

Excellence in Business Communication, Cdn., 6e (Thill)

Chapter 3 Communicating Interculturally

1) Many difficulties in intercultural communication occur because people in different cultures have different _____

- A) genetic makeup.
- B) basic assumptions.
- C) environments.
- D) media exposure.

Answer: B

Type: MC Page Ref: 65

2) Ethnocentrism refers to the _____

- A) study of ethnic groups.
- B) study of cultural diversity.
- C) belief that all immigration into Canada should be halted.
- D) belief that one's own cultural background is superior to that of others.

Answer: D

Type: MC Page Ref: 65

3) Stereotyping _____

- A) refers to a deep analysis of culture.
- B) assigns generalized attributes to an individual on the basis of membership in a particular culture or social group.
- C) lets you deal with individuals as they really are.
- D) is often the result of thorough, specific, and accurate evidence.

Answer: B

Type: MC Page Ref: 65

4) Ethnocentrism can be overcome by _____

- A) accepting multiple cultures on their own terms.
- B) judging other groups according to your own standards.
- C) ignoring the distinctions between cultures.
- D) remembering that people from other cultures communicate in ways that are inferior to your own.

Answer: A

Type: MC Page Ref: 65-66

5) Xenophobia _____

- A) refers to a fear of strangers and foreigners.
- B) recognizes the differences that exist between your culture and other cultures.
- C) focuses on the possibility that your words and actions will be misunderstood.
- D) is an acceptable cultural phenomenon.

Answer: A

Type: MC Page Ref: 65

6) A more extreme reaction than ethnocentrism to people in groups is _____

- A) euphemism.
- B) xenophobia.
- C) claustrophobia.
- D) stereotyping.

Answer: B

Type: MC Page Ref: 65

7) In high-context cultures _____

- A) people rely more on nonverbal circumstances and cues to convey meaning.
- B) people rely less on the environmental setting to convey meaning.
- C) the rules of everyday life are highly explicit.
- D) primary task is to exchange information.

Answer: A

Type: MC Page Ref: 67

8) To convey meaning in a low-context culture such as the one existing in Germany, people rely more on _____

- A) gestures and vocal inflection.
- B) indirectness and metaphors.
- C) situational cues.
- D) explicit verbal communication.

Answer: D

Type: MC Page Ref: 67

9) Negotiators from high-context cultures _____

- A) try to reach decisions as quickly and as efficiently as possible.
- B) prefer to make their deals slowly, after building relationships.
- C) spend a lot of time on each little point to display their good faith.
- D) arrive at decisions through consensus, after an elaborate and time-consuming process.

Answer: B

Type: MC Page Ref: 67

10) When communicating across cultures, keep your messages ethical by _____

- A) focusing on social behaviours.
- B) identifying roles and status.
- C) avoiding nonverbal signals.
- D) seeking mutual ground.

Answer: D

Type: MC Page Ref: 67

- 11) Generally, businesspeople in Canada show respect by addressing top managers by _____
- A) using their job titles.
 - B) using their first names.
 - C) using "Mr." or "Ms."
 - D) omitting any references to gender.

Answer: C

Type: MC Page Ref: 68

- 12) Meeting a deadline is less important than building a relationship for businesspeople from _____

- A) the United States.
- B) Scandinavia.
- C) China.
- D) Germany.

Answer: C

Type: MC Page Ref: 68

- 13) Avoid cultural blunders by recognizing and accommodating six main types of cultural differences: contextual, legal and ethical, social, nonverbal, gender, and _____

- A) educational.
- B) age.
- C) employment.
- D) ethical.

Answer: B

Type: MC Page Ref: 69

- 14) Workplaces which employ multiple generations _____

- A) should ignore individual differences and expect the same from every employee.
- B) must treat everyone equally regardless of their ages.
- C) should focus on the younger workers as they are the future of the company.
- D) must pay attention to cultural diversity of age groups.

Answer: D

Type: MC Page Ref: 69

- 15) People in Canada and the United States show respect by addressing top managers _____

- A) by their first names.
- B) as "Mr. Roberts" or "Ms. Tremblay."
- C) as "Sir" or "Madam."
- D) as "boss."

Answer: B

Type: MC Page Ref: 69

16) Successful intercultural communication can _____

- A) be accomplished through learning other languages.
- B) come from talking to people to find out what they think of different cultures.
- C) be learned by watching foreign movies.
- D) require modification of personal communication habits.

Answer: D

Type: MC Page Ref: 70

17) If you have a long-term business relationship with people from another culture, _____

- A) there is no need for you to learn that country's language.
- B) they will understand that you do not know their language.
- C) you should learn a few basic words and phrases of their language.
- D) you should only deal with natives who can speak English.

Answer: C

Type: MC Page Ref: 72

18) Letters from Japanese businesspeople, as compared to letters from Canadian businesspeople, tend to _____

- A) get directly to the point.
- B) be direct and brief.
- C) be less direct.
- D) sound unnatural.

Answer: C

Type: MC Page Ref: 72

19) When sending written communication to businesspeople from another culture _____

- A) use casual language.
- B) elaborate on every detail.
- C) use transitional elements.
- D) use cultural references.

Answer: C

Type: MC Page Ref: 73

20) When writing letters to businesspeople in other countries, you should _____

- A) use an informal, friendly tone.
- B) explain in long sentences and paragraphs.
- C) be general in your wording.
- D) be brief.

Answer: D

Type: MC Page Ref: 73

21) Using humour in communication is discouraged because _____

- A) it is unprofessional.
- B) it is considered unethical in many cultures.
- C) it usually relies on intimate knowledge of a particular culture.
- D) humour is not a part of the communication process.

Answer: C

Type: MC Page Ref: 75

22) When you deal with people who don't speak your language very well, you have a few options, including _____

- A) using an intermediary or a translator.
- B) using gestures and sign language.
- C) speaking loudly and enunciating clearly.
- D) using an English-only policy.

Answer: A

Type: MC Page Ref: 76-77

23) Back translation _____

- A) ensures accuracy.
- B) employs many people.
- C) confuses messages.
- D) is a waste of time.

Answer: A

Type: MC Page Ref: 76-77

24) Employees can improve their own intercultural communication skills by _____.

- A) helping non-native speakers learn English.
- B) respecting cultural preferences for communication style.
- C) understanding their own culture so that they can recognize its influences on their communication habits.
- D) all of the above.

Answer: D

Type: MC Page Ref: 77

25) Intercultural communication is the process of sending and receiving messages within a specific culture.

Answer: FALSE

Type: TF Page Ref: 62

26) Improving intercultural communication improves the contributions of all employees in a diverse workforce.

Answer: TRUE

Type: TF Page Ref: 62

27) Diverse workforce can hinder business operations because managing too many viewpoints and ideas is time consuming.

Answer: FALSE

Type: TF Page Ref: 62

28) You belong to several cultures, but only one affects the way you communicate.

Answer: FALSE

Type: TF Page Ref: 64

29) Effective intercultural communication is about matching language between sender and receiver.

Answer: FALSE

Type: TF Page Ref: 64

30) A company's cultural diversity affects how its business messages are composed, delivered, received, and interpreted.

Answer: TRUE

Type: TF Page Ref: 64

31) People's cultural background influences the way they prioritize what is important in life, and establishes rules for their behaviour.

Answer: TRUE

Type: TF Page Ref: 64

32) An important step in intercultural communication is to understand your own culture.

Answer: TRUE

Type: TF Page Ref: 64

33) Culture is inborn.

Answer: FALSE

Type: TF Page Ref: 64

34) Some cultures are much more complex than other cultures.

Answer: TRUE

Type: TF Page Ref: 64

35) Cultural pluralism is a negative view of other cultures.

Answer: FALSE

Type: TF Page Ref: 65

36) Ethnocentrism is the tendency to judge all other groups according to your own group's standards, behaviours, and customs.

Answer: TRUE

Type: TF Page Ref: 65

37) When ethnocentric people stereotype an entire group of people, they are usually justified in doing so.

Answer: FALSE

Type: TF Page Ref: 65

38) Ethnocentric people fail to communicate with individuals as they really are.

Answer: TRUE

Type: TF Page Ref: 65

39) To overcome ethnocentrism, you should ignore the differences between another person's culture and your own.

Answer: FALSE

Type: TF Page Ref: 65

40) Cultural context is the pattern of physical cues and environmental stimuli that conveys meaning between members of the same culture.

Answer: TRUE

Type: TF Page Ref: 66

41) Because Canada and Germany have such high-context cultures, they rely heavily on verbal communication and less on implied meaning.

Answer: FALSE

Type: TF Page Ref: 67

42) Chinese and Japanese negotiators primarily focus on building relationships before entering into serious negotiations.

Answer: TRUE

Type: TF Page Ref: 67

43) From culture to culture, what people consider legal and ethical varies widely.

Answer: TRUE

Type: TF Page Ref: 67

44) High-context cultures view adherence to laws as being more flexible.

Answer: TRUE

Type: TF Page Ref: 67

45) Formal rules of social etiquette are explicit and well defined, but informal rules are learned through observation and imitation.

Answer: TRUE

Type: TF Page Ref: 68

46) In China, it is considered polite to pour tea for yourself and then offer the rest of the table some.

Answer: FALSE

Type: TF Page Ref: 68

47) Differences in body language are a major source of misunderstanding in intercultural communication.

Answer: TRUE

Type: TF Page Ref: 68-69

48) People from Canada and the United Kingdom rarely misunderstand each other because they speak the same language.

Answer: FALSE

Type: TF Page Ref: 72

49) Many companies recognize that they must be able to conduct business in languages other than English.

Answer: TRUE

Type: TF Page Ref: 72

50) If you don't have the time or the opportunity to learn a new language, learning just a few common phrases is considered insulting in most cultures.

Answer: FALSE

Type: TF Page Ref: 72

51) Canadian and U.S. workers typically prefer an open and direct communication style.

Answer: TRUE

Type: TF Page Ref: 72

52) Knowing what your communication partners expect can help you adapt to their particular style.

Answer: TRUE

Type: TF Page Ref: 72

53) In general, when writing to someone in another country, Canadian businesspeople should be a bit more formal than they would be otherwise.

Answer: TRUE

Type: TF Page Ref: 72

54) When communicating with someone for whom English is a second language, you should avoid using slang and idioms.

Answer: TRUE

Type: TF Page Ref: 75

55) Jokes and references to popular Canadian entertainment usually rely on cultural issues that your audience will be aware of after living in Canada for a year.

Answer: FALSE

Type: TF Page Ref: 75

56) For important business communication, use a professional interpreter (for oral communication).

Answer: TRUE

Type: TF Page Ref: 76

57) Machine translation uses computerized intelligence (such as software on websites) to translate material from one language to another.

Answer: TRUE

Type: TF Page Ref: 76

58) To be more effective in intercultural conversations, speak slowly and over enunciate your words.

Answer: FALSE

Type: TF Page Ref: 76

59) For more effective intercultural communications make sure you and the listener agree on what has been said and decided.

Answer: TRUE

Type: TF Page Ref: 76

60) If a nonnative English speaker is making mistakes that could hurt his or her credibility, it would be helpful for you to offer advice on the appropriate words and phrases to use.

Answer: TRUE

Type: TF Page Ref: 77

61) Both immigration and _____ create advantages—and challenges—for business communicators throughout the world.

Answer: workforce diversity

Type: SA Page Ref: 3

62) The process of sending and receiving messages between people of different cultures is called _____.

Answer: intercultural communication

Type: SA Page Ref: 62

63) Culture is a(n) _____ of symbols, beliefs, attitudes, values, expectations, and norms for behaviour.

Answer: shared system

Type: SA Page Ref: 64

64) If you react with _____, you tend to judge all other groups according to your own group's standards, behaviours, and customs.

Answer: ethnocentrism

Type: SA Page Ref: 65

65) In a(n) _____ culture such as exists in Taiwan, people rely less on verbal communication and more on the nonverbal actions and environmental setting to convey meaning.

Answer: high-context

Type: SA Page Ref: 67

66) In a(n) _____ culture such as exists in Germany, people rely more on verbal communication and less on circumstances and implied meaning.

Answer: low-context

Type: SA Page Ref: 67

67) Ethnocentric people are prone to _____, or attempting to predict individuals' behaviours or characteristics on the basis of their membership in a particular group.

Answer: stereotyping

Type: SA Page Ref: 67

68) Differences in _____, such as gestures and eye contact, are a source of misunderstanding during intercultural communications.

Answer: body language

Type: SA Page Ref: 68-69

69) In international business correspondence, you should _____ your approach, style, and tone to meet the audience's expectations.

Answer: adapt

Type: SA Page Ref: 73

70) _____ are phrases that mean more than the sum of their parts and can cause misunderstandings when translated literally.

Answer: Idioms

Type: SA Page Ref: 75

71) One way to protect against poor translation is to _____ the same message into the original language.

Answer: back-translate

Type: SA Page Ref: 76

72) When communicating interculturally look for _____ to make sure your message is getting through.

Answer: feedback

Type: SA Page Ref: 76

73) Briefly describe advantages of a multicultural workforce.

Answer: A culturally diverse workforce yields a broader spectrum of viewpoints and ideas. It also helps companies understand and relate to diverse markets and enables organizations to tap into the broadest pool of talent.

Type: ES Page Ref: 62

74) Explain the general challenges of intercultural communication for today's businesses and give brief examples of how culture impacts the way we communicate.

Answer: • Cultural diversity affects how messages are created, sent and interpreted.

- Diverse workforce provides a wide range of backgrounds, traditions, experiences, and attitudes toward work.

- Supervisors face the challenge of communicating with diverse workforce.

- Teams face the challenge of working together.

- Communication and way of thinking is influenced by culture in which one is raised.

- Intercultural communication goes beyond words to beliefs, values and emotions.

Type: ES Page Ref: 63-64

75) Define culture and explain in detail how culture is learned. What are the specific implications of learning culture?

Answer: • Culture is a shared system of symbols, beliefs, attitudes, values, expectations and norms of behaviour. Cultural background influences the way we prioritize what is important.

- We all belong to several cultures: family, village, country, ethnic group, religious group, profession.

- We learn culture directly and indirectly. From family, education system, other members of the group we belong to.

- Sometimes we are explicitly told which behaviours are acceptable; other times we learn by observations.

- Established cultures tend to be coherent, logical and consistent when viewed from inside. These norms may not make sense to someone outside our culture.

Type: ES Page Ref: 64-65

76) What is ethnocentrism, and how can it be overcome?

Answer: Ethnocentrism is the tendency to judge all other groups according to the standards, behaviours, and customs of one's own group. There is tendency to conclude that one's own group/culture is superior due to a limited understanding of other cultures. This represents negative views of other cultures and does not acknowledge individuality.

Type: ES Page Ref: 65-66

77) Explain the difference between a high-context culture and a low-context culture, and provide at least one example of each.

Answer: High-context cultures rely less on verbal communication and meaning of specific words, and more on the context of nonverbal actions and environmental setting to convey meaning. Asian cultures tend to be high-context.

In a low-context culture people rely more on verbal communication and less on circumstances.

Rules and expectations are spelled out through explicit statements. Primary task of communication is exchanging information. Western cultures tend to be low-context.

Type: ES Page Ref: 67

78) Since cultures do not always share the same ideas on legal and ethical issues, how can you keep messages legal and ethical when communicating interculturallly?

Answer: Consider low- and high-context. Apply the four principles:

- Actively seek mutual ground.
- Send/receive messages with judgment.
- Send messages that are honest.
- Show respect for cultural differences.

Type: ES Page Ref: 67-68

79) Describe three simple habits that can help you avoid both the negativity of ethnocentrism and the oversimplification of stereotyping?

Answer: Avoid assumptions.

Avoid judgments.

Acknowledge distinctions.

Type: ES Page Ref: 67

80) Explain three areas of nonverbal communication that can differ widely among cultures. Give specific examples how problems can develop from these signals.

Answer: Students can choose from: greetings, personal space, touching, facial expressions, eye contact, or posture.

Type: ES Page Ref: 68-69

81) While working in Mexico, you schedule a meeting with a vendor who lives there. When he shows up 20 minutes after the meeting was supposed to begin, should you take it as a sign of incompetence or disrespect? Explain.

Answer: Attitudes toward time, such as adherence to meeting schedules, can vary throughout the world. Schedules, deadlines and appointments are regarded differently from culture to culture.

People in low-context cultures view time as a limited resource and treat scheduled as rigid requirement. In high-context cultures people often see time as more flexible. Deadlines are less important than building business relationships.

Type: ES Page Ref: 68

82) Select three types of nonverbal differences that you might encounter when working with businesspeople from other cultures. Provide examples of how these differences might cause misunderstandings in communication.

Answer: Students can select from: greetings, personal space, touching, facial expressions, eye contact, posture, formality.

Type: ES Page Ref: 68-69

83) Social behaviour and rules vary from culture to culture. Describe the three main areas where social norms can vary from culture to culture and give specific examples for each.

Answer:

1) Roles and status: People in Canada show respect by addressing top managers as "Mr. Roberts" or "Ms. Gutierrez." However, people in China address businesspeople according to their official titles, such as "President" or "Manager."

2) Use of manners: Asking a colleague "How was your weekend?" is a common way to make small talk in Canada but the question sounds intrusive to people in cultures where business and private lives are seen as totally separate.

3) Concept of time: People in low-context cultures view time as a limited resource and tend to treat schedules as rigid requirements. However, executives in high-context cultures often see time as more flexible and often take care not to damage relationships in pursuit of deadlines. Consequently, the workday isn't expected to follow a rigid, preset schedule.

Type: ES Page Ref: 69-70

84) Describe in detail how studying other cultures and languages can improve your intercultural communication skills. Why is this important for your life and career?

Answer:

- Increased knowledge about cultures, and ability to understand such concepts as ethnocentrism and stereotyping.
- Changing own personal habits and attitudes.
- Learn more about own culture when comparing it to other cultures.
- Help in business situations with representatives from other cultures.
- Learn about nonverbal customs.
- Not everyone understands or speaks English.
- Demand for multilingual employees is growing.
- Learning common phrases shows respect to other cultures.
- Learning some language demonstrates commitment to the business relationships.

Type: ES Page Ref: 70-72

85) Why is it a good idea to learn a few common phrases in a native language before conducting business in a foreign country?

Answer: The ability to communicate in more than one language can make one a more competitive job candidate and open new career opportunities. Learning at least the basics in another language, not only helps one to get through everyday business and social situations, but also shows respect and demonstrates commitment to the business relationship.

Type: ES Page Ref: 72

86) Briefly describe three strategies for writing effective multicultural messages.

Answer: Students can choose from: choose words carefully, be brief, use plenty of transitions, cite dates and numbers carefully, avoid slang, idioms and jargon, avoid humour and references to popular culture.

Type: ES Page Ref: 73-74

87) Describe in detail, with specific examples, at least five things you need to consider before doing business abroad.

Answer: Table 3-1

- Understand social customs.
- Learn about clothing and food preferences.
- Assess political patterns.
- Understand religious and folk beliefs.
- Learn about economic and business institutions.
- Appraise the nature of ethics, values, and laws.

Type: ES Page Ref: 73

88) A new employee who speaks English as a second language has just joined the design team you lead. You notice that she often looks confused during conversations. Describe at least three useful strategies for this situation.

Answer: Speak slowly and clearly; rephrase only if necessary; ask for feedback. Don't talk down by over enunciating or over simplifying; check for agreement at the end of the conversation.

Type: ES Page Ref: 76

89) You are working on a team with a new colleague from another country. Describe two things you can do to help him adapt to your culture.

Answer: Learn about the person's culture.

Offer advice on language use if a non-native English speaker is making mistakes.

Ask for written rather than oral report.

Type: ES Page Ref: 77