during the negotiation. I feel it does not fit to be put together with the other ones.

I agree with the third one if you say the way they work is related to that but that's not an aspect of the making of a deal. So, it really depends on how and what areas you want to find out about. Because like you explain it, it is a sign of professionalism, of how different companies might see it differently. But you can also think about, do we have to put everything on paper or not, or written culture, or what kind of leadership, is the boss the boss and must the rest follow. Can or can they not make decisions on their own. The term is called egalitarianism. But of course, you cannot deal with all of these areas, you definitely have to choose. Another area that might be interesting can be power distance, because if the client happens to deal with bigger companies then it might be relevant for your client to know who is in charge and who should she talk to, and how to address them correctly. Should she call him mister Rodriguez, or should she call him by his first name. This area or factor would suit better next to the other three factors.

Regarding the poly/ monochronic, you can connect this with control and in harmony, along with certainty and uncertainty avoidance.

- Individualistic – collectivistic oriented

- Polychronic – monochronic time oriented
- Expected behavior for a professional to have
- Normative – contingent negotiation style (Rational or intuitive reasoning and decision making)

⑥ Would you change or add another factor that can also play a role? ☐ Yes or ☐ No.

Answer: The book of bridging the gap has also a chapter on presentation. “How to present the proposal”. Me; I think that the advice will land on that point. So how should they present the proposal more suitably, how should she best communicate her idea so that they can go much faster through the negotiation process and how they sell the proposal.

Risk management in the travel sector in this

⑦ Can you see perceived risk related to service collaboration playing a role on the drawbacks¹? ☐ Yes or ☐ No.

With service collaboration is meant the ability a tour operator or DMC³ has, in coordinating well with the end suppliers, (hotel or tour guide and considering all other external conditions as well) to deliver the services promised to the travel agent.

If yes, what examples of perceived risks (related to service collaboration) can you think of within the travel industry, that can be triggering similar drawbacks¹?

Answer: I don't have a clue. I'm not much familiar with the travel sector.

⑧ Please check the factors related to perceived risks which you believe might have the strongest influence on the formation of the drawbacks¹?

- Granting of insufficient market-related information of the country of destination
- Lack of first hand inspection of service quality provided
- Lack of sufficient relevant credentials
- Limited network of suppliers to choose from

⑨ How can you imagine the cause and effect relationship to be between perceived risk related to service collaboration and the drawbacks¹ specified above?

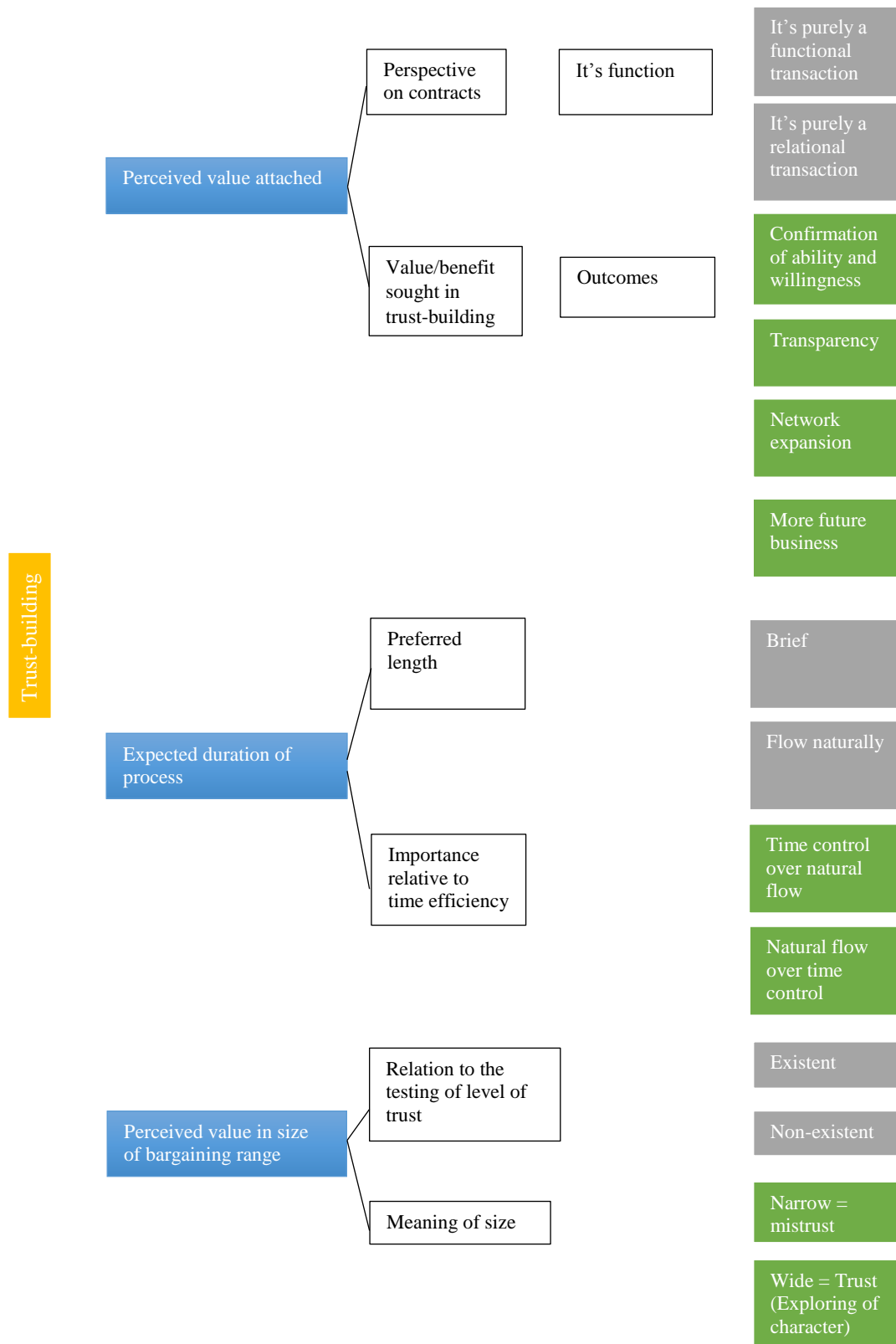
⑩ Would you change or add another possible causing factor for the drawbacks ¹?

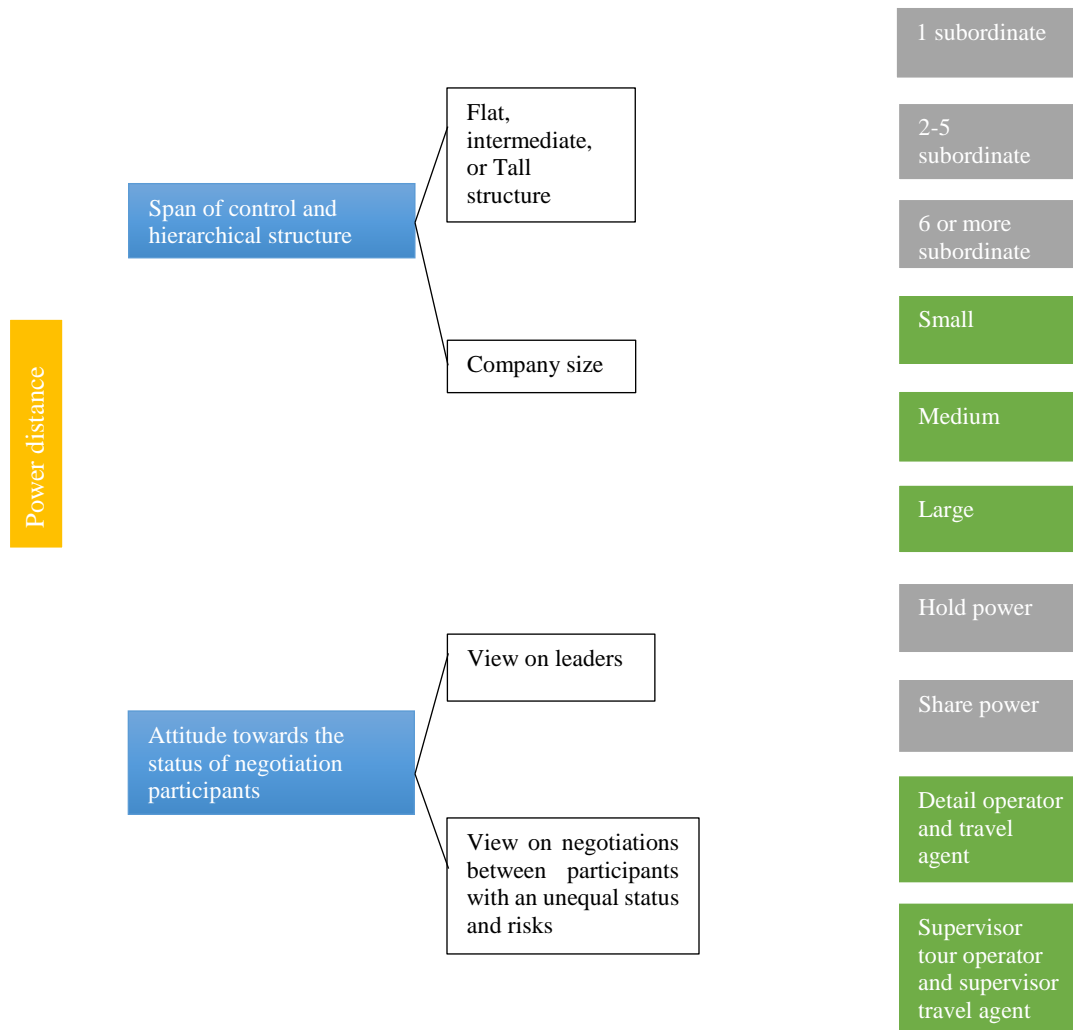
☐ Yes, ☐ No.

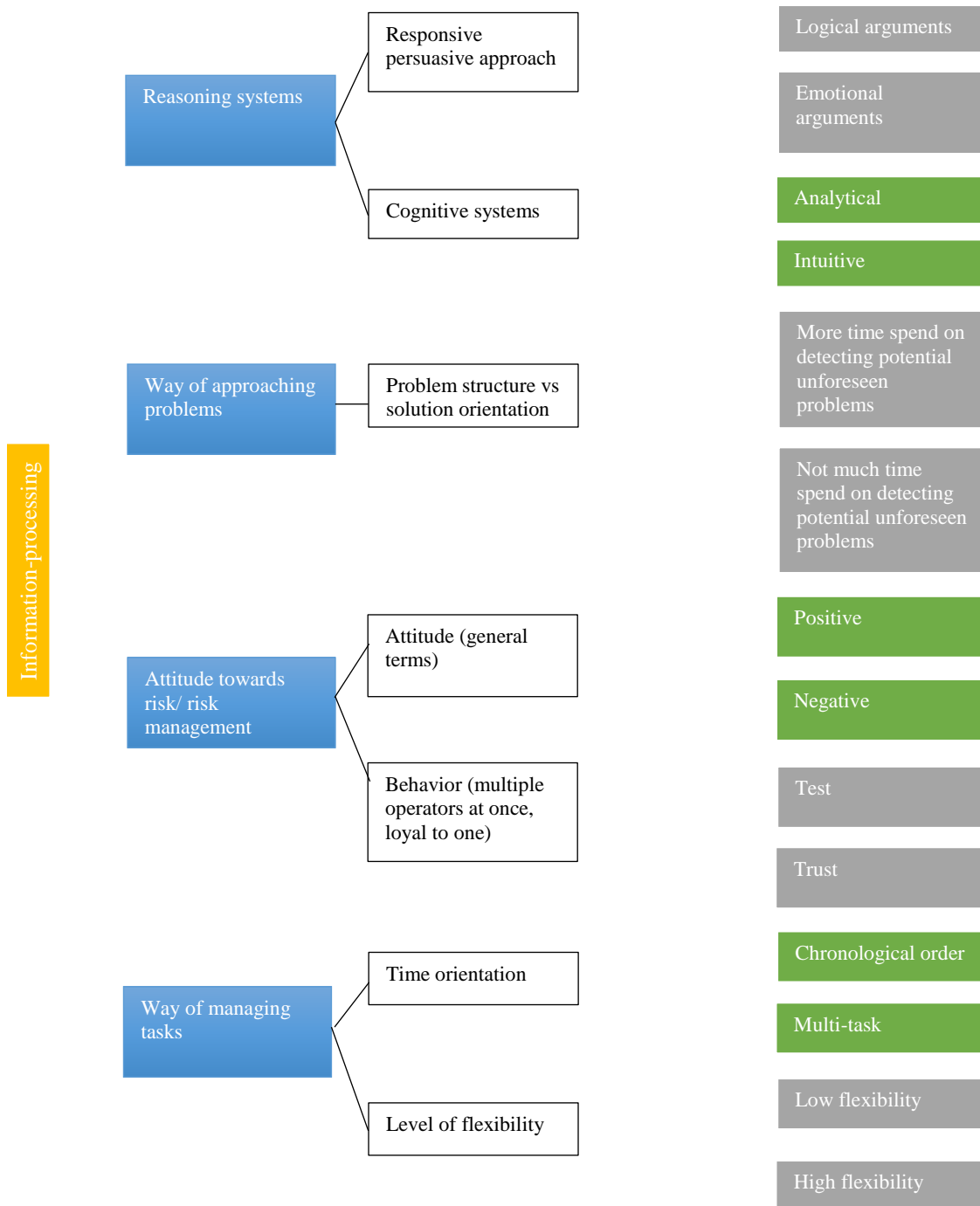
If yes, which? _____

Thank you for your contribution, it is highly appreciated.

13.2 Operationalization of key concepts







13.3 The sample list

Emails – Travel agencies in Bogota (In total 89 contacts)

info@valletours.com.co
tourexito@tourexito.com
info@thegallerytravel.com
tecniviajes@tecniviajes.com.co
contact@sampletravel.com
operaciones@solarismayorista.com
info@reyestours.com
info@restur.travel
digital@pullman.ltn.travel
pclase@outlook.com
servicio.clientes@pricetravel.com
norjuela@pelicanostours.com
servicioalcliente@ossayasociados.com.co
info@omnitours.com.co
octopus@aviatur.com.co
multiviajesltda@multiviajesltda.com
info@macondodmc.com
comercial@kiboko.com.co
itrep@itrepresentaciones.com
info@vuelokey.co
gerencia@goldtoursas.com
ventas@giraturtravel.com
konoyek@gmail.com
tusproximasvacaciones@aviatur.com
gerencia@jtr.com.co
agenciadeviajes@compensar.com
brunyrecomienda@aviatur.com
asesorvirtual@superdestino.com.co

info@gammamercadeo.com
gerencia@expoturismo.co
cruceros@discover.com.co
info@crucerosinternacionales.com
dircomercial@colreservas.com
servicioalcliente@colmundoviajes.com
cmtropical@cmtropical.com
info@cedhitours.com
josecamposgerencia@alltravelpereira.com.co
redes@atrapalo.com.co
contacto@asertouris.com
asistentedegerencia@andestours.com.co
info@alvez.com.co
informacion@allreps.com
online@bonhotel.com.co
diana.suarez@ciccolombia.travel
cotizaciones@siemprecolombia.com
cindy.batta@athalviajes.com.co
luz.reyes@athalviajes.com.co
contacto@viajesflamingo.com
landtravelltda@hotmail.com
info@trafaltar.com.co
elclanviajes@elclanviajes.com.co
marreroviajesyturismo.bogota@gmail.com
reservas@viajeprogramado.com
nr_granados@aviatur.com
contactenos@expresoviajes.com
pasajes@turismo.com
info@sudestino.com
adminturivel@panamericanaviajes.com

admon@caminantesviajesyturismo.com
c_correag@aviatur.com
agentur@agentur.ltn.travel
reservas@aerovacacionesltda.com
web.viajesalkosto@alkosto.com.co
info@360travelers.com
info@vchapinero.com
proyectos@astrotours.com.co
info@astrotours.com.co
contacto@besttravel.co
info@tourschool.com.co
exytures@hotmail.com
sistemas@contactos.com.co
infotav@turismoalvuelo.com.co
info@mercadodelturismo.com
ventas@idealtourltda.com
ventasbog@recioturismo.com
ventas1@juristours.com.co
info@pasajes.co
viajespremier@aviatur.travel
leonor.forero@aviatur.com
travesias@aviatur.com.co
juan.bonilla@aviatur.com
luz.uruena@aviatur.com.co
juan.carreno@terranetcolombia.com
quieroviajar@bluetours.com.co
clienteaviatur@aviatur.com.co
viajes@javeriana.edu.co
calderon.mariamercedes@gmail.com
gerencia@mayaturcolombia.com.co
info@overaz.com.co

Emails: Travel agencies in Medellin (In total 100 contacts)

viassa@viajesviassa.com
asesoraonline@viajesveracruz.co
reservas2@viajesgeotours.com
yduque@falabella.com.co
eupacla@eupacla.lalianxa.net
info@viajeselite.com.co
communitymanager@coomeva.com.co
servicioalcliente@travel-center.co
corporativo@terranovaviajes.com
reservas@puertadembarque.com
oficinamedellin@promotoradeturismo.com
servicio.clientes@pricetravel.com
Mundiasturinfo@une.net.co
darenas@mayorplus.com
gerenciagiratur@une.net.co
gerenciacomercial@dezimatur.com
direccioncomercial@casadecolombia.travel
l_vez@aviatur.com.co
info@viajesuniverso.com
daniela.martelo@aviatur.com
mariae.rincon@aviatur.com.co
jorge.suarezv@aviatur.com.co
monicatamayo@aviatur.com
turismomayacentro@hotmail.com
gerardoyepes@aviatur.com
deysi.lozada@aviatur.com
citytours@aviatur.com.co
info@molitur.com
iberoturdircomercial@gmail.com

info@agenciaoit.com
info@agatharepresentaciones.com.co
aerovision@aerovision.com.co
Ventas2@solmaryluna.com
ventas1@solmaryluna.com
contacto@tusanagustin.com
asesor1@viajesvisionfuturo.com
a_balcazar@aviatur.com
mariap.sanchez@aviatur.com.co
gloria.cortes1949@gmail.com
rramirez@colombiasky.com
Presiden@colombina.com
camilo.uribe@ef.com
INFO@TOURISMSERVICE.S.COM.CO
JULIANA@TOURISMSERVICES.COM.CO
info@spolontravel.com
mercadeo@viajesvillanuevalda.com
Info@vuelo-secreto.com
reservas1@viajesinteractiva.com
ventas@atododestino.com
Medellin@travelviajes.com.co
cotizaciones@siemprecolombia.com
info@allegrotours.net
reservas@planesturisticos.com
ventas@paipatours.com
info@tmrcolombia.com
novalandiatours@hotmail.com
Tiquetes@adescubrir.com
clementina.orduz@rumbosagencia.com

INFO@TRAFALGAR.COM.CO
reservas@petrareps.com
gerencia@petrareps.com
servicioalcliente@comfacundi.com.co
info@startourscolombia.com
info@columbiatours.com.pa
rivertours@une.net.co
info@viajeselite.com.co
tours@corporativolibra.com
elittour.gro@hotmail.com
eliteviajes@grupoeuropa.com
suraturltda@suramericanadeturismo.com
carmenctorres@asrepre.com
info@altacalidad.com.co
servicioalcliente@regataviajes.com.co
ventasenlinea@overpistatours.com.co
gerencia@designtravel.com.co
Toltravel@outlook.es
gerencia@mcocali.com
info@universalgroup.com.co
servicliente@jetours.com.co
info@bmrepresentaciones.com
viajesatlas@aviatur.com.co
info@optimaviajes.com.co
stephany.celemin@nexotours.com
sandra.beltran@rumbosagencia deviajes.com
diana.castillo@rumbosagencia deviajes.com
rocio.urieta@rumbosagencia deviajes.com
luzdary.marique@rumbosagencia deviajes.com
gladys.rodriguez@rumbosagencia deviajes.com

Extra Emails of travel agencies in Bogota and Medellin (In total 78 contacts)

yamile.lozano@rumbosagencia deviajes.com
alberto.martinez@rumbosagencia deviajes.com
yesmith.ruiz@rumbosagencia deviajes.com
alexandra.gomez@rumbosagencia deviajes.com
angelica.gualdron@rumbosagencia deviajes.com
alejandriaviajesyturismo@hotmail.com
jlopez@onvacation.com
servicios@univiajes.com.co
gerenciamaresysol@gmail.com
peregrinosagencia deviajes@gmail.com
agencia deviajest@gmail.com
mundoviaje.ibague@gmail.com
heilerfc@yahoo.es
servicioalcliente_mzl@viajescolombiasinfronteras.com.co
sandra@turismoplayablanca.com
viaticumtornus@gmail.com
info@evolucionviajes.com
clientes@planesturisticos.com
gavitur.viajes@gmail.com
gaviturismo@gmail.com
gavitur.turismo@gmail.com
info@awake.travel
info@aeroclass.net
chamana25@hotmail.com
geob80@hotmail.com
javierturs@hotmail.com
gerencia@viajesemantours.com.co
vanstour33@gmail.com
gereson-cg@hotmail.com
gerencia@designtravel.com.co
info@colombiaviptavel.com

noticucuta@yahoo.com
alejandra.cechagua@ciccolombia.travel
traveltourscolumbia@gmail.com
pelikanostours@hotmail.com
agenciacapitur@hotmail.com
planetaazulcolombia@hotmail.com
callepj@yahoo.com
ecorientados@hotmail.com
cartagenadivers@hotmail.com
gerencia@travesiadorada.com
gerencia@travesiadorada.com
ernestoastudillo76@hotmail.com
pacoatravel@gmail.com
sofitours1@hotmail.com
juank_76_9@hotmail.com
administracion@luzverde.com.co
alasagencia@gmail.com
contabilidad1@bestavel.travel
cristina.castillo@capitaltravel.co
traveldesigneragencia@gmail.com
info@travelfusioncolombia.com
gustavotravel@hotmail.com
directora@terramayorista.com
gerencia@sonaryvolar.com
gerencia@slowtravelcolombia.com
maira.molina@asiatraveling.com.co
ndiaz@abordando.net
mblanco@diazreus.com
gerenciaviarcla@gmail.com

contabilidad@multitravel.com.co
norjuela@pelicanostours.com
camilo.torres.lozano@gmail.com
gerencia@eurotravelcolombia.com
aviajarmayoreo@hotmail.com
transamerica@viajestransamerica.com
grancolombianadeturismo@hotmail.com
asesor@grancolombianodeturismo.com
gerencia@grancolombianodeturismo.com
manager@volantis.com.co
travelogistics1@gmail.com
openskytravelagency@gmail.com
asesoriasnatan@gmail.com
martham.martinez@solways.co
ventas@solways.co
ventasmedellin@solways.co
ventascali@solways.co
comercialbga@solways.co
gerencia@giraturtravel.com
reservas@giraturtravel.com
ventas@giraturtravel.com
gerenciagiratur@une.net.co
operacionesgiratur@une.net.co
dicomercial@andoviajando.com.co
viajesofertur@gmail.com
tusuenoincluido@gmail.com
info@viajeselite.com.co
info@elitetravelve.com
dianagedeon@gematours.com
turitavel1@hotmail.com

Facebook page links of travel agencies in Bogota and Medellin (In total 240 companies)

https://www.facebook.com/pg/Selecta-Travel-272196916457987/about/?ref=page_internal
https://www.facebook.com/travelombia/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/ColombiaExploraSAS/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/vipstudent.travel/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/DisfrutaColombiaGroup/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/arenna.agencia/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/megatravelcolombia/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Traveltourscolombia/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/viajarporcolombiayelmundoo/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/teenttravelcolombia/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/AgenciaDeViajesTierraSMaresDeColombia/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Multidestinostravel/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/agenciaecotourcolombia/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/oasistravelmedellin/?ref=br_rs
<https://www.facebook.com/FenixTravelCol/>
https://www.facebook.com/AwakeAdventures/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/TAVquince/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Emporio-Travel-152527828147294/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/GlobalTravelSA/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/MerakiColombiaTravel/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/volemos.co/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/TurismoAndinoEspecialesSas/?ref=br_rs

https://www.facebook.com/caribbeantravelcolombia/?ref=br_rs
<https://www.facebook.com/Visiting-World-1564205650520888/>
https://www.facebook.com/RainbowTravelBugA/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/santorinigroup/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/agenciatourismservicios/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/porcolombiayelmundotoureventos/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/greenvaation/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/turinco.co/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Agencia-de-viajes-Planes-y-Destinos-Colombia-104411289620916/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/caribestoursintl/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/NilsonTours/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/AllWaysTravelCol/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/viajes.todoincluido.7/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/BplTravel.sas/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/TRAVEL-AND-SERVICE-SAS-135581749884080/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/alternativetravelcartagena/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/destinojetcolombia/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Tolitur.Ibague/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/ClubtoursAgenciaDeViajes/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/coltravelexpress/?ref=br_rs

Facebook page links of travel agencies in Bogota and Medellin

<https://www.facebook.com/AgenciaDeViajesLineTours/>
https://www.facebook.com/viveencolombiacali/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Cic-Colombia-Mayorista-De-Turismo-859535360728127/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/AGENCIADEVIAJES.AMERICAN.TOURS/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/pg/vuelosyvacacionesagenciadeviajes/about/?ref=page_internal
https://www.facebook.com/travelcolombiatours/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/TheWorldTravelViajesYEstudiosEnElExterior/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/COLORtravelCOLOMBIA/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/pg/PacoaTravel/about/?ref=page_internal
https://www.facebook.com/Viajes-y-Turismo-Lucero-687318871377473/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/viajesdepuebloenpueblo/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/interviajespopayan/?ref=br_rs
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/viajesazcolombia/about/>
https://www.facebook.com/travelviajesgroupcolombia/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/AgenciaDeViajesLetsGoTravel/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/OnVacationPlanes/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/lulocolombiatravel/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/turismocarlos/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/viajescircular/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/viajesgeotours/?ref=br_rs

https://www.facebook.com/colworldtour/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/LuxuryExperiencesColombia/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Viajes-cartagena-tour-576255595857175/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/viajanmundo/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Agencias-de-Viajes-en-Colombia-1546454685598304/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/cafetourscolombia/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/TravelyTravel/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/ColombiaSky/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/AgenciasDeViajesMedellin/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/buenviajetourscali/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/pg/SPECIAL-TOURS-SA-132355346850480/about/?ref=page_internal
https://www.facebook.com/visalud.travel/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/GlobalTeen/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/viajesgoldentravel/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/vuelosecreto/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Colombiasurftravel/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/viajesparaisocolombia/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Turismo-por-colombia-tres-132196683558661/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Viajes-Mar-y-Tour-Ipiales-108987602580281/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Colombia-LSM-673562486017767/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/avrutas/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/comercializadorajetours/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/travelcenter/?ref=br_rs

Facebook page links of travel agencies in Bogota and Medellin

https://www.facebook.com/FuerzaDeltaMayorista/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/SOMERTUR-agencia-de-viajes-153198521415013/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/ExcursionesGranAventura/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/ViajesAvialoi/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/globalmagicaltravelsas/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Aeromundotours/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/GouTravelAgencia/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/adventuresagencia/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/travelsolutionscolombia/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/ndturismo/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/turismoconsentidobogota/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/AerollanosYopal/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/AstrOceantravel/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/viajesclubp/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/citytoursviajes/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/citytoursviajes/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/academictravelcolombia/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/tropicaltraveltoursjamundi/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Avioteles.Avioteles/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/asttur/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/pasabordocolombia/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/TravelFactoryCounter/?ref=br_rs

https://www.facebook.com/travelyservices/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/turismomonarca/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/turismo.atododestino/?ref=br_rs
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/Openworldagency/about/>
https://www.facebook.com/Viajes-de-15-113431898682163/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/quinceaneras.jetours/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/uniquecolombiasas/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/VivamosColombiaTravel/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/ColombianTourist/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/chictours/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Proyectostours/?ref=br_rs
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/Typology-Travel-Agency-137896986333479/about/>
https://www.facebook.com/Colombianosviajandoporelmundo/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Destinos-y-Planes-agencia-de-viajes-1117211348306496/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/LeapingTo/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/spgtravelsas/?ref=br_rs
andres.aleman@colombiaextrema.co
https://www.facebook.com/pg/AventuraExtrematravel/about/?ref=page_internal
https://www.facebook.com/TurismoAlVuelo/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Turismo-Paranormal-1829848123908362/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/TravelGestionProfesionalDeViajes/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/momondodescuentos/?ref=br_rs

Facebook page links of travel agencies in Bogota and Medellin

https://www.facebook.com/TravelFactoryCounter/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/ColmundoViajes/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/PromoviajesCali/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Viajes-D-Colombia-1506836166254888/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/origenestours/?ref=br_rs
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/JuanchoTravel/about/>
https://www.facebook.com/AmericanTravel.Att/?ref=br_rs
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/camaleontravelibague/about/>
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/VickyBuitragoViajes/about/>
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/Primaventur/about/>
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/SINGULAR-LUXURY-TRAVEL-DESIGNERS-212882372076864/about/>
https://www.facebook.com/conexionesydestinosltda/?ref=br_rs
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/AgenciasDeViajesPeireira/about/>
https://www.facebook.com/pg/alcaribetravel/about/?entry_point=about_section_header&ref=page_internal
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/DestinyTravelColombia/about/>
https://www.facebook.com/megaviajesco/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Vuelese/?ref=br_rs
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/cptravels/about/>
https://www.facebook.com/pg/RealpeTravel/about/?entry_point=about_section_header
https://www.facebook.com/pg/fystours/about/?entry_point=about_section_header
https://www.facebook.com/viloriatraveltours/?ref=br_rs

<https://www.facebook.com/pg/turismoendubai/about/>
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/gilberpopayan/about/>
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/viajesmundoturista/about/>
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/Viaja-por-Colombia-y-el-Mundo-15A%C3%B1eras-1657935354441333/about/>
https://www.facebook.com/pg/ViajesRabbit/about/?entry_point=about_section_header
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/saptravelandturism/about/>
https://www.facebook.com/Viajes-y-Cruceros-Colombia-325051210931805/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/masviajespasto/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Excursiones-de-Colombia-y-Am%C3%A9rica-139114542811773/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/pg/Viajes-Inversa-135899719797760/about/?entry_point=about_section_header&ref=page_internal
https://www.facebook.com/pg/Viajes-Inversa-135899719797760/about/?entry_point=about_section_header&ref=page_internal
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/turismoversalles/about/>
https://www.facebook.com/overproturismo/?ref=br_rs
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/ViajesZeppelinCo/about/>
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/rumboviajesyturismo/about/>
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/viajes.helitur/about/>
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/traveldreamscol/about/>
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/JafTravelColombia/about/>
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/viajayvivecolombia.com.co/about/>

Facebook page links of travel agents in Bogota and Medellin

<https://www.facebook.com/pg/School-Travel-1019283088109110/about/>
https://www.facebook.com/Tovyt.Tours.Cali/?ref=br_rs
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/jirehtravelco/about/>
https://www.facebook.com/360Travelers/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/asistouragenciadeviajes/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/viajesinvisa/?ref=br_rs
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/jupawiss/about/>
https://www.facebook.com/logiturviajes/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/chturismo/?ref=br_rs
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/PBX3512707/about/>
https://www.facebook.com/magicalcolombia/?ref=br_rs
<https://www.facebook.com/DecameronColombia/>
https://www.facebook.com/PaqarinaGoTravel/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/AgenciaDeViajesSunshineTravel/?ref=br_rs
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/Viajapues.co/about/>
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/Reyes-Tours-Bogota-Colombia-122978927752297/about/>
https://www.facebook.com/travelgallerypr/?ref=br_rs
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/AgenciasDeViajesBogota/about/>
https://www.facebook.com/travelstc/?ref=br_rs
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/paradiseviajesyturismo/about/>
https://www.facebook.com/VieturOperadorMayorista/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Viajes-Verano-Tours-1801042320121296/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/viajesvisionfuturo/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/tourchieventos.sas/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/tourstocolombia/?ref=br_rs

https://www.facebook.com/pg/turismomagico.com.co/about/?entry_point=about_section_header&ref=page_internal
https://www.facebook.com/viajesmrtrip/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/ntcturismo/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/tasajerotours/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/optours/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/rextravelcolombia/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Empaqueyvamonos/?ref=br_rs
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/lymtours1/about/>
https://www.facebook.com/arenarosatours/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/APGcolombia/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Por-El-Mundo-SAS-1546557708986118/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/pg/ProvidenciaTravel/about/?entry_point=about_section_header&ref=page_internal
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/Agencia-de-Viajes-Quitasol-648072705397288/about/>
https://www.facebook.com/Tropitours-Colombia-673524422666212/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Turixmo-Colombia-SAS-468452759888703/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/www.colombiaexpedition.co/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/goldvacations/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/agenciaviagemosltada/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/opentravelvyt/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/viajescollege/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Living-Travel-476681549130646/?ref=br_rs

Facebook page links of travel agencies in Bogota and Medellin

https://www.facebook.com/Agencia-De-Viajes-Travel-Y-Ticket-1411921582443534/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/vivasuntravel/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/gototravel.agencia/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/PAQUETES-TURISTICOS-COLOMBIA-121873861221695/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/viveturismopopayan/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/EXCURSIONESFROMGRADOSONCE/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/travelresorts/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/tripmediacol/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/KatiosTravel/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/viajesmundialcali/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/RainbowTravelCali/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/AGENCIADEVIAJESYTURISMOVLADETUR/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/internationaltraveleducation/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/Mediterraneo-Travel-Resorts-1048825668491486/?ref=br_rs
https://www.facebook.com/studiotravelcolombia/?ref=br_rs
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https://www.facebook.com/People-Travel-1627014124196407/?ref=br_rs

13.4 Survey Questions

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

- Yes
- No

Which of the following more closely matches your job title?

- Intern
- Front-line agent (travel consultant)
- Manager
- President/ owner
- Other

Trust-building

Perceived value attached

1. What is the most important value to you in building trust?
 - A confirmation of the other person's ability and willingness to deliver the task well
 - More future businesses together
 - Expansion of one's network
 - The encouragement for transparency from both sides (the strive for a win-win situation)
 - Other
2. What is your view on contracts of negotiations with DMCs and tour operators? (5-point scale)
 - Negotiations are purely a functional transaction bonded by a contract.
 - Negotiations are purely a relational transaction between people.
3. What do you think about the influence of the relationship within a negotiation process? (5-point scale)
 - The feeling I have with the other person doesn't matter much. The contract is enough to serve protection.
 - If I don't get a good feeling of trust, the contract is not enough. I can't close a deal.

Expected duration of process

4. What is your view on the ideal duration of trust building? (5-point scale)
 - The building of trust with the other person should remain brief. Trust is already established in the contract.
 - The building of trust needs time and should flow naturally, not rushed. Trust is built by interacting with the other.

5. What is your view on the importance of trust building and being time efficient? (5-point scale)
- To manage your time efficiently is more important than to nurture business relationships.
 - To manage your time efficiently is not as important as to nurture business relationships.

Perceived value in size of bargaining range

6. Can you see a link between the size of bargaining range in negotiations and trust building?
- Yes.
 - No.
7. If yes, what does the size of the bargaining range mean to you? (5-point scale)
- I expect it to be narrow, and may well mistrust a person that moves too far from the entry point.
 - I expect it to be big, as it's a process to be enjoyed and a good opportunity to assess the other's intention.

Decision-making

Span of control and hierarchical structure

8. What is the size of your company?
- Small (less than 50 employees)
 - Medium (between 50 to 250 employees)
 - Large (more than 250 employees)
9. How many subordinates do you or your supervisor have in your company?
- 1 subordinate
 - 2-5 subordinates
 - 6-10 subordinates
 - 11 or more subordinates

Attitude towards the status of the negotiation participants

10. What is your view on the leaders in your company? (5-point scale)
- Leaders should share power; and trust subordinates and their responsibility to make correct decisions on proposals themselves
 - Leaders should hold power; Proposals need to first be approved by the supervisor, since they hold the responsibility and authority
11. What is your view on cross-level negotiations? (5-point scale)
- Negotiations should not always be closed by two persons from the same hierarchical level; a staff member (within the DMC or tour operator company) who worked directly on the trip proposal ideas and details is also able to close the deal with the travel agent

- Negotiations should always be closed by two persons from the same hierarchical level; a low-level staff member is not in the position to close a deal.
12. What is your attitude towards the changing of negotiation partner in the course of a negotiation period?
- Negative, the trust and bond from interactions with previous partner will be for nothing.
 - Neutral.
 - Positive, business is business, it's not a problem as long there's a contract.

Information-processing

Reasoning systems

13. Which one identifies your way of reasoning to proposal suggestions the most? (5-point scale)
- Even if I instinctively feel a proposal is right, I still need to test every step in the argument before I can commit myself.
 - If I instinctively feel a proposal is right, I usually don't need to test every single step in the argument before I commit.
14. What will more likely convince you regarding description proposals? (5-point scale)
- Logical arguments supported by plain facts
 - Emotionally appealing arguments accompanied by intriguing contexts

Approach to problem-solving

15. What tends to be your approach to problem solving the most? (5-point scale)
- I prefer to focus more on identifying and understanding the problem first, in order to solve it
 - I prefer to go more directly to the point and focus more on searching for the potential solutions to the problem
16. How do you analyze proposal suggestions? (5-point scale)
- When analyzing proposals, I tend to put more time and focus in detecting any potential unforeseen problems
 - When analyzing proposals, I tend to put more time and focus on the degree to which the suggested items in the proposal fit the wishes of the client.

Attitude towards risk management

17. What is your attitude towards risk? (5-point scale)
- The future is either way uncertain. Bigger risks, lead to bigger gains
 - Uncertainty should be avoided. The more control you have on the outcomes, the better.
18. How do /would you deal with customized proposal requests? (5-point scale)
- I always have to check offers of multiple DMCs before presenting a proposal to the client

- If there is a DMC or tour operator whom I already have trust in, I stick to its specialized services

Way of managing tasks

19. How do you deal with tasks? (5-point scale)

- I deal with one task at a time in a sequential fashion
- I have several tasks running at the same time

What is your view on your control over flexibility? (5-point scale)

- I am not flexible at all. I value schedules and being time efficient.
- I am very flexible. I value quality relationships and do not take schedules too strictly.

20. Prioritize these 8 factors by the most to least probable to cause delays in closing proposal deals with DMCs.

Prioritize these 8 factors by the most to least probable to cause delays in closing proposal deals with DMCs. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Way of processing information	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Decision-making policy of the travel agent's organization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of layout design and structure	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Multiple proposal offers open on the side with more DMCs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Confirmations from the end clients	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Failure in building trust	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Confirmations from 3rd parties within the tourism supply chain	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Unprofessionalism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>