**The Assignment**:

You have been hired as a consultant for HealCo, a prominent healthcare provider based in San Francisco, USA, and AI TechMed, a leading AI firm from Seoul, South Korea. HealCo and AI TechMed have just announced plans to merge, aiming to revolutionize healthcare through the integration of AI in various medical practices.

Despite the potential benefits of this collaboration, the two companies are already noticing significant communication issues. For instance, during a critical meeting, the HealCo team suggested a change to the patient assessment portal, only to receive silent, seemingly passive responses from the AI TechMed team. Likewise, team members at AI TechMed continue to ask questions about changes that HealCo thought were long settled. The communication issues between teams have caused tension during meetings and a decrease in decision-making efficiency, making it clear that these cultural differences must be addressed for the merger to be successful.

The AI TechMed's team is accustomed to a communication style where silence, subtleties, and indirect expressions or statements play a vital role; the directness and immediacy of HealCo's approach feels too brusque and potentially disrespectful. This stark difference in communication styles is causing both teams to feel increasingly frustrated and disconnected.

You've been hired as a consultant to help HealCo and AI TechMed overcome potential cultural communication barriers that could hinder their successful collaboration. They've requested two recommendations to address these issues and foster an effective, collaborative environment.

Some questions to consider when making recommendations:

* What are the potential barriers, given the different communication styles? Remember that both offices speak English, so language isn’t an issue.
* What strategies can be used to foster mutual respect and understanding between the teams, bridging the cultural gap?
* How should the companies implement your recommendations?
	+ What do your recommendations look like in practice?
	+ Be detailed on how you can fix the problem by providing examples from your research.

**Your task:** Compose a 2-page, single-spaced, 12-point font, business brief providing HealCo and AI TechMed with two recommendations for a smooth merger, considering their cultural differences. Keep in mind that you are a consultant, and your role is to recommend, not to dictate actions. The clients would like 1" margins for the document.

**Note:** You will need to cite 4 different sources in APA on your references page. Your references page will not count towards the 2-page requirement. When citing sources, use parenthetical citations (see Publication Manual of APA 6.11-21), not footnotes. The readings cited below are all in APA format, but remove the hyperlinks above each source when you cite.

**Sources:**

We **strongly** recommend reading [Erin Meyer’s The Culture Map (2014)](https://onesearch.uark.edu/permalink/01UARK_INST/573n21/cdi_askewsholts_vlebooks_9781610392594) pgs. 195-218. (You can access this text through our university library at https://libraries.uark.edu/).

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