

have a
dream



ERF:
CULTURAL AWARENESS AND EXPRESSION
TOPIC NO. 3: Effective communication skills in
intercultural contexts

Project Partner Name

Have a dream

Duration: 6 hours



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the European Union**

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Project Consortium

Coordinator:



Partners:



Jordan Youth Innovation Forum
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Acronym: **EMSA** (Entrepreneurial Mindset and Skills for All)

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Training Aim

The aim of this workshop is to cultivate a deeper understanding about the significance of cultural awareness and expression. By exploring the definitions of cultural heritage, and the importance of preserving cultural traditions, participants will develop a heightened awareness of the value that diverse cultural backgrounds bring to society.

Intercultural communication will also be a focal point of the workshop, participants will learn about the barriers to intercultural dialogue and discover strategies to foster respectful and meaningful interactions across cultural boundaries.

By the end of the workshop, participants will have:

The ability to effectively interact with people from different backgrounds.

- A sense of agency and the confidence to contribute positively to a more inclusive world.
- A broader understanding of global issues and the interconnectedness of cultures.
- Practical communication skills for working effectively in intercultural environments.
- Needed skills to overcome common communication barriers, and practice conflict resolution strategies that can be applied in diverse cultural contexts.



Topic 3

Learning Outcomes

In terms of **knowledge**:

- *Define intercultural communication principles and learn about business communication in international communities and how technology affects intercultural dialogue.*

In terms of **skills**:

- *Apply effective communication techniques and overcome communication barriers in international communities.*

In terms of **competencies**:

- *Implement strategies to overcome communication barriers in intercultural contexts, ensuring mutual understanding and respect in their interactions.*

ERF: The European Reference Framework (Key Competences for Lifelong Learning)



Cultural awareness and expression competence involves understanding and respecting how ideas and meanings are creatively conveyed and shared across different cultures through various art forms and cultural practices. It also entails actively engaging in comprehending, developing, and articulating one's own ideas and sense of belonging or role in society across different contexts and settings.

What ERF competence is our training about?

Training Route Map (*Competence Level*)

1

Understanding the diversity of cultural expressions and the importance of cultural heritage

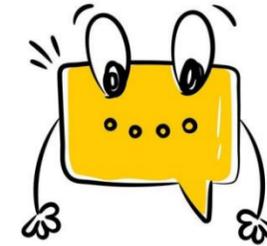
2

Cultural Diversity and How to ensure it

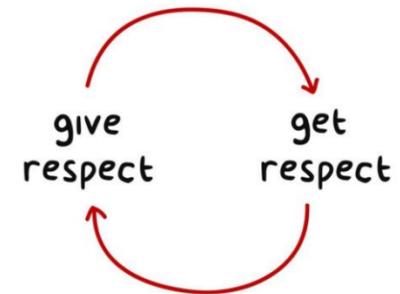
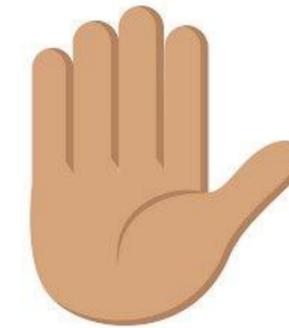
3

Effective communication skills in intercultural contexts

Training Rules



Chat



BREAK TIME

Culture is the software of the mind
Geert Hofstede



Ice-breaking Activity

Tell us Two words that describe your culture.

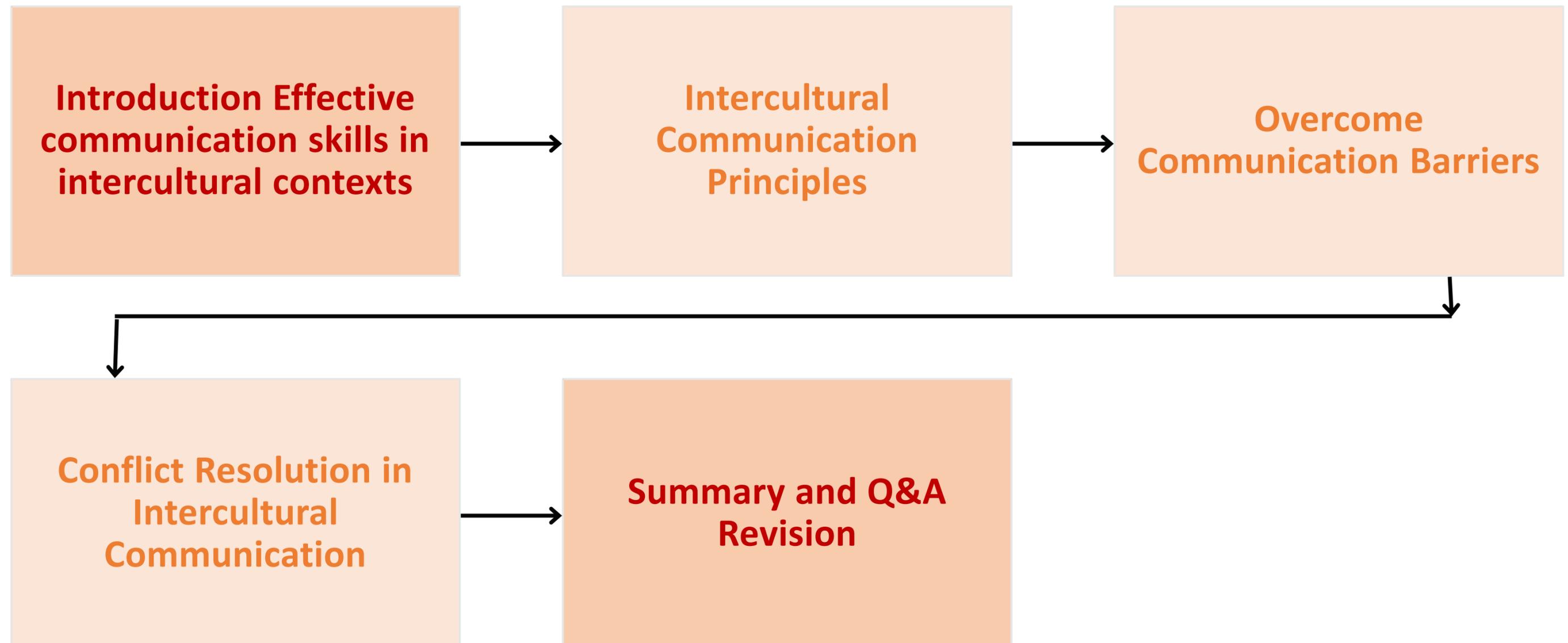


**The First One
Everyone
Knows**



**The Second One
Few Know**

Training Route Map



Introduction to Intercultural Communication

what is intercultural communication ?

Intercultural communication is the ability to engage with people from different cultural backgrounds. It involves patience and sensitivity to differences such as language, customs, thought patterns, social norms, and behaviors.



Intercultural Communication

People around the world share many common traits, but it is our cultural differences that shape how we communicate.

Effective communication involves sharing ideas and information through both verbal and non-verbal methods, making it important to understand social cues, body language, and etiquette.



Intercultural Communication

Developing strong intercultural communication skills is essential for success in multicultural or international settings.

It strengthens relationships by encouraging open dialogue and mutual understanding across cultural boundaries.



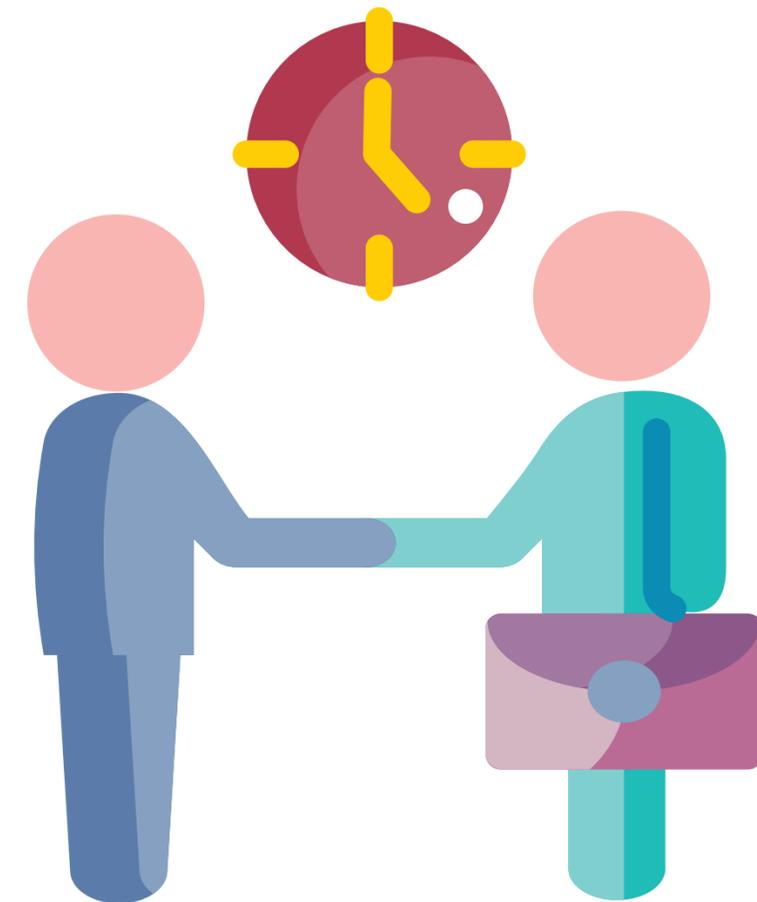
Example

Navigating Business Relationships

Understanding and respecting the social norms of different cultures is essential for successful business interactions.

For example:

- Americans often use small talk.
- The British may incorporate humor
- Germans tend to be direct.
- Thai culture is generally more open to personal questions, such as those about marital status or occupation, which might be perceived as intrusive in Western cultures.



1. Business communication in Intercultural Contexts

1.1 VUCA

1.2 The Hofstede Model (6-D Model)

VUCA

- **VUCA**, a term originating from the U.S. military in the late 1980s to describe the post-Cold War environment, highlights **volatility**, **uncertainty**, **complexity**, and **ambiguity**. Initially used to analyze and adapt to military challenges, it was later adopted by the business and leadership communities to navigate dynamic corporate landscapes.
- Today, VUCA is widely applied to all aspects of life, including personal decision-making, relationships, and life events, reflecting the complexities and uncertainties we face daily. This concept provides a framework for understanding and adapting to ever-changing conditions in both professional and personal spheres.

VUCA



VOLATILITY



UNCERTAINTY



COMPLEXITY



AMBIGUITY

VUCA

Volatility

- Volatility refers to the speed and unexpected changes that an organization faces.
- Changes can be fast and unexpected.
- volatility leads to a difficult work environment.
- A volatile environment demands a clear and coherent vision to guide decisions.



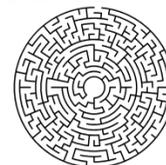
Uncertainty

- Uncertainty refers to unpredictability to the future events.
- In an uncertainty environment, it's challenging to forecast future occurrences due to a lack of clear data.



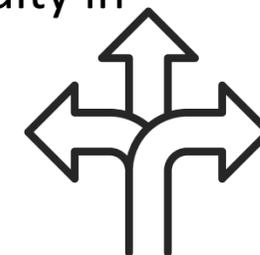
Complexity

- Complexity refers to the presence of multiple interconnected factors, issues, or forces that make it difficult to understand.
- In complex situations, small changes can lead to unpredictable outcomes.



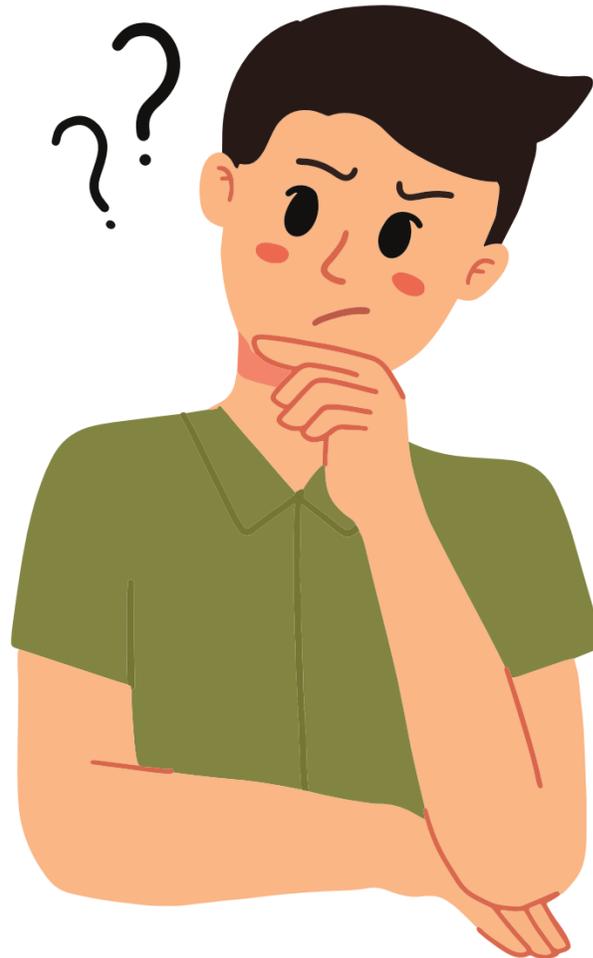
Ambiguity

- Ambiguity refers to a lack of clarity or mixed messages.
- Ambiguity accrues when there is difficulty in understanding the situation.



Group Discussion

Are we living in a VUCA world ?



VUCA

- We live in a **VUCA world** characterized by Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity.
- Rapid technological advances, economic fluctuations, and geopolitical shifts drive **Volatility**.
- **Uncertainty** surrounds events like climate change and political decisions.
- **Complexity** arises from interconnected systems like global supply chains.
- **Ambiguity** persists due to incomplete or unclear information.
- Living in a VUCA world isn't entirely negative. It opens doors for innovation, growth, and progress. Though it brings challenges, it also fosters adaptability, resilience, and the capacity to succeed in times of change.
- The VUCA framework helps us grasp, manage, and take advantage of today's complexities.

How can we deal with the VUCA world?

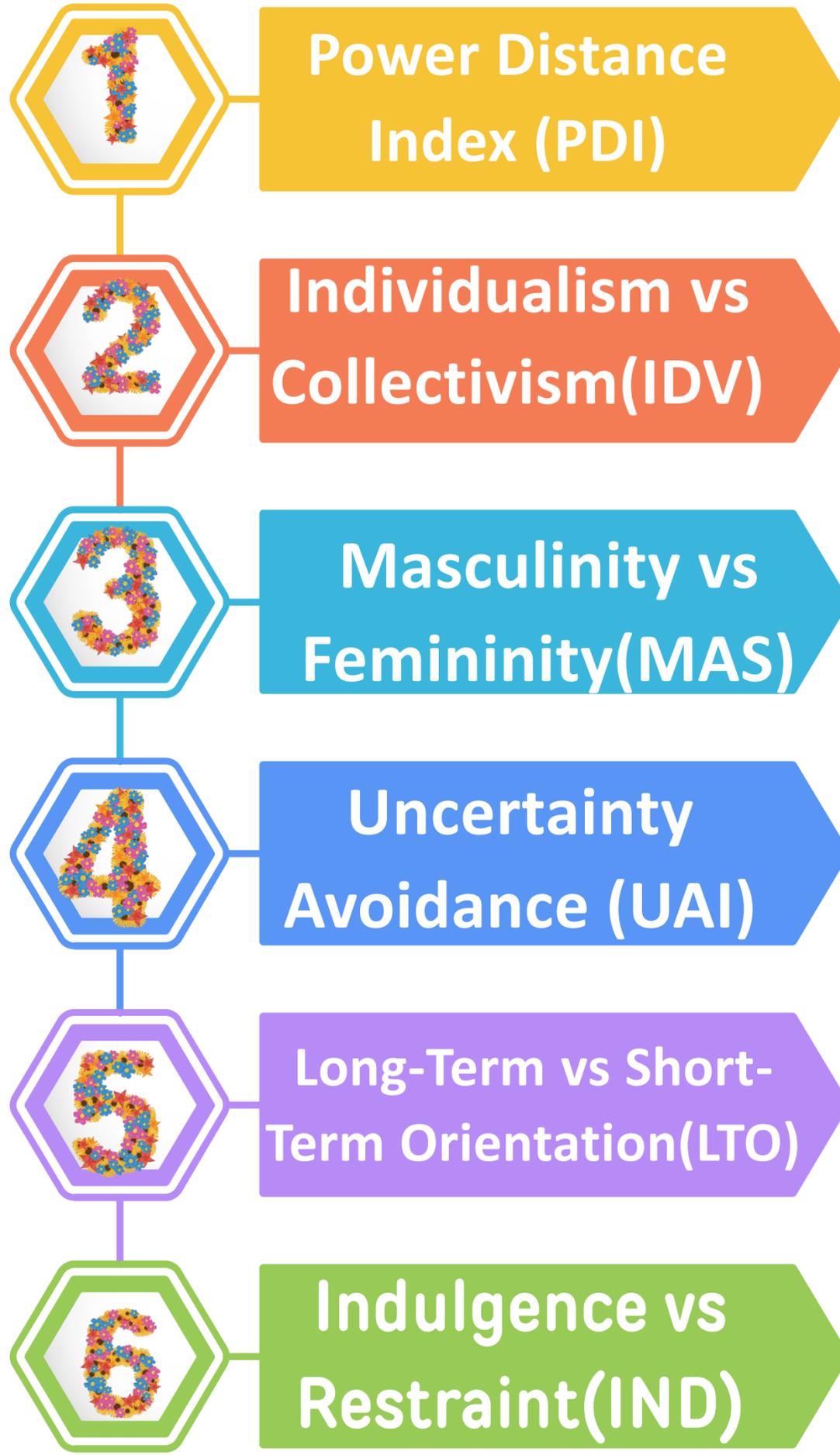
- Stay informed and engage with stakeholders to understand their needs and expectations.
- Tackle it through clear communication and teamwork, ensuring complex issues are addressed collaboratively.
- Encourage agility by fostering a team that is adaptable, willing to try new approaches, and learn new skills.

Hofstede's cultural dimensions Theory

- This Theory is developed by Professor Geert Hofstede.
- Hofstede cultural dimensions theory is a way to understand different cultures.
- it helps explain why people from different countries act the way they do
- Each dimension looks at a different part of culture.



Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory (6D's)

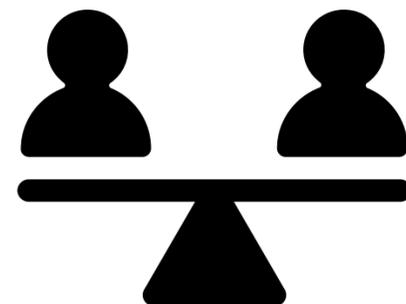


Power Distance Index (PDI)

- The Power distance index shows how much people accept that power is not shared equally.

- People believe it is ok for leaders to have more power and they have to respect and follow their leaders without questions.

High power distance



- People believe everyone should be equal, they like to share ideas and make decisions together.

Low power distance

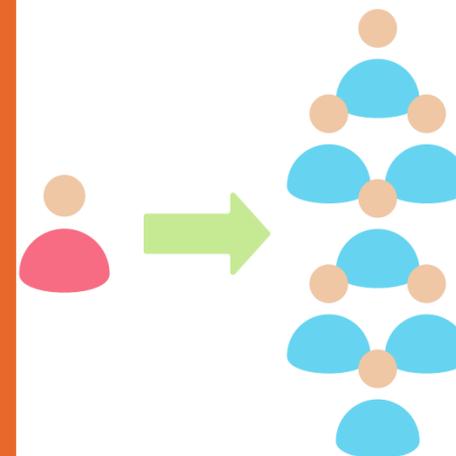
Individualism vs Collectivism

● Individualism

- Individualism means people care more about themselves and their close family.
- They think about “I” before “we”.
- They value personal freedom and independence.

• Example:

USA



● Collectivism

- collectivism means people care more about the group.
- They think about “We” before “I”
- They value teamwork and loyalty to the group.

• Example:

China

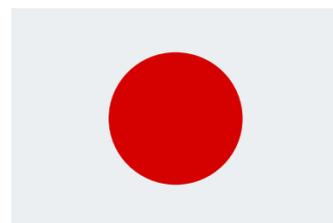


Masculinity vs Femininity

● Masculinity

- Dimension looks at what qualities a culture values
- Masculine culture values:
Competition, Achievement, success
- being strong and assertive is important
- Example:

Japan



● Femininity

- Value caring for others, Quality of life, and cooperation
- They think being kind and modest is important.

- Example:

Sweden



Uncertainty Avoidance



- Uncertainty avoidance index shows how comfortable people are with uncertainty and change.

- People like to know what will happen next
- They prefer rules and plans to avoid surprises.

- **Example : Greece** 

High Uncertainty Avoidance



- People are more relaxed about the future
- They are okay with not knowing what will happen and are more flexible.

- **Example : Singapore** 

Low Uncertainty Avoidance

Long-Term vs Short-Term Orientation



● Long-Term Orientation

- Long-Term-oriented cultures focus on the future
- They value saving money and planning for long-term success
- They are willing to wait for rewards

- Example:

South Korea



● Short-Term Orientation

- Long-term-oriented cultures focus on the present or near future.
- Like quick results and spending money now.

- Example:

Nigeria



Indulgence vs Restraint

● Indulgence

- Indulgent cultures allow people to enjoy life and have fun
- Believe it is good to satisfy desires and have freedom in spending money and time

- Example:

Mexico



● Restraint

- Control their desires and follow strict social rules
- They focus on saving money and being practical

- Example:

Russia



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NRnYksNWyDg>

2. Overcome communication barriers

2.1 *communication barriers*

2.2 *How can we overcome communication barriers?*

2.3 *Technology and Intercultural Communication*

communication Barriers

- Communication barriers are obstacles that hinder effective communication.
- These barriers can disrupt the flow of information, leading to misunderstandings, conflicts, and decreased productivity.
- Understanding these barriers is essential for improving communication skills and fostering stronger relationships.



communication Barriers

- Semantic barriers
- Psychological barriers
- Physical barriers
- Cultural barriers
- Organizational barriers



Semantic barriers

- These occur when the sender and receiver have different interpretations of words or symbols.



Psychological barriers

- These are mental or emotional obstacles that can prevent effective communication, such as stress, anxiety, or preconceived notions.



Physical barriers

- These are physical obstacles that can interfere with communication, such as noise, distance, or technical difficulties.



Cultural barriers

- These arise from differences in cultural values, beliefs, or customs.



Organizational barriers

- These are structural or procedural obstacles within an organization that can hinder communication.



Case Study



Communication Barriers Between Aisha and Tom

- Aisha, a marketing manager from Egypt, and Tom, a software developer from Canada, were collaborating on a project for a global tech company. Their different cultural backgrounds led to several communication barriers that impacted their ability to work together effectively.

Communication Barriers Between Aisha and Tom

- During a meeting, Aisha used the term "deadline" to refer to a flexible timeline for project tasks, while Tom interpreted it as a strict deadline. This misunderstanding led to Tom prioritizing certain tasks incorrectly, causing delays in the project.
- Aisha felt overwhelmed by the fast-paced work environment and began to assume that Tom's straightforward feedback was criticism of her capabilities. This stress affected her confidence and willingness to engage in discussions, further complicating their collaboration.

Communication Barriers Between Aisha and Tom

- The company lacked established communication protocols for cross-departmental projects. To resolve this, Aisha and Tom proposed regular check-in meetings and the use of collaborative tools like project management software. This helped ensure everyone was on the same page regarding expectations and responsibilities.
- Aisha was accustomed to a more relationship-oriented approach, valuing personal connections, while Tom preferred task-focused efficiency. Recognizing this difference, they agreed to set aside time to build rapport, which improved their overall communication and understanding.

Communication Barriers Between Aisha and Tom

- Through awareness and proactive measures, Aisha and Tom successfully navigated their communication barriers. Their collaboration improved significantly, leading to a successful project completion and a better understanding of how cultural differences can impact teamwork.

How can we overcome Communication Barriers?

Brainstorming

“ Overcoming Communication Barriers ”



How can we overcome Communication

- Rather than seeking a specific solution for every communication barrier, it's more effective to develop a general strategy to address any potential obstacles that may arise.



Strategies for overcoming communication Barriers

- Stay Calm
- Do your research
- Find a new location
- Gain experience



Stay Calm

- It's important to remain calm when encountering communication difficulties. Increased anxiety and frustration can only exacerbate a strained conversation.



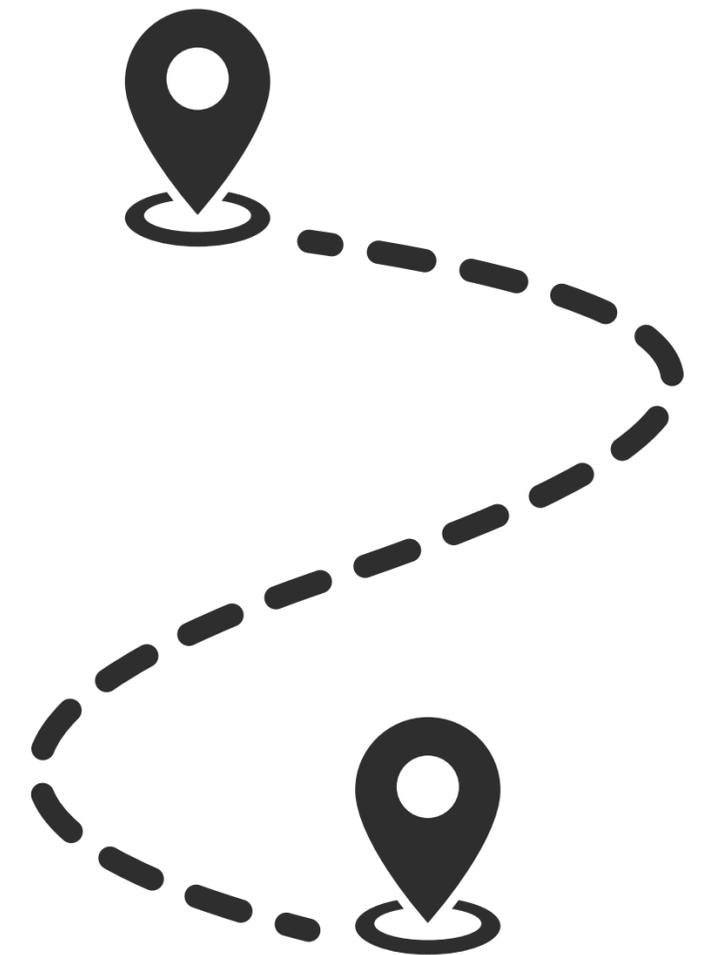
Do your research

- By conducting research and preparing for potential cultural differences, language barriers, or other challenges, you can often prevent communication issues and avoid frustration.



Find a new location

- Sometimes, a change of scenery can revitalize a stagnant conversation. Our environment significantly influences communication, so if the current setting isn't conducive, consider moving to a different location. This applies to both in-person and online interactions.



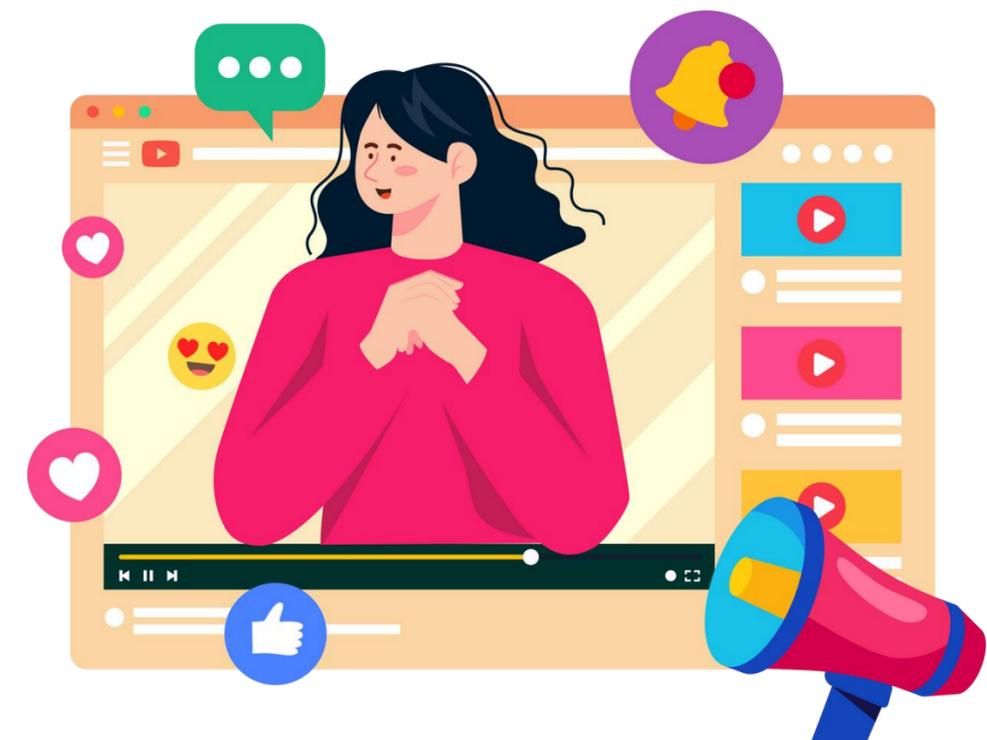
Gain experience

- The key to becoming a better communicator is to be prepared for any situation. The best way to gain this experience is to practice regularly by engaging in conversations with new people. Try talking to someone you see on the bus, your barista, or a new colleague.



Technology and Intercultural Communication

Technology has changed the way we communicate by making it faster and easier. While it helps us connect more quickly, it also affects how we interact with others on a personal level. In this section, we will look at how technology impacts communication, both the good and the bad, and how to balance using technology with talking face-to-face.



What are the negative and positive effects of technology on communication skills?

The Negative Impact



● Dependence on Technology and Its Effects on Social Interactions

- As technology becomes more integrated into our lives, our reliance on it for communication has increased.
- This dependence has contributed to a decline in face-to-face interactions and the overall quality of our social engagements.
- Over-reliance on technology can lead to challenges, especially when it fails or is not available, impacting our ability to connect effectively.

● Lack of Emotional Depth and Miscommunication

- While technology has made communication faster and more efficient, it often lacks emotional depth.
- Digital interactions can make it challenging to express emotions and nuances effectively.
- This can result in misunderstandings and miscommunication.

● Decrease in Face-to-Face Communication and Its Consequences

- Increased reliance on technology has resulted in a decline in face-to-face interactions.
- This reduction can lead to weaker social skills and challenges in forming deeper connections with others.
- It may also result in diminished empathy and a decreased ability to interpret nonverbal cues.

The Positive Impact



● Global Connectivity through Technology

- Technology allows us to connect with people worldwide in ways that were previously impossible.
- This has promoted deeper cultural understanding and fostered a greater sense of global empathy.

● The Convenience of Communication through Technology

- Technology has made communication faster and more accessible than ever.
- We can instantly connect with others, regardless of distance.
- This ease of communication helps maintain long-distance relationships and keeps us closely connected with friends and family, no matter how far away they are.

● Enhanced Communication through Technology

- Technology has significantly improved the way we communicate, offering new possibilities for connection.
- Video conferencing allows for face-to-face conversations with people across vast distances.
- Instant messaging enables real-time communication with anyone, anywhere in the world, making global interaction more efficient and personal.

Group Discussion

what are the challenges and benefits of Technology in Intercultural Communication?



3. Conflict Resolution in Intercultural Communication

3.1 Negotiation Tactics

3.2 Building Trust

Negotiation Tactics

Cultural differences play a crucial role in successful negotiations. Understanding these differences is essential, especially in today's interconnected world where business transactions and cooperation often cross international borders.

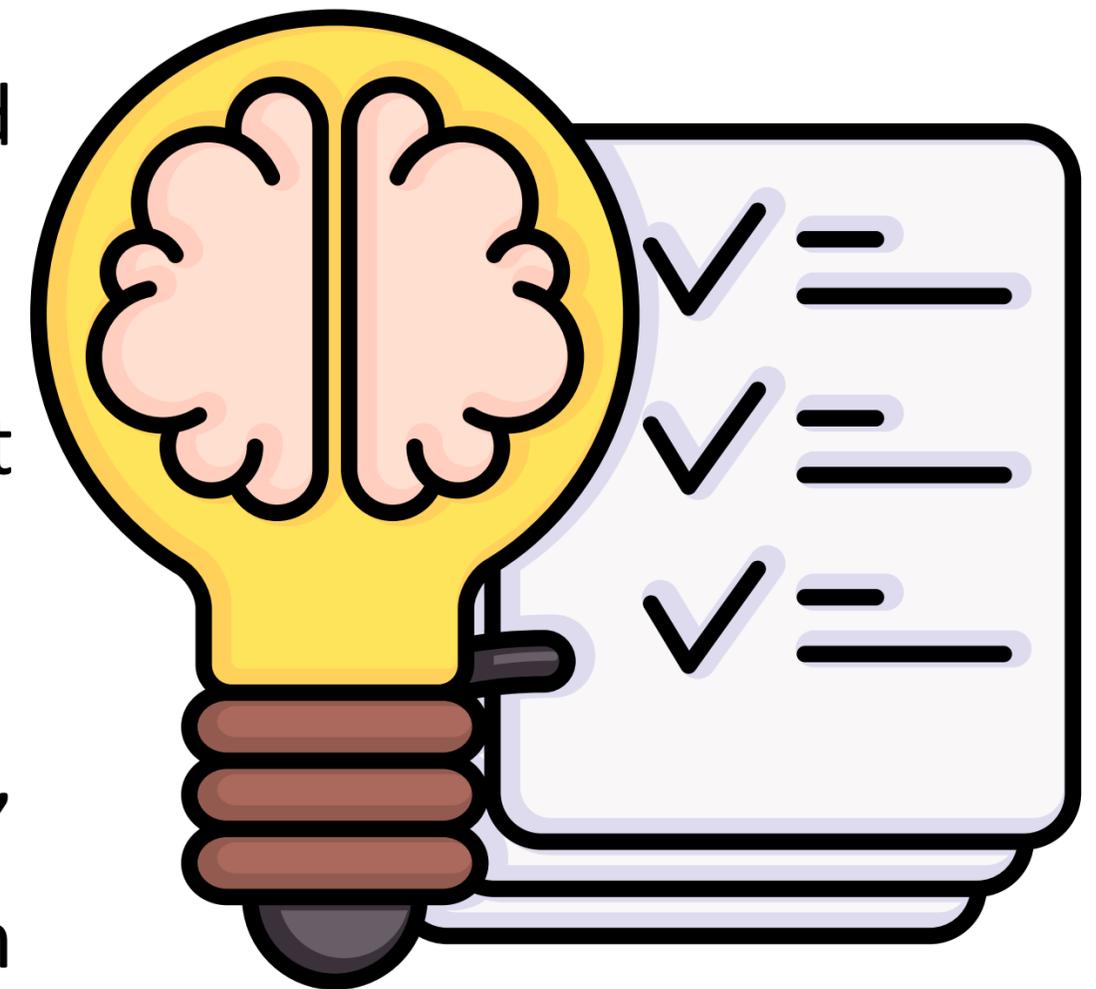


Negotiation across cultures

Negotiation styles vary across cultures, from direct and confrontational to indirect and cooperative.

Some cultures prioritize indirect communication, while others prefer directness.

By understanding these different styles, negotiators can improve their communication skills and adapt their strategies accordingly.



American Negotiation Style

Speed, cost and efficiency

Americans approach negotiations with a focus on speed, cost, and efficiency.

They aim for a win-win outcome where one side's gain is not necessarily the other side's loss.

Information is seen as a tool for negotiation, and both sides have limits they are willing to accept.

The goal is to find common ground within these limits.

Americans prioritize the transaction over the relationship, and they value clear and concise action plans.



Several red maple leaves are hanging from the top left corner of the slide.

Canada negotiation style

Information sharing and problem-solving

Canadian negotiators focus on achieving win-win outcomes.

They prioritize information sharing and problem-solving to reach this goal.

Their approach is typically polite, direct, and efficient, with a focus on facts rather than building relationships.





China negotiation style

A soft sell and a hard buy

Chinese negotiators are skilled and strategic.

They prefer group negotiations with a spokesperson and use a gradual approach with generous initial offers.

They may also mention personal connections.



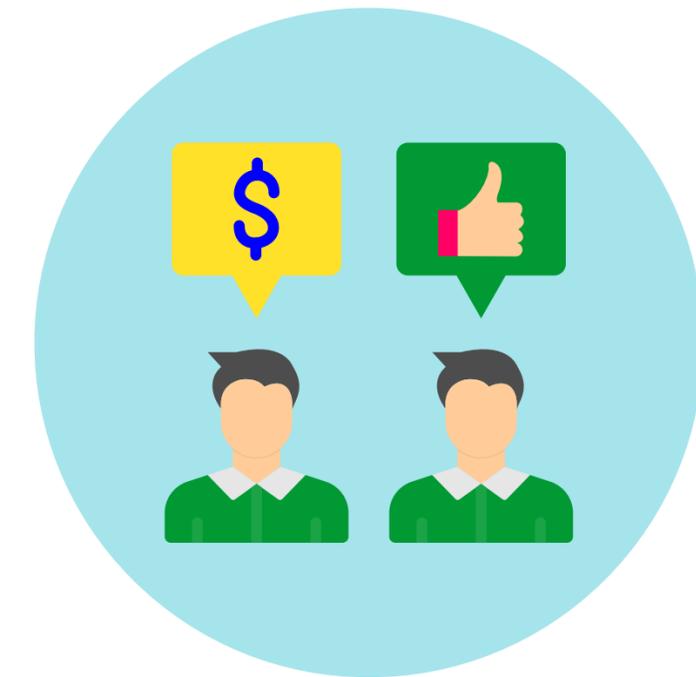


Zambia negotiation style Flexibility and commitment

The Zambian negotiation style prioritizes mutual benefit and is characterized by a back-and-forth exchange, often involving haggling.

Zambian negotiators may ask you to suggest a price rather than directly quoting one.

The overall goal is to reach an agreement that satisfies both parties.



Case Study



The 2010 Copenhagen Climate Summit Miscommunication

At the 2010 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, negotiations faced challenges due to cultural misunderstandings between key delegations, particularly China and the United States. These miscommunications were rooted in differences in how each delegation approached negotiation and communication:

- Chinese Delegation: They preferred a more reserved and indirect communication style, avoiding public confrontation to maintain harmony.
- U.S. Delegation: They used a direct and transparent approach, expecting open and immediate discussions. The U.S. saw the indirectness of the Chinese team as avoidance, while China viewed the U.S. style as unnecessarily aggressive.

The 2010 Copenhagen Climate Summit Miscommunication

The main issue was a mismatch in negotiation styles:

- China followed a flexible approach to scheduling and decision-making.
- The U.S. preferred clear timelines and rapid progress.

To address the situation, neutral mediators, who were familiar with both cultures, were brought in to facilitate private discussions. These mediators helped both sides better understand each other's communication preferences, leading to more productive and respectful negotiations.

The 2010 Copenhagen Climate Summit Miscommunication

Although the summit didn't result in a significant climate agreement, it did highlight the importance of **cultural awareness** in international diplomacy. Without it, differences in communication styles can cause frustration and stall progress. By understanding and respecting these differences, negotiations can be more successful, even in complex global discussions. This case highlights the power of effective intercultural communication to resolve misunderstandings and find common ground.

Building Trust

- Building strong relationships and trust is essential for effective cross-cultural communication.
- Showing real interest, listening carefully, and respecting different perspectives help build trust and mutual respect. This creates a positive work environment where everyone's views are valued.



Why should you care about building trust?

- Deteriorating trust leads to noticeable changes in interactions.
- High-trust organizations experience 74% less stress, while low-trust environments increase stress for all.
- Managers who don't trust their teams tend to micromanage and restrict their independence.



Why should you care about building trust?

- Coworkers who lack trust in one another often avoid collaboration and miss opportunities to form social connections.
- Trust is essential from the beginning, as losing it can harm one's reputation and lead to exclusion from workplace friendships.
- In remote work settings, strong trust is vital for fostering effective teamwork and collaboration.



How to building trust in multicultural environments ?

- **Be Honest:**

Building a reputation for dishonesty quickly destroys trust. Always be truthful, even if it feels uncomfortable, to avoid being caught in a lie.



- **Honor your commitments:**

A trustworthy person makes every effort to keep their commitments. If you make a promise, be sure to follow through, and avoid making promises you may not be able to keep.



How to building trust in multicultural environments ?

- **Communicate effectively:**

Trust can be harmed by miscommunication, so aim to communicate clearly to avoid misunderstandings.

If something isn't clear during a conversation, ask questions to clarify.

Listening is just as important as speaking—allow others to talk and show genuine interest by truly listening.



How to building trust in multicultural environments ?

- **Be helpful:**

A trustworthy person helps others out of kindness, not self-interest. When your tasks are done, offer help to coworkers, or support new hires who may need guidance.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oMiRZ1JYQ_2



Revision-Summary and Q&A

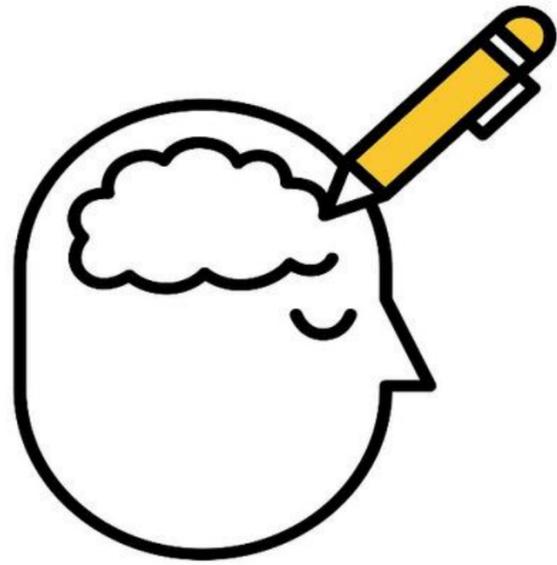


1. What is intercultural communication?
2. How does the VUCA model describe the complexities of modern life?
3. What are the six dimensions of the Hofstede model, and how do they influence cultural differences?
4. What are the most common barriers to communication, and How can we overcome it?
5. What is the impact of technology on communication, both positive and negative, and how does it affect personal interactions?
6. In what ways do cultural differences shape negotiation styles, and how do approaches differ among countries such as the United States, Canada, China, Norway, and Zambia?
7. Why is trust important in intercultural contexts, and what strategies can be employed to build trust in diverse environments?





Do you have any questions?



What will you keep from today's training?

Training

Evaluation



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List of Suggested Resources for Self-Directed Learning

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Thank you!



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