



Intercultural Communication: Strategies for Managing Intercultural Dimensions of Business

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ABSTRACT

Every human group shares a body of common understandings, its culture, which serves to make communication within the group intelligible and which guides behavior and enables the group to achieve common objectives. Common understandings, communication, and behaviors set each group apart from other groups. To a greater or lesser degree, there is overlap with the shared understandings of other groups. Nevertheless, critical points of difference in these understandings, however minor they may seem to outsiders, give rise to convictions of being a separate group and reinforce a shared identity. While separate cultures may share varying amounts of their content, their points of difference establish boundaries. These cultural boundaries are potential obstacles to communication. Communication is the act or process of imparting or exchanging meanings, such as information, opinions, thoughts, and feelings.

In times of rapid economic development and internationalization of business, effective Inter-cultural communication among employees remains a challenge. This paper aims to research and analyze Inter-cultural communication in business. Through in-depth analysis and application of existing theories the findings of this research demonstrated that although national culture does have an undeniable influence on people's behavior and their communication style, implications in communication between businesses partners of different cultural backgrounds often connected to an individual approach to Inter-cultural communication. A great emphasis was placed on the language being one of the biggest communication challenges facing in international arena. Communication ways among individuals are greatly affected by ones background, culture, norms, values and perceptions of the world.

KEYWORDS : Intercultural, values, communication, communication barriers, cultural dimensions, cultural differences.

INTRODUCTION:

Intercultural communication is closely related to international business and marketing. However, its knowledge is applicable in any situation, in which two or more different cultures interact. Inter-cultural communication has been the topic of research of various disciplines for a long time. Globalization phenomena brought upon growth and internationalization of businesses, consequently resulting in necessity and practicality of studying cross-cultural communication. Intercultural communication stems from the understanding that when cultures from diverse backgrounds meet as part of a dialogue in communication at work, and other social settings, there seem to be much space for varied interpretations, which may result in miscommunication among people at multiple levels.

The words, culture and diversity, are used as a broad term to include not only nationality, a country that someone may be from, but also many other aspects that make up an individual such as gender, religion, social class, sexuality, etc. The discourse generated in this topic may provide an opportunity for individuals to consider one another more deeply in conversation and in understanding. When we have a better understanding of one another, we create more space for peace and harmony.

The interconnections in varying themes are shown on the right in the following concept map for intercultural communication. The concepts shown in the diagram can be traced back to the root words such as communication and culture, and linked to cultural literacy, transformative learning, and digital literacy.



OBJECTIVES:

- To understand The Challenges of Intercultural communication
- To recognize Communicating Effectively Across Cultures, Managing Intercultural

Conflicts

- To study Profile of an intercultural effective person (IEP)
- Be acquainted with Intercultural Learning and Training.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Method There is an abundance of empirical theory and research on Inter-cultural communication, which was applied as basic framework in this paper. However, while using the existing research for analyzing Inter-cultural communication in focus, this paper is a contribution to an academic research through qualitative method of data collection. Secondary data was collected through literature reviews. Also the secondary data has been collected from Books, Periodicals, News papers, Journals, Internet.

The Challenges Of Intercultural Communication:

One of the biggest challenges facing the business world is dealing with other cultures. Different intercultural values have a direct impact on how individuals communicate, work and interact with each other. Since these differences are instinctive, most individuals fail to make the connection between their intercultural values and how they impact working practices. This lack of awareness can lead to severe intercultural misunderstandings, incidents or clashes. The important challenges of Intercultural communication are as follows:

- Ambiguity
- Interference
- Lack of equivalence
- Prejudice
- Stereotypes
- Lack of knowledge of body language and non-verbal cues
- Lack of knowledge about the other culture level of operation

Managing Interdependence:

Managing interdependence means to break down the barriers of communication between cultures, between various sectors of the international system, between societies and especially building a common language for dealing with interdependence. Today interdependence in the international system is managed through the creation and development of inter-governmental and international institutions.

Main goals of managing interdependence and intercultural communication

- The strategic international management deals with the globalization vs. national responsiveness issue.
- The international management also emphasizes that two forces are at work: globalization (borderless economics) and diverse cultures.
- Big market players must take in consideration the reality of national cultures which greatly affect organizational culture.
- The main objective of international communication is creating competitive advantages
- Intercultural communication transforms/converts local traditions, values and norms in resources and capabilities that enhance global competitiveness.
- The aim of intercultural communication is to transform certain differences and cultural diversity into positive factors for the global development of companies.

Intercultural communication develops competitiveness by several means as:

- Understanding the worldwide political, cultural and business environment from a global perspective;
- Developing multiple cultural perspectives and approaches to conducting business;
- Being skilful at working with people from many cultures simultaneously;
- Adapting comfortably to living in different cultures;
- Learning to interact with international partners as equals.

The effectiveness of every international negotiation depends on intercultural skills, such as:

- Understanding barriers to cross-cultural communication and intercultural communication;
- Forecasting the impact of communication message that touch core values of the other cultures;
- Understand what behaviours can damage or increase negotiation effectiveness across cultures;
- Defining the action line

Inter-cultural communication is imperative for companies that have a diverse workforce and participate in the global economy. It is important for employees to understand the factors that are part of an effective, diverse workforce.

A Profile of an Intercultural Effective Person (IEP):

- Adaption skills
- Attitude of modesty and respect
- Understanding of the concept of culture
- Knowledge of the host country and culture
- Relationship - building
- Self- knowledge
- Interculture – communication
- Organizational skills
- Personal and professional commitment

Interculture Competencies:

- Tolerance for ambiguity
- Behavioral flexibility
- Goal orientation
- Sociability & interest in other people
- Empathy
- Non-judgement
- Meta communication skills

Personal Qualifications For International Work:

- Open – mindedness
- Flexibility
- Interaction
- Adaption skills
- Motivation

Intercultural Dialogue:

- Understanding
- Listening
- Empathy
- Openness

- Trust
- Atmosphere
- Responsibility

Multicultural Person:

- Adapts when encounters difficulties, and is capable of interactions in various situations irrespective of the culture where s/he happens to be
- Experiences constantly a personal process of change because s/he finds always new challenges in different situations
- Is able to observe his/her own culture from an outsider perspective

No Rules Function In All Contexts:

- The knowledge of the communication rules of a culture is necessary but one should also realize that no rules function in all context. Interculture sensitivity and situational adaptability are paramount in multicultural working situations.
- Culture influences people and their communication. One should, however, beware of culture stereotyping. People are influenced by many cultures, not only one. Which influence becomes dominant in each particular situation depends on the circumstances.

Intercultural Management Training Course

An Intercultural Management training course typically includes:

- Culture and its influence on intercultural management
- Intercultural values and attitudes and their impact on multicultural teams: time, space, group dynamics, authority, tasks, relationships
- Intercultural communication styles
- Intercultural management styles and skills
- Working together in an intercultural context: strategies to harness the team's experience and skills
- Developing intercultural awareness among your team
- Language issues in intercultural management and strategies to overcome them
- Tips and strategies for working in an intercultural context

This Intercultural Management Training Will Help Global Managers In:

- Developing international markets
- Working effectively with multi-cultural teams
- Dealing with customers in different parts of the world
- Merging or integrating with other companies across borders
- Dealing with cross-cultural conflict
- Planning a global strategy
- Developing international leadership

CONCLUSIONS:

An increased appreciation by companies that managing cultural differences properly can be a key factor in getting things done effectively across borders. There is a growing demand for businesses to understand and manage the diverse values, perceptions, business worldviews and behaviour of corporations, staff, and its customers. Intercultural communication contributes to the protection of human rights and spreads democracy, good governance and the rule of law. These changes ask for intercultural communication in developing skills and tools to manage differences creatively.

We intent to determine the most imperative Inter-cultural communications implications caused by cultural differences, in business communication context, to identify the existing problems which have led to some kind of friction, a conflict, misunderstanding or termination of relations with international partner and finally, to determine any possible solutions for enhancement of cross-cultural business communication. In the constantly increasing cross-border business operations, the knowledge and application of operational intercultural business communication between partners is crucial for the survival of business. The nature of the job of international managers demands them to become proficient communicators and to adopt broader cultural perspectives.

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