

Chapter 2—Multicultural and Global Communication

TRUE/FALSE

1. Outsourcing moves part or all of the business processes to a service provider.

ANS: T PTS: 1

2. Cultural background affects how individuals communicate and how they interpret messages from others.

ANS: T PTS: 1

3. An understanding of cultures recognizes that cultural backgrounds and experiences influence behavior and communication so it is important to learn certain characteristics of different cultures and apply that to all persons in a particular culture.

ANS: F PTS: 1

4. People in high-context cultures place high value on productivity and direct communication.

ANS: F PTS: 1

5. Although there are many language differences throughout the world, nonverbal signals are basically the same.

ANS: F PTS: 1

6. The friendly, outgoing competitive, informal American primarily uses the indirect plan of business communication and may not be well received in Asian countries.

ANS: F PTS: 1

7. Some English words may have different meanings in different countries although the native language in these countries may be English.

ANS: T PTS: 1

8. Ethnocentrism is the inherent belief that one's own cultural values and traditions are correct and superior to other cultures.

ANS: T PTS: 1

9. English is the primary language used in conducting multinational business; therefore, current global marketing strategies shape their products and their Web sites to appeal only to the countries where English is the native language.

ANS: F PTS: 1

10. Only women can be victims of sexual harassment.

ANS: F PTS: 1

11. Both genders bring strength to the workplace; but, in general, women in the United States tend to use language to create connections and relationships more than men do.

ANS: T PTS: 1

12. Quid pro quo is a term used to describe different cultural beliefs.

ANS: F PTS: 1

13. Some words and phrases are difficult to translate from one language to another.

ANS: T PTS: 1

14. Learning about other cultures lets you categorize individual persons by their culture and know their beliefs and preferences.

ANS: F PTS: 1

15. In general, Asian cultural background has favored an indirect style of communication.

ANS: T PTS: 1

16. A global supply chain is a system of moving products or services from supplier to consumers by outsourcing part of the supply system to resources from other countries.

ANS: T PTS: 1

17. Computer translation software can be used to translate languages; therefore, translators are no longer required to communicate between two languages.

ANS: F PTS: 1

18. Low-context countries generally take a long-term view of time.

ANS: F PTS: 1

19. Guidelines for successful business communication in a multinational and global society is to review communication principles, analyze the message receiver, be open to and accepting of other cultures, learn about other cultures and apply what you learn, and consider language needs.

ANS: T PTS: 1

20. Gender and age are two of five core cultural dimensions.

ANS: T PTS: 1

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. Five generally recognized core cultural dimensions are
- ethnicity, race, gender, age, and physical challenge.
 - corporate, multicultural, language, ethnicity, and global.

- c. English, German, Scandinavian, French, and Japanese.
- d. friends, colleagues, employers, employees, and family.

ANS: A PTS: 1

2. In Germany business communication generally requires that business transactions
- a. begin with small talk.
 - b. are indirectly discussed.
 - c. rely on informal relationships and. understandings
 - d. focuses on getting the job done.

ANS: D PTS: 1

3. The primary business language, even in countries for which English is the second language, is
- a. English
 - b. indirect
 - c. French
 - d. Spanish

ANS: A PTS: 1

4. Examples of communication challenges in a global environment are
- a. Not understanding cultural differences
 - b. Differences in time
 - c. Words that have different meanings and connotations and different language patterns for parts of speech
 - d. a, b, and c

ANS: D PTS: 1

5. Cultural barriers that prohibit effective multicultural communication include
- a. cultural relativism, ethnocentrism, and lack of global experience.
 - b. Discrimination and harassment, language, cultural relativism, and ethnocentrism.
 - c. quid pro quo, high-context culture, and the acceptance of the needs of others.
 - d. stereotypes, hostile environment, and a common business language.

ANS: B PTS: 2

6. Global communication challenges include
- a. variations in time, holidays, days in a workweek, and language.
 - b. direct and indirect communication styles, belief that there is more than one right way, and shared meanings.
 - c. lack of understanding of other cultures and placing a high value on mutual understanding.
 - d. productivity and favorable relationships.

ANS: A PTS: 1

7. Countries with a general preference for indirect communication are likely also to
- a. value individualism.
 - b. value family and group authority.
 - c. place a higher value on words than shared background.
 - d. favor structured messages with technical details.

ANS: B PTS: 1

8. Which of the following is NOT a characteristic of language variations?

- a. Translation of slogans may have different meanings.
- b. Words such as “gift” may have a different meaning.
- c. The use and arrangement of parts of speech vary in different languages.
- d. Nonverbal signals are the same or similar in different countries; for example, a smile is a smile.

ANS: D PTS: 1

9. The belief that your own cultural traditions and values are correct and superior is
- a. cultural relativism.
 - b. a stereotype.
 - c. ethnocentrism.
 - d. quid pro quo.

ANS: C PTS: 1

10. Strategies for effective global communication include
- a. communicating by telephone instead of e-mail or postal mail.
 - b. using a translator when speaking to a person whose English is a second language.
 - c. learning about other cultures and applying what you learn.
 - d. avoiding use of any words in a language other than your own to avoid being incorrect.

ANS: C PTS: 1

MATCHING

Match each statement to the item listed below.

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a. Outsourcing | f. Multicultural communication |
| b. Corporate culture | g. Hostile environment |
| c. Global communication | h. Offshoring |
| d. Stereotyping | i. Ethnicity |
| e. Expatriates | j. Core cultural dimensions |

- 1. Shared values and behavioral expectations of an organization; sometimes referred to as “the way we do things around here.”
- 2. A company’s transfer of tasks and processes to a service provider for completion.
- 3. A company’s moving all or part of their business operation outside of the home country.
- 4. An offensive work environment that interferes with job performance.
- 5. Persons who live and work outside their home country.
- 6. Information exchange among people from different cultures.
- 7. Information exchange with a world market.
- 8. Strictly categorizing individuals based on simplistic understanding of groups.
- 9. Race, ethnicity, gender, age, and physical disability that affects expectations, behavior, and values.
- 10. A national or racial group of people; groups of people with similar characteristics.

- 1. ANS: B PTS: 1
- 2. ANS: A PTS: 1
- 3. ANS: H PTS: 1
- 4. ANS: G PTS: 1
- 5. ANS: E PTS: 1
- 6. ANS: F PTS: 1
- 7. ANS: C PTS: 1
- 8. ANS: D PTS: 1

9. ANS: J PTS: 1
10. ANS: I PTS: 1

ESSAY

1. Explain why bilingualism can be an important skill to emphasize when applying for a business position.

ANS:

Being able to communicate with a diverse group of coworkers, customers, suppliers, and others has become increasingly important. A high percentage of persons in the United States come from households where English is a second language. Furthermore, the number of business interactions across national boundaries and in foreign locations continue to increase. This means that businesspeople communicate with large numbers of people who speak languages other than English. A business person with knowledge of language and language subtleties can help avoid mistakes from inappropriate use of words and slogans and have a better understanding of spoken or written messages in another language. Mutual understanding by the sender and receiver of messages promotes effective communication.

PTS: 1

2. Explain why it is important for business communication students to learn how to communicate effectively with persons from other cultures.

ANS:

E-commerce, offshoring, and outsourcing are increasing rapidly; and most U.S. businesses are, or will be, involved in global business. In addition, multicultural interactions in this country are increasing as our population represents a diversity of clientele and employees in the workplace. To communicate effectively requires an understanding of individuals with whom you interact. People from different backgrounds and experiences have differences in beliefs, values, customs, and behavior. Skill in communicating with persons from a variety of ethnic and racial backgrounds and of different age groups, gender, and physical challenges is an asset that increases opportunities for employment and advancement.

PTS: 1

3. Generally speaking, Mexican culture is high context. Based on what you know about high-context cultures, describe characteristics that might be a part of the culture of people who live in Mexico.

ANS:

The high-context culture places a high value on family and relationships and relies on long-term relationships for underlying meaning. People have a long-term view of time; appointments are considered flexible. Mexican business documents are likely to have a personal tone and give less precise goals, requests, or completion dates than is generally true of American documents because of a preference for indirect communication and vague, nonconfrontational language or simple, ambiguous messages. Information is often obtained through private networks of people.

PTS: 1

4. Explain three basic guidelines for communicating in a multicultural business environment.

ANS:

Effective communicators should understand their own culture, keep an open mind and respect diversity, and identify and adapt to language differences. To improve communication in a multicultural environment, you need to understand your own culture and how it affects your perceptions of persons with different beliefs, values, and behaviors. This helps you to be open to and accept other cultures because you recognize there are different ways of doing things rather than one right way. In addition, continuing to learn about different cultures and how to overcome cultural and language barriers will promote effective communication. When speaking or writing, alter language and traditional word usage that may be offensive to the receiver. Be sensitive to and considerate of others' beliefs and values. English is a common business language, but the language may be somewhat altered in sentence structure, word usage and spelling by writers for whom English is a second language. Some sentence structure or word usage may resemble usage in the native language.

PTS: 1

5. Discuss the most challenging cultural difference faced by 101 global executives, as reported on a survey by McCall and Hollenbeck.

ANS:

Multinational and global business operations increase the complexity and uncertainty of how to communicate effectively. The most frequent responses were communication and language. Understanding people, what they want, and what motivates them, as well as not knowing if others understand what you tell them, were examples mentioned.

PTS: 1

6. Compare or contrast cultural preferences that you might find in each country if you were traveling or working in both China and Germany.

ANS:

Because China is considered a high-context culture in general and Germany is a low-context culture, expectations would, in all likelihood, be distinctly different. For example, I might expect a getting acquainted period and building relationships to take place in China before beginning to transact business; whereas, in Germany the focus most likely would be on getting a job done successfully and profitably. In China, power, position, family, and group authority are important in contrast to Germany's low-context view of personal relationships as transitory with people assumed as equals. Information, details, and appointments would be specific in Germany. In China, where there is a long-term view of time, appointments may be considered flexible; and communication is likely to follow a spiral logic based more on relationships than a linear progression of ideas. Germans are likely to communicate directly and specifically.

PTS: 1

7. Discuss how time differences, workweeks, and holidays can affect communication between people living and working in two different countries.

ANS:

International time zones can mean as much as a six- to nine-hour time difference between the U.S. and European or Asian countries. Time differences allow little or no overlap in normal business hours, so telephone calls would require pre-arrangement; e-mail would be the most likely method of communication. Days of the week for business operations vary around the world. These differences would require knowing business operation workday, workweek, and holidays of the other country to plan the best time for communication.

PTS: 1

8. What language adjustments would you make if you are a person whose native language is English and are communicating with someone speaking English as a second language?

ANS:

The tone and pace of language would not be altered; however, enunciating words clearly would be helpful. Also, avoiding long, complex sentence or colloquial terms would help the English language learner understand your message. Avoid attempts at humor, which may be misunderstood or be offensive. Learn to say a greeting or common phrase in the other person's home language. He or she will appreciate your effort.

PTS: 1

9. Discuss the meaning of *Learn about other cultures and apply what you learn*.

ANS:

Understanding business and social etiquette, lifestyles, and cultural adaptations that you will need to make will increase your ability to communicate with the people of that culture. You will want to learn as much as possible about how the people think and feel, their beliefs, values, and customs. Use their language as much as possible for simple greetings or phrases. You will want to learn and use their nonverbal signals. Consider their thought processes to help you communicate from the you-viewpoint. Researching information and talking with persons from that country can help you learn about their economies, customs, traditions, and social and business practices. Observe how people relate to each other, food and apparel preferences, workdays, workweek, holidays, and acceptable and unacceptable nonverbal gestures. Then consider similarities to and differences from your culture and how you can bridge those differences.

PTS: 1

10. Describe the difference between an interpreter and a translator.

ANS:

An interpreter is able to listen to a speaker and orally communicate the message in a different language. A translator changes written messages from one language to another. Both should be competent in the languages involved and in the subject matter.

PTS: 1