The extent to which the less powerful members of organisations accept and expect power to be distributed unequally - what is defined as power distance - varies vastly across cultures.

In more egalitarian societies, for example, it is okay to disagree with the boss openly in front of others; people are likely to move to action without getting the boss's okay and can reach out to colleagues several levels below or above them.

By contrast, in more hierarchical cultures, effort is made to defer to the boss's opinion (especially in public); acquiring boss's approval before moving to action is crucial and communication usually follows strict hierarchical lines.

While in egalitarian cultures an aura of authority stems from acting like one of the team, in hierarchical cultures an aura of authority tends to come from setting yourself clearly apart. How much respect is shown to an authority figure in your culture?