

# Cultural Differences & Similarities

## 2017 MH Conference



Working in Multicultural Korean Environments

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What day of a week a chicken hates the most?

Day of a week	In Korean	Meaning
Monday	Weoul	Moon
Tuesday	Hwa	Fire
Wednesday	Soo	Water
Thursday	Mok	Tree
Friday	Geum	Gold
Saturday	Towh	Earth
Sunday	Eel	Sun



It may not be understood at first, but, whenever it is appropriate, please Share your rich heritage, story, and your culture. And build a relationship with those who are different.

# What is Culture?

*Southern  
Hospitality*

Korean/Asian  
Culture,  
Tradition, Custom,  
Convention

Merriam-Webster (*among many definitions*):

- ▶ the integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior that depends upon the capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeed;
- ▶ the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group;
- ▶ the characteristic features of everyday existence shared by people in a place or time;
- ▶ the set of values, conventions, or social practices associated with a particular field, activity, or societal characteristic;

# Accepting the differences:

- ▶ A customary action in a particular group may not be a customary action in another group.
- ▶ A sign of RESPECT in one group can be a sign of DISRESPECT in another group.
- ▶ We may not be able to understand a reason, learn the differences, and rather ACCEPT THE DIFFERENCES.

# Bill Gates disrespects Korean President Park



*Bill Gates accused of being rude and disrespectful to South Korean President Park*

Picture of meeting splashed on front of national newspapers



# Proper Handshake

Microsoft CEO Bill Gates



April 23, 2013

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg



June 19, 2013

# Body Language: DON'Ts

Putting your hands  
in pockets

Not-ready...

Anti-collaborative

Anti-social...

Not-interested...



Leaning on one  
foot or leaning  
against an object?

Rebellious??



# Hand Gesture: Come Here please



# Hand Gesture: Pointing Finger

Do not use any  
of your fingers  
to point at a person.





# How a Korean points to get an attention?



# What is common



1986 President Reagan 75 years old  
Newt Gingrich 43 years old

2005 President Bush 59 years old  
French President Chirac 67 years old





## Body Language for RESPECT: DON'Ts

Crossing legs appears to be arrogant or over confident.

Laying back/ reclining back or putting legs on the table appears to be condescending, or not interested

In the view of an elder.



## Body Language for RESPECT: DON'Ts

Don't rest your chin on your hand.

You're boring...

You're not worthy of my focus...

I'm not interested in you...

**Good posture is the best!**



Are you paying attention?  
We have eye-contact.

**However,** Staring at an elder, or  
Looking at an elder's eyes straight  
Means Challenging the status or  
authority



**Who goes first?**  
*Unless you're opening the door*

# Yield first

*Be a Southern gentleman who practices a good Southern manner.*

- ✓ Let Elders/ Supervisors always go first
- ✓ Let them sit down first at a table
- ✓ Let them pick their silverware first
- ✓ Let them lead first
- ✓ Let them enter or exit first
- ✓ But YOU open & hold the door first
- ✓ But YOU get up first (*from a chair*)
- ✓ But YOU greet first
- ✓ But YOU acknowledge other presence first
- ✓ But YOU do NOT stand out



A White lie or Humbleness?

NO THANK YOU...  
Even if you want it.



## Virtue of Yield

Yield **twice** before accept.

*What you want is offered to you:*

1<sup>st</sup> yield for the person who offers it.

2<sup>nd</sup> yield for others who is nearby.

3<sup>rd</sup> accept it humbly.



# Virtue of Tolerance

**DON'T STAND OUT**

Tolerance  
Forbearance  
Patience  
Self-Control  
Discipline  
Endure suffering

*Seclusive Korean culture  
Causes a Problem for  
improvement*



Don't be  
opinionated



# A woman in Korean history

In the past:

1. A wise mother - \_\_\_\_\_.
2. A polite wife - \_\_\_\_\_
3. A financial manager of the household
4. An obedient daughter - \_\_\_\_\_

Today:

1. A tiger mother - \_\_\_\_\_
2. A working wife - \_\_\_\_\_
3. Only one or two children regardless sex - \_\_\_\_\_
4. Highly educated women - \_\_\_\_\_



## A woman in Korean history

In the past:

1. A wise mother - a mother is respected.
2. A polite wife - a wife is expected to care for the husband
3. A financial manager of the household
4. An obedient daughter - a daughter should listen to parents

Today:

1. A tiger mother - educating children is #1 priority
2. A working wife - double income - equal management
3. One or two children regardless sex - a spoiled daughter
4. Highly educated women - pursue professional career



## SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY

# Sweet Home Alabama

### 1. Politeness

- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_;
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_!

### 2. Good home cooking

- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_ SOUL-satisfying \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Kindness & Helpfulness

- ✓ No strangers, \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_, and Take TIME to help others

### 4. Charm - witty, considerate \_\_\_\_\_,

### 5. Charity - do unto others \_\_\_\_\_, but without expecting reciprocation.



## SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY

# Sweet Home Alabama

### 1. Politeness

- ✓ Yes, ma'am; No, sir;
- ✓ please; thank you!

### 2. Good home cooking

- ✓ Expect to have guests for SOUL-satisfying dinner anytime

### 3. Kindness & Helpfulness

- ✓ No strangers, just friends we haven't met yet
- ✓ Opening homes and hearts, and Take TIME to help others

### 4. Charm - witty, considerate to everyone,

### 5. Charity - do unto others as you'd have them do unto you, but without expecting reciprocation.



# Confucius 5 Relationships

*Hierarchical yet bonding relationships*

Harmonious society when people accept place in society

1. Ruler & Subject - \_\_\_\_\_
2. Father & Son - \_\_\_\_\_
3. Husband & wife - \_\_\_\_\_
4. Elder & younger - \_\_\_\_\_
5. Friend & friend - \_\_\_\_\_



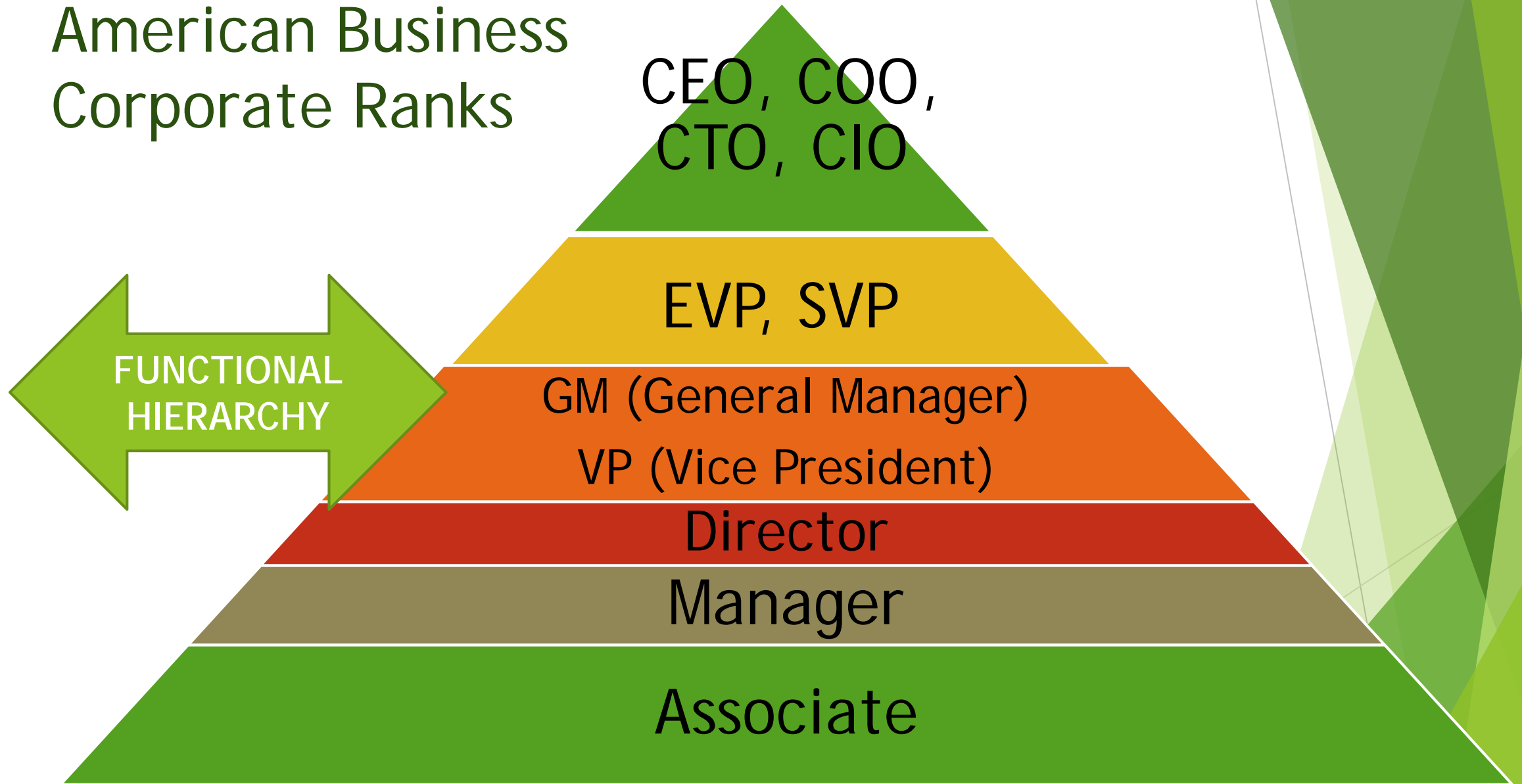
# Confucius 5 Relationships

*Hierarchical yet bonding relationships*

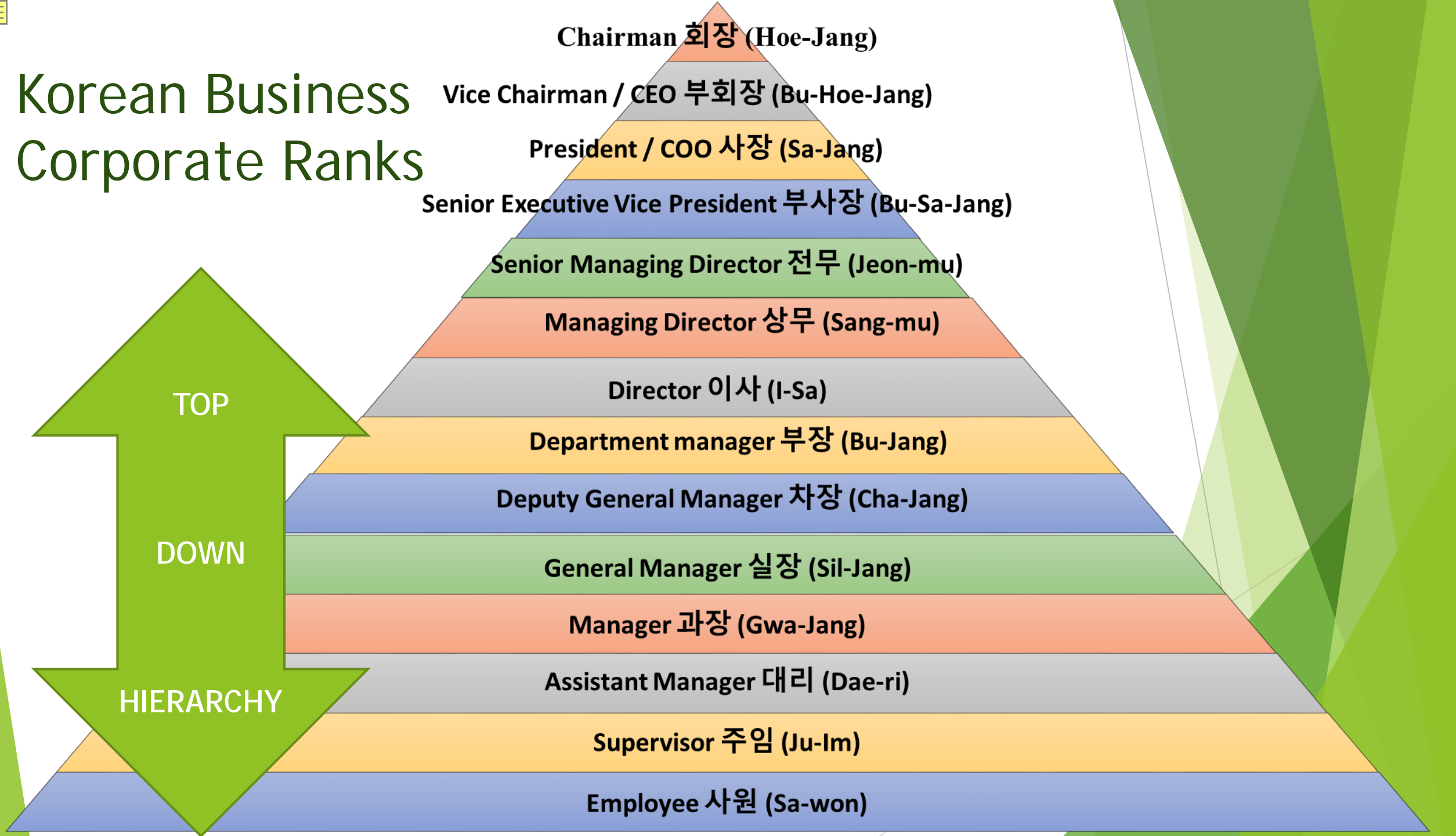
Harmonious society when people accept place in society

1. Ruler & Subject - LOYALTY by obedience
2. Father & Son - STRONG LOVE by example
3. Husband & wife - MUTUAL RESPECT by differentiation
4. Elder & younger - ORDER & DISCIPLINE by respect
5. Friend & friend - TRUST by honesty

# American Business Corporate Ranks



# Korean Business Corporate Ranks





# Working Relationship

Harmonious working environment  
when people accept place

1. Ruler & Subject - \_\_\_\_\_
2. Elder & younger - \_\_\_\_\_
3. Friend & friend - \_\_\_\_\_

- ✓ **Etiquette -  
polite always**
- ✓ **Attire -  
Business  
formal/ casual**
- ✓ **Greeting - be  
the first one  
who greets!**

# Business Culture

Building a  
relationship via  
socializing is  
important.  
Getting to know  
one another  
over FOOD &  
DRINKS



addlayer. Team member dinner. 2007. Image. flickr. 12 November 2015. <<https://www.flickr.com/photos/addlayer/461434786>>



No Privacy?

## General Resume form of Korean companies

Photo

Place a recent picture (within 6 months) here.	Name in Korean		Name in Chinese characters	
	Romanized name		Identification #	
	E-mail Address		Cell Phone #	
	Home Address			
	Phone # (Home)		Date of Birth	

Date of Birth

School	Major	Term	Location	Grade
High school				
College				
University				
Graduate School				

ALL Family members' Detail:  
Name, age, occupation, position, etc.

Work Experience			
Place of work	Term	Job responsibilities	Title

Relation to you	Name	Age	Co-Residence	Occupation	position	Etc.

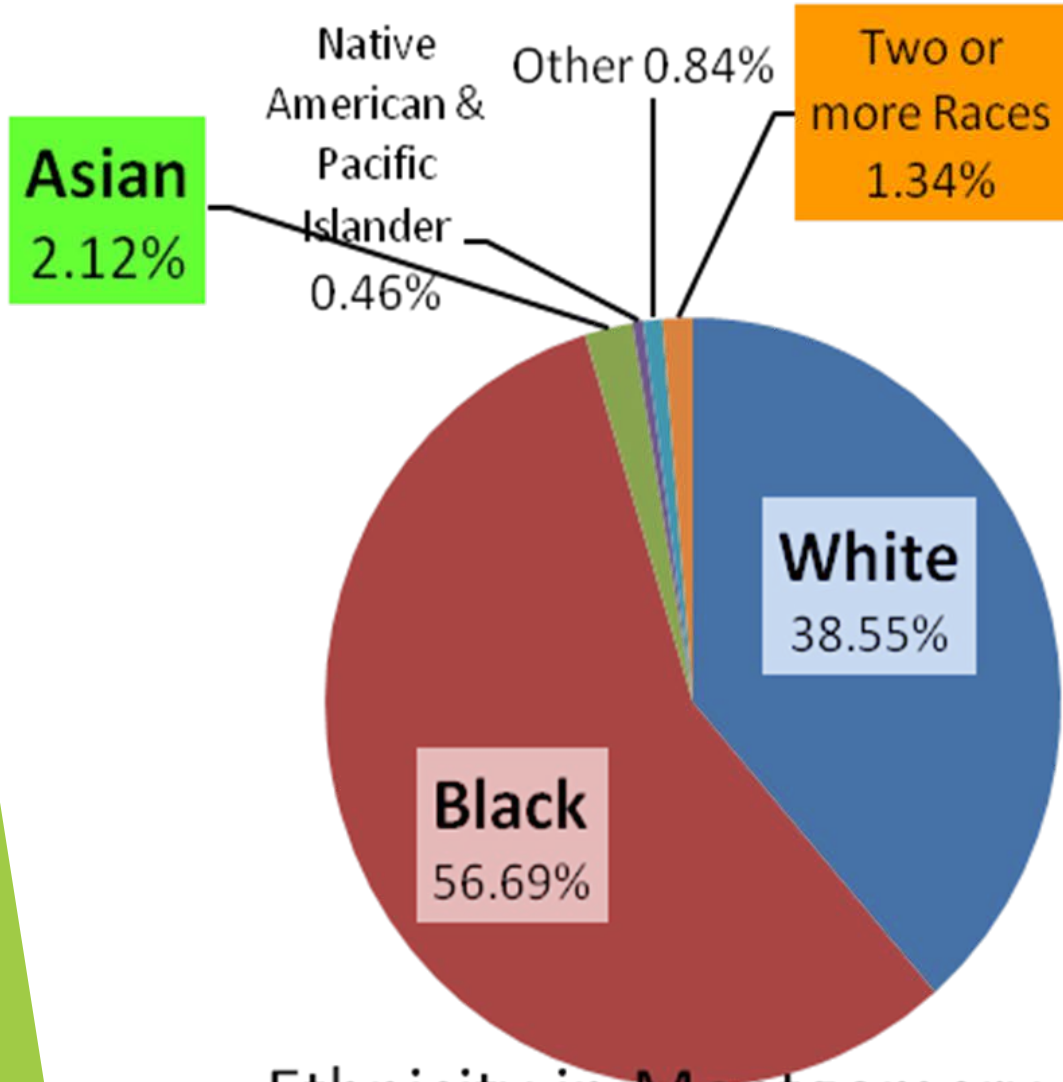
Personal info:  
Height, weight, etc.

Personal Information		
Height		
Weight		
Eye sight	Left	Right
Chronic disease		

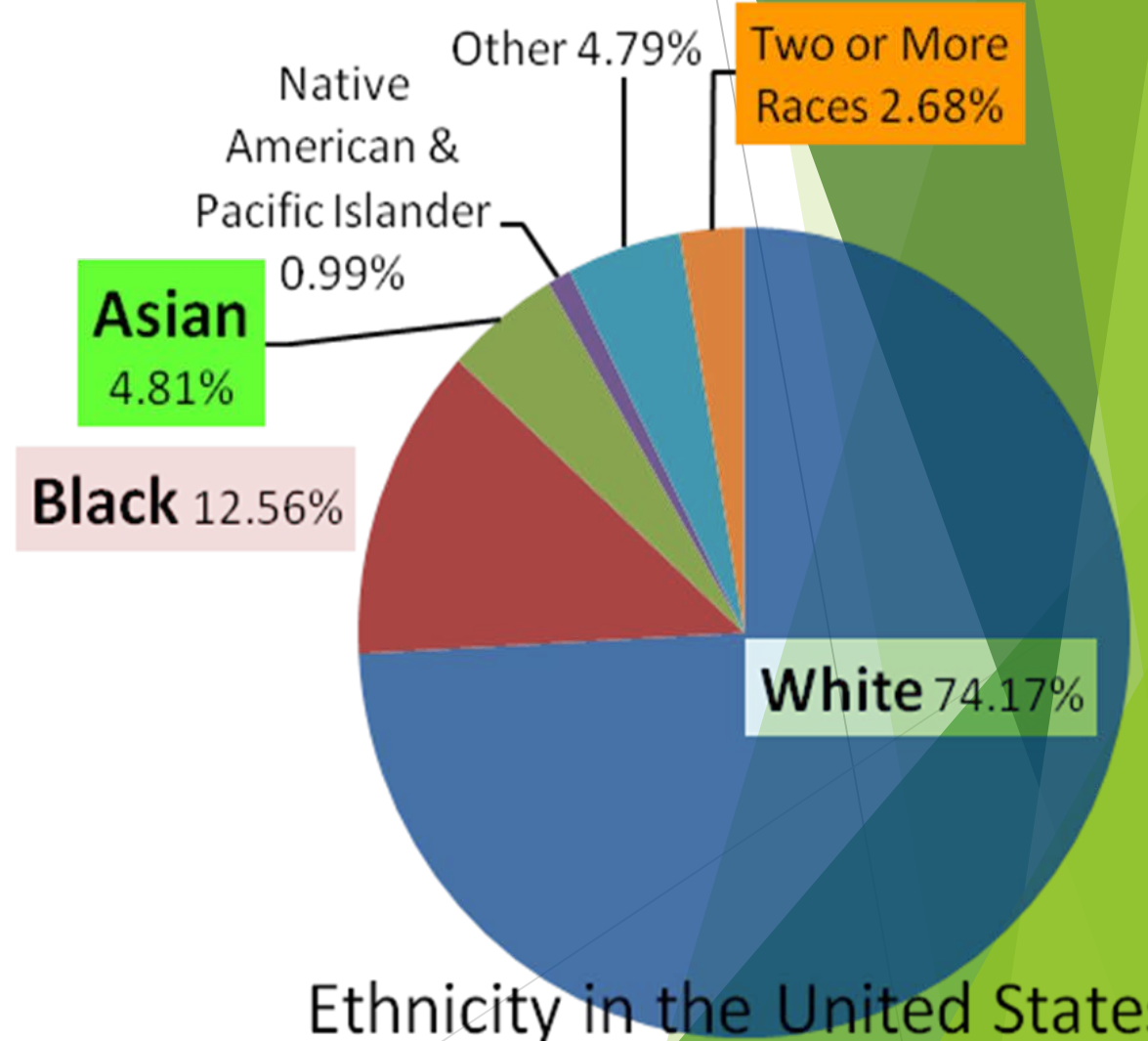
Certificate information			
Name	Grade	Name of Institution	Date

# Heterogeneous Alabama/ United States

## Demographic Differences Immigration nation



Ethnicity in Montgomery, AL  
2014 Data provided by <http://www.bestplaces.net>

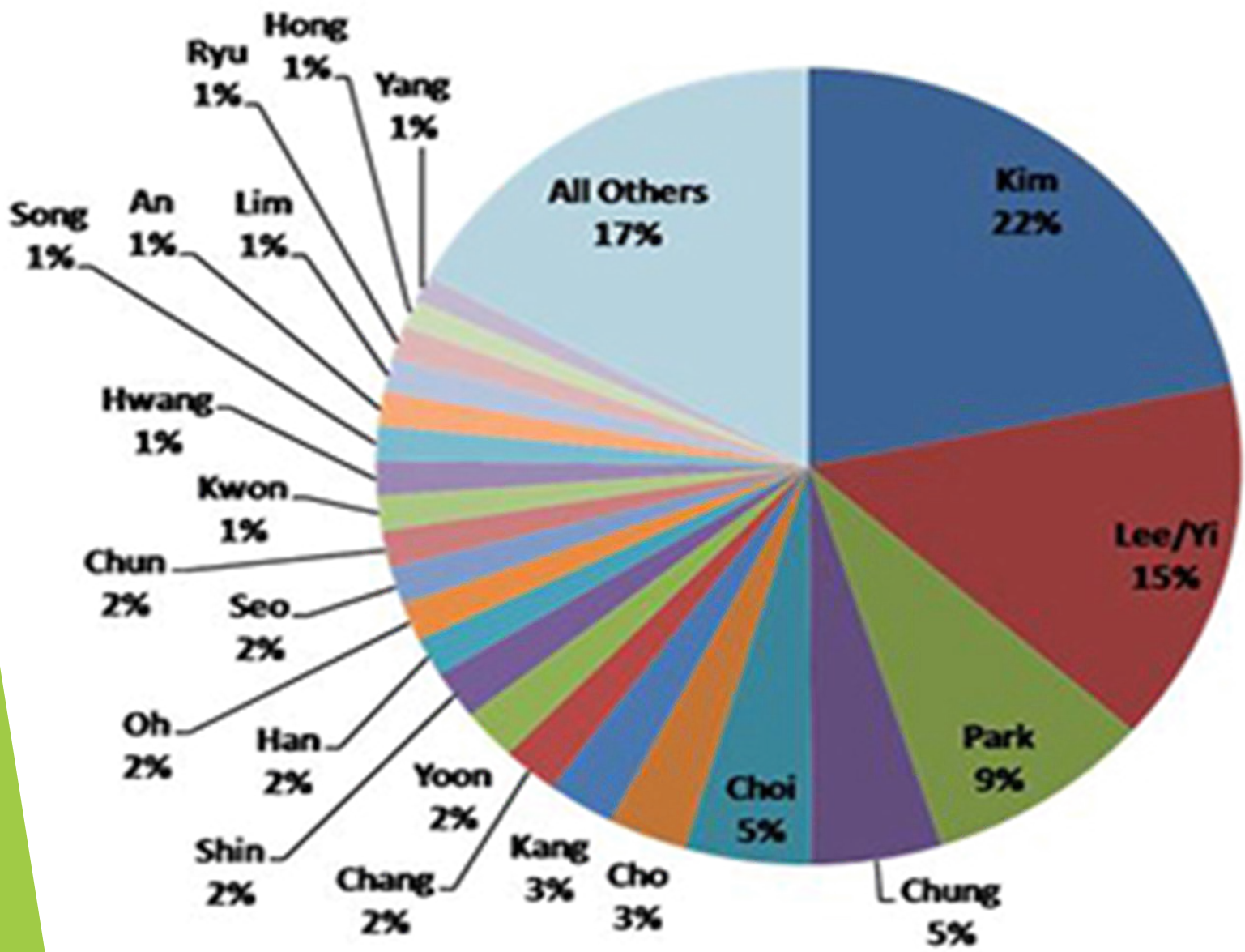


Ethnicity in the United States  
2014 Data provided by <http://www.bestplaces.net>



# Korean Family Names

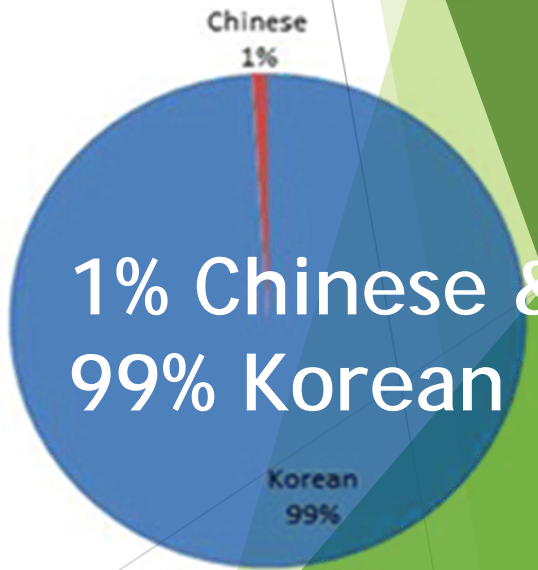
Estimated distribution (2000)\*



Data from 2000 South Korean Census Estimated Distribution of Family Names

# Homogeneous Korea

## South Korean Ethnicity Data



1% Chinese & 99% Korean



# What does a Homogeneous Korea mean?

## Demographic Differences and its impact

An Immigration nation verse a long isolated & secluded nation of kin

5,000 years of seclusion in a small peninsular

The most population is kin, related, to one another

- ✓ → Can be more personal and private to each other
- ✓ → Relatives of each other, and NOT a friend
- ✓ → A friend(ship) lies only within the same age;

Shared heritages – shared commonalities

- ✓ → Assumptions can be made in communication
- ✓ → Need to clarify.

Make sure of their understanding constantly.



**A-KEEP**

## **Alabama-Korea Education & Economic Partnership**

A 501C3 nonprofit educational organization

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*A-KEEP provides Alabama-Korea Multicultural Diversity Education and bridges the differences for local economic partnership.*

A-KEEP

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