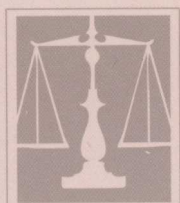


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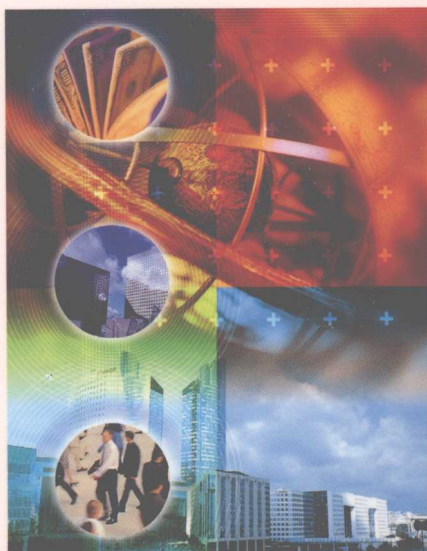
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跨文化商务沟通

Intercultural Business Communication

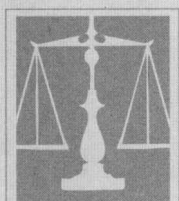
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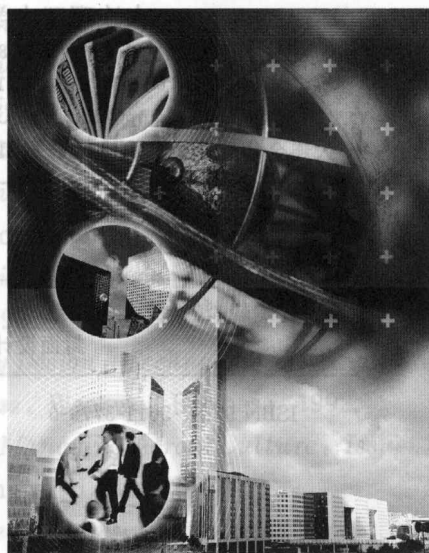
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跨文化商务沟通

Intercultural Business Communication

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PREFACE

前言

随着经济全球化的加速发展,国际商务交流与合作已经全方位展开。国际贸易和国际生产活动不仅跨越国界,往往也跨越文化,使跨国生产与贸易成为一种跨文化的沟通。文化的差异也就难免给国际商务合作造成摩擦和障碍。这种摩擦和障碍也是多方面的。经济全球化越是深入发展,文化上的摩擦与障碍这一问题就越突出。消除这些摩擦和障碍,提高跨文化沟通的有效性也就越来越重要,甚至成了决定国际商务活动成功与否的关键因素。比如,随着越来越多的跨国企业、合资企业的建立,人力资源的来源日益呈现出国际化的趋势。来自不同国家、不同民族的员工具有不同的文化背景,他们的价值观、行为准则、思维方式、态度等具有相当大的差异。这种文化差异很可能引起行为上的冲突。企业的管理人员能否在跨文化管理过程中有效解决文化冲突,减少文化差异造成的消极作用,对跨文化团队的建设和企业国际竞争力的提高意义重大。中国加入 WTO 后,文化差异也是中国企业走出国门,外资企业进入中国市场所面临的最大挑战。因此,为消除文化差异造成的障碍,迎接文化多元化的挑战,必须进行有效的跨文化商务沟通及跨文化商务管理方面的教育和培训。

跨文化商务研究这一学科发端于 20 世纪七八十年代的美国,是目前国外研究的热点之一,已有大量的著作和教材问世。但目前国内对此问题进行研究者尚少,除引进的原版教材外,本土学者编写的教材数量较少。为此,我们认为应该编写《跨文化商务沟通》一书来揭示文化冲突根源、分析国际商务活动和跨国公司管理中的文化冲突、解决由文化差异所导致的文化困惑,以使中国学生和读者加深对文化及其重要性的认识,意识到文化差异对跨文化沟通的影响,增强克服文化障碍的

信心和技能,顺利开展跨文化交流活动,促进中国经济的发展并带动其他方面的进步。

本书的主旨是研究文化背景不同的各类经济主体,如何通过文化整合处理文化与商务的关系,以更好地开展国际商务和跨国公司管理活动。内容安排除前言外共分12章。前4章对文化及文化构成元素进行概括介绍与分析,包括文化差异的客观性及经济全球化背景下跨文化商务沟通的重要性;不同文化背景下的政治、经济、教育及婚姻家庭等制度及文化对这些制度的影响和作用;作为文化核心的价值观,以及由不同价值观所形成的不同的商业文化;由于文化差异存在所形成的文化冲击问题。第5章至第8章主要介绍文化差异的表现,包括跨文化沟通中如何使用语言;不同文化下非语言沟通的含义;商业交往中由于文化差异可能造成的书面沟通障碍;跨文化沟通中的习俗、礼仪和礼节的重要性。第8章至第12章则重点介绍跨文化商务沟通的类型,包括跨文化谈判、跨文化管理、跨文化营销,最后以介绍主要国家商务文化风格收尾。

与同类教材相比,本书具有以下特点:

第一,本教材在内容上融合中外此类教材之精华,并吸收了该领域的最新研究成果,既探讨文化的深层含义,又从文化的表现入手,细解不同文化的差异,并对文化差异对国际商务沟通的影响进行了深入分析。与国内外同类教材相比,不仅包括关于文化及其构成要素、文化差异类型等介绍,还增加了跨文化管理、跨文化营销等章节,内容上更为全面、具体。

第二,本书结构和内容编排独具特色,力图使学术性、知识性、实用性和趣味性相结合。文中及各章后提供大量案例,各章后还附有根据中国人的思维习惯设计的自测题、案例和实践性问题,供学生进一步思考。

第三,本书采取以英文为主并辅以中文导读的双语写法。英文部分采取引用与编著相结合,引用部分均选自于英文原版刊物;中文导读部分并不是简单翻译和对照,而是就该问题作进一步的展开或描述。

本教材不仅具有一定的学术研究价值,而且具有一定的实用价值,既适合高等院校财经类专业和涉外专业师生的教学和研究使用,同时也以从事国际商务活动(进出口贸易、投资签约、技术合作、国际金融)及跨国企业经营管理、商贸旅游、英语专业及出国留学人员等人士为服务对象;对于进行涉外经贸领域的培训及对此

学科感兴趣者,也不失为一本有借鉴价值的教材和读物。

本书由杭州电子科技大学承担本课程教学和研究的专业教师编写。其中第1章、第4章由王春阳编写;第2章、第5章由杭言勇编写;第3章、第7章由周江编写;第8章、第9章由鲍平平编写;第6章由鲍平平、鲍伟共同编写;第10章由王春阳、刘玉瑾共同编写;第11章由王春阳、杭言勇共同编写;第12章由周江、王彬共同编写。全书由王春阳、鲍平平担任主编并负责统稿,周江、王彬负责整理和校对。

本书在编写时查阅了大量数据资料,吸收和借鉴了国内外大量跨文化沟通与管理的研究成果,在此向相关作者表示衷心感谢。由于跨文化商务沟通在中国属于新兴学科,加之作者的知识水平有限,书中的错误和纰漏在所难免,恳请读者批评指正。

编者

2007年7月

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Cultural Differences and Intercultural Communication

Chapter 1

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this chapter, you will:

- ① Understand the concept of culture, dimensions of culture, and characteristics of culture.
- ② Be able to define such terms as intercultural communication, intercultural business communication, world culture, intracultural communication, international communication, enculturation, acculturation, subcultures and subgroups.
- ③ Appreciate the relationship of culture and communication.
- ④ Understand the differences between norms, rules, roles, and networks.
- ⑤ Be able to know the processes of communication.
- ⑥ Understand how communication barriers affect intercultural communication, and how to improve communication component.

Globalization and Intercultural Business Communication

More than 2 million North Americans work for foreign employers, and the number of foreign companies who have built plants in the U.S., EU, China, and other countries is increasing. Evidence that the world is becoming more cosmopolitan can be seen in the number of international business such as Coca-cola, McDonald's, Sony, and Honda that are common around the world. The new economic bonanza is apparent in the universal appreciation of food such as sushi, fashion such as jeans, and music such as U.S. jazz and rock (Chaney & Martin, 2002).

Because of the global boom, more and more business will involve international activities which was called globalization. With the increasing number of multinational corporations and the internationalization of the economy, the globalization of the world economy is being a general trend. Intercultural business communication continues to become more and more important, therefore, it is imperative that managers, both present and future, be sensitive to differences in intercultural business communication and require the ability to communicate across cultures.

The International Monetary Fund defines **globalization** as the growing economic interdependence of countries worldwide through increasing volume and variety of cross-border transactions in rapid and services and of international capital flows, and also through the more rapid and widespread diffusion of technology. In simple words, business globalization is the ability of a corporation to take a product and market it in the entire civilized world. For better or for worse, it has changed the way the world does business. Though still in its early stages, it is all but unstoppable. The challenge that businesses and individuals face is learning how to live with it, manage it, and take advantage of the benefits it offers.

The globalization of economies has created a confluence of cultures when it comes to business practices. In a number of important respects, the increased globalization of the world's major economies such as the United States, the European Union, Japan and China is beginning to elicit demands for more uniform and organized business practices — in other words, a global standard for such corporate practices as ethics, governance and accounting. The dramatic rise in cross-border capital flow and international investment has created a sense urgency to reach such global standards. The information revolution and the Internet, along

with improvements in telecommunications technology, has facilitated cross-border discussion on these issues as well.

Globalization of national economies and business has had a great impact on capital, technology and trade flows but it has also had a major impact on national values, thought processes and the actions of people, organizations and institutions. The American fast food giant, McDonald's, is a dramatic example of how a company that does business around the globe can have an impact on local cultural traditions that seem totally unrelated to their main product — fast food. The company is also a prime example of how a company can think globally and act locally. In many countries — at least among the younger generations — McDonald's is considered a local company. In these countries, McDonald's has been absorbed into the local communities and become assimilated. It is no longer thought of as a foreign restaurant — and in many ways it no longer functions as one. The company is about more than the globalization of hamburgers — it is about altering culture.

Why is intercultural knowledge and understanding so important? The American statesman and inventor Benjamin Franklin wrote that time is money. Globe-trotting businesspeople would add that being aware of cultural differences and sensitivities is money, too. Failing to grasp the subtleties that lie beyond such public cultural displays like greeting rituals and seating arrangements can make the difference between a truly successful international business transaction and one that fails to connect. Culture affects the most basic forms of personal and business interaction from decision making to management style. National culture, in turn, determines corporate culture, affecting a firm's internal structure, its marketing behavior and its view of foreign business partners and contracts. The business world is littered with “international” projects that failed to overcome cultural barriers (Mitchell, 1999).

Understanding Culture

There are hundreds of definitions of culture. It is difficult to define because it is a large and inclusive concept. “Everything you need to know in life to get along in a society” is not as useful a definition, however, as one that focuses on what culture's characteristics are. Culture involves learned and shared behaviors, norms, values, and material objects. It also encompasses what humans create to

express values, attitudes, and norms. A culture is not usually discussed by the members who share it. Edward Hall (1966), a key researcher into culture, wrote

Culture [is] those deep, common, unstated experiences which members of a given culture share, which they communicate without knowing, and which form the backdrop against which all other events are judged.

Culture is like the water fish swim in — a reality that is taken for granted, rarely examined. It is in the air we breathe and as necessary to our understanding of who we are as air is to our physical life. Culture is the property of a community of people, not simply a characteristics of individuals. Societies are programmed by culture and that programming comes from similar life experiences and similar interpretations of what those experiences mean. If culture is mental programming, it is also a mental map of reality. It tells us from early childhood what matters, what to prefer, what to avoid, and what to do. Culture also tells us what ought to be. It gives us assumptions about the ideal beyond what individuals may experience. It helps us in setting priorities. It establishes codes for behavior and provides justification and legitimization for this behavior. Linda Beamer and Iris Varner (2001) defined culture;

Culture is the coherent, learned, shared view of a group of people about life's concerns that ranks what is import, furnishes, attitudes about what things are appropriate, and dictates behavior.

Charles Mitchell (1999) gives a more formal and common definition;

culture is a set of learned core values, beliefs, standards, knowledge, morals, laws, and behaviors shared by individuals and societies that determines how an individual acts, feels and view oneself and others.

A society's culture is passed from generation to generation, and aspects such as language, religion, customs and laws are interrelated — that is, a society's view of authority, morals and ethics will eventually manifest itself in how an individual does business, negotiates a contract or deals with a potential business relationship. Understanding the cultural context and mindset of a potential foreign business partner or competitor can help in developing sound strategy for negotiations and deal-making. What once seemed mysterious may become more predictable — and can ultimately be used to your advantage.

Characteristics of Culture

Culture Is Coherent

Each culture, past or present, is coherent and complete within itself — an entire view of the universe. Edward Tylor, the pioneer researcher into the study of cultures, said in 1871 that culture is

the outward expression of unifying and consistent vision by a particular community to its confrontation with such core issues as the origins of the cosmos, the harsh unpredictability of the natural environment, the nature of society and humankind's place in the order of things. (Cohen, 1991)

That different groups of human beings at different times in history could develop different visions is both a cause for wonder, and as we shall see, a cause of misunderstanding. The incredible richness of the variety of cultures fascinates historians, anthropologists, travelers, and nearly everybody. It makes all our lives richer to glimpse and even claim a bit of this treasure of human achievement.

Regardless of how peculiar a fragment of a culture seems, when it is placed within the whole tapestry of the culture, it makes sense. For example, in China, death is not to be mentioned even by homonym (words that merely sound like words associated with death are avoided), let alone broadcast by images everywhere. However, *El Dia de Los Muertos*, the day of the Dead (the last week of October, in every store window and every home are images of skeletons, skulls, and graves that made by surge and bread), is a fiesta with deep meaning for Mexican families. It emphasizes family ties that reach beyond the grave, as departed family members are remembered and consciously brought to join the living family members through a celebration. (In fact, the Chinese traditionally hold a celebration with a similar objective, called *Qing Ming*, on the fifth day of the fourth month, or April 5.) If the Chinese understood why the Mexicans display skulls and skeletons everywhere, they could respect the Mexicans attitudes toward death symbols. But if all they have is the culture fragment — a bit of behavior — they will probably regard it as bizarre, unnatural, and odious.

The completeness of cultures also means members looking out from their own seamless view of the universe probably do not see anything lacking in their

“unifying and consistent vision.” Why do I need to know another culture? How can I see the possibility of something existing where I have always seen nothing? How can I know what I don’t know? The response to these questions first recognizes that culture determines business practices are not neutral or value-free. Neither are business communication practices. You need to understand the cultural values you transmit when you interact with someone from another culture, as well as the other person’s cultural values. You also need to recognize the likelihood that there will be gaps in comprehension — holes instead of connections — in your interaction (Beamer & Varner, 2001).

Culture Is Learned

Culture is not something we are born with, but rather it is learned. This is not to say people can talk objectively about their own culture. Much of what is learned about one’s own culture is stored in mental categories that are recalled only when they are challenged by something different. We all have to be taught our culture. The process begins immediately after birth — even earlier, according to some.

If culture is learned, it is also learnable. That means nobody for a lifetime locked inside only one culture. If you want to understand other culture, you can learn them — not just learn about them, but actually get inside them and act according to what is expected in them. Many people have learned more than one culture and move comfortably within them. When circumstances dictate, they make the transition from one culture to another easily. Businesses don’t have to accept failure in another culture simply because no representative of the organization grew up in that culture (Beamer & Varner, 2001).

Culture Is the View of A Group of People

A culture is shared by a society. Members of the society agree about the meaning of things and about the *why*. Along with everyone from whom they have learned their culture — older family members, teachers, spiritual leaders, peers, and representatives of legal, political, and educational institutions — they have interpreted life experiences in ways that validate their own culture’s views. Therefore, since they have little doubt about that validity, they all share the view that their interpretations are correct. They agree about what the important things are that truly merit respects.

Members of a society probably agree without having to say so that something is necessary and important. Groups are motivated by common views, and these views are a dynamic force in enabling groups to achieve societal goals — protecting economic resources from unscrupulous outsiders, for example.

People in a given culture share symbols of that culture. The most obvious set of symbols is language. Much more will be said about the role of language (Chapter 5) and communication (later in this chapter). Cultures also share visual symbols. Company logos, icons, religious images, and national flags are examples of visual symbols (Beamer & Varner, 2001).

The Things Culture Does

Culture Ranks What Is Important

What is of paramount importance to one group may be virtually meaningless to another. For instance, consider the amassing of wealth. In one Pacific Island culture, the Guru rumba of New Guinea, a rich man is required to expend all his carefully amassed fortune — in this case, pigs — in the lavish entertainment of the members of his society. To be able to entertain this way is the real meaning of wealth because it means the giver is owed and there has great prestige. But explain that to a businessperson in the United States or Italy who has spent his or her life amassing wealth! Usually in these cultures resources are to be husbanded and increased, not depleted in one big blow-out. To be sure, businesspeople in these cultures often make generous charitable and philanthropic donations, but their cultures teach them to treat wealth with care and make it grow. Cultures rank what is important. In other words, cultures teach values or priorities.

The term values and attitude (later in Chapter 3) crop up frequently in books about intercultural business. A values is the core of the culture. Values underlie attitudes. They also shape beliefs. They enable us to evaluate what matters to us or to apply standards to our attitudes and beliefs. Values are what people go to war over or conduct business by. In order to communicate about business in another culture, it is necessary to understand the values that operate in that business culture. Because values tell us how to weigh the worth of something, they indicate