

# *Grasp Cultural Differences and Achieve Effective Communication*

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**Keywords:** Cultural dimension theory, Cross-cultural business negotiation, Multinational enterprises, Cross-cultural differences

**Abstract:** In the context of the globalization of business and trade, the thesis is guided by the “cultural dimension theory” and focuses on the effective cross-cultural communication. With the expansion of global trade, the competition among multinational enterprises is becoming more and more fierce. Effective communication and management mode are of great importance to multinational enterprises. Enterprise managers should not only solve the problem of language communication, but also consider the impact of cultural differences in different countries on employees' values and cooperation ability.

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 “Cultural Dimension Theory”

Business culture is the product and service as the carrier, the business activities of enterprises as the driving force and link, reflecting, spreading, creating and carrying forward the material civilization and spiritual civilization of the society. In terms of cultural values, Hofstede, a Dutch scholar, conducted a large-scale survey on the cultural values of IBM, a famous multinational company, and focused on the analysis of the differences in the cultural values of employees in various countries, and summed up six cultural dimensions to measure values: individualism and collectivism; Power distance; Uncertainty avoidance; Masculinity and femininity; Long-term tendency and short-term tendency; Indulgence and restraint.

The management mode of an enterprise is the direct reflection of business culture, and enterprise culture is a management-oriented culture. The management mode of an enterprise is the main manifestation of business activities, and business culture is a marketing culture. Most enterprises take profit as their foothold, so the operation mode that is conducive to expanding sales and in line with social ethics is the best choice. Expanding sales creates more business interests for enterprises, conforms to social ethics and wins customer reputation for enterprises. The organic combination of the two requires enterprise managers to adjust employees under different cultural dimensions and choose appropriate communication methods, which can promote mutual understanding and support.

### 1.2 Language Barriers in Cross-Cultural Business

Through the course study, I know that cross-cultural business communication refers to the process

in which people with different cultural backgrounds transfer, exchange and understand each other's information, ideas, knowledge and emotions in business activities. Language barriers in cross-cultural communication deserve communicators' attention, which can be divided into shallow language barriers and deep language barriers. In the global business communication activities, English, as a global business language, has largely overcome the communication barriers caused by different language symbol systems, that is, the superficial language barriers. By using standardized and unified language in communication, representatives from different countries can minimize vocabulary mistakes, avoid excessive use of dialect and slang, reduce misunderstandings caused by pragmatic failures, and avoid excessive use of industry terms, thus overcoming these superficial language barriers. For the representatives of different countries with different national cultural concepts, the misunderstanding caused by cultural differences is called deep language barrier. For example, in business negotiations, when Chinese representatives say “OK”, they respect the other party and express their sincere attitude that they are willing to listen to the other party, while western representatives will mistakenly think that The Chinese representatives agree with all the negotiation content and express their affirmation of signing the contract, which will lead to conflicts between the two sides of the negotiation.

## **2. Business Communication**

### **2.1 Business Verbal Communication**

In cross-cultural business communication, verbal communication plays an important role in business communication. Proper verbal communication is indispensable for business negotiation with foreign enterprises and effective management in multinational companies.

As John D. Rockefeller, the oil magnate, said, “If interpersonal skills were a commodity like sugar or coffee, I would pay more for them than anything under the sun.” This shows the importance of effective communication. It goes without saying that good communication is vital to any team and organization.

### **2.2 Business Non-Verbal Communication**

Albert Merabian, an American communication scientist, once put forward a formula: “All expression of information =7% speech +38% voice and intonation +55% body language”, in which non-verbal factors convey 93% of the information, indicating that non-verbal communication plays an extremely important role in business activities.

#### **2.2.1 Physical Distance**

People in different countries have different views on physical distancing in cross-cultural business communication due to their different cultural backgrounds and national habits. There are four types of distance representing four different social situations: intimate relationships (physical distance ranging from about 45 centimeters to 45 centimeters apart), personal interactions (conversation between people 45 to 80 centimeters apart), social interactions (conversation between people 1 to 3 meters apart), and public situations (distances greater than 3 meters or more). Understanding the cultural requirements for physical contact and distance in different countries can help us conduct our business dealings with other countries with propriety and grace.

#### **2.2.2 Sign Language**

The hand is one of the organs that people often use to express their emotions, and sign language is

also called “special language” because gestures can convey messages directly. Body language plays an important role in business communication. The same gesture will be understood differently in different cultural backgrounds, and the use of gesture language just reflects those different cultural backgrounds give different communicative functions to gestures. Therefore, use of sign language in formal and informal business situations should be carefully considered.

With the long-term exchange of business and trade, the cooperation and exchange between countries has gradually increased, so that at present, there are many gestures that overcome the cultural differences of countries and are endowed with the same meaning, such as: applause to welcome, encourage and identify the speaker; Thumbs-up in most countries and regions is the meaning of praise. Therefore, before cross-cultural business communication, the meaning of sign language should be analyzed and studied in detail in order to avoid unnecessary mistakes affecting the whole business activities.

### **3. Cross-Cultural Business Negotiation**

The basic principles of cross-cultural business negotiation are the guidelines for business negotiation, mainly including the following principles.

#### **3.1 The Principle of Equality and Voluntariness**

The principle of equality and voluntariness in cross-cultural business negotiation is embodied in the following four aspects. First of all, companies on both sides of the transaction should be equal in rank and status regardless of their size. Secondly, both parties have the right to veto any clause in the negotiation. If one party is not satisfied, the agreement cannot be reached. Finally, at the end of the negotiations, the decision whether to sign an agreement is made on a voluntary basis.

#### **3.2 The Principle of Mutual Benefit**

The principle of mutual benefit not only reflects the connotation of win-win for each other, but also the enterprise successfully obtains its expected benefits. Reciprocity and mutual benefit require each other to think in each other's position and not to bargain blindly in their own position, otherwise they may be too sensitive to defend their own position and ignore the interests of the other party, resulting in deadlock or even breakdown of the negotiation.

#### **3.3 The Principle of Seeking Common Ground While Reserving Differences**

The principle of seeking common ground while shelving differences means that both sides of the negotiation should seek common ground on major goals and major issues of principle and have the consciousness of overall situation. During the negotiation, the main negotiation issues should focus on important matters, and for some trivial differences or differences, both sides can temporarily shelve or compromise a step, so as to promote the success of the negotiation.

### **4. Multinational Enterprises and Cross-Cultural Teams**

Multinational enterprises are mainly based in their own countries and set up branches or subsidiaries around the world through foreign direct investment to engage in international production and business activities. Multinational companies share common policy and strategic objectives, and the various branches of the enterprise share common resources, information and responsibilities. Cross-cultural team is a platform for people with different cultural backgrounds to work together in

an enterprise for completing the same project or achieving the same goal.

#### **4.1 Cultural Integration of Multinational Enterprises**

The integration of transnational enterprise culture mainly includes the integration of value concept, moral behavior standard, material culture and management idea. Through the establishment of a unified value system, the company establishes a unified goal in the spirit of employees, which helps to weaken the communication barriers between employees and managers caused by their own values and religious beliefs. The company sets up a unified standard of moral behavior, which helps to standardize the code of conduct of employees, and also creates an equal and comfortable communication environment for employees. Through the integration of material culture, the company ADAPTS to the changes of company size and team structure by means of asset reorganization, staff increase and decrease, equipment replacement, etc., and further improves the relevant welfare and working conditions to facilitate the smooth repositioning and role transformation of employees, which is conducive to improving cross-cultural communication effect. The integration of the company's business philosophy, the formulation of strategic goals that adapt to the company's future development, and the reflection of the development trajectory of employees' future work will help speed up the integration of employees into the new environment and new team, and build a broad communication platform for employees' career growth.

#### **4.2 Talent Localization Strategy**

The talent localization strategy implemented in multinational companies not only includes the knowledge and ability training of talents, but also includes the cultivation of employees' sense of belonging and loyalty to the enterprise. Effective communication becomes a bridge for employees to integrate into local enterprises as soon as possible. For employees, local employees not only require multinational companies to provide favorable salary, but also attach more importance to the development of their personal career, that is, enterprises need to provide them with a stage to display their talents. In view of this, many local companies in China have been invited to universities or training institutions, to help them training senior management personnel, technical personnel, etc., these policies show that multinationals have faded past “high above the” employment mentality, really stood on the employee's point of view thinking, good communication, further realizes the enterprise and employees Give every employee the respect and opportunity to grow as they deserve.

#### **5. Conclusion**

Based on the background of globalization, in combination with Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, and the content of the course focuses on, according to the differences in social and cultural backgrounds, different countries put forward along with the commercial trade brought by the increasingly frequent cross-cultural communication, the contradiction of the cross-cultural differences and attempt to solve design for the negative impact of multinational companies.

International business culture studies the communication between people. Only by accumulating communication experience in cross-cultural business activities from daily work and life, and analyzing effective communication and negotiation skills from the root of culture, can a smooth and smooth communication bridge be built among all members of cross-cultural enterprises. To promote the rapid integration of employees from different countries into the enterprise team, thus improving the operation and management efficiency of multinational companies, and realizing the comprehensive integration of corporate culture of multinational companies.

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