

NINE TIPS¹⁾ FOR COMMUNICATING SUCCESSFULLY WITH A GLOBAL AUDIENCE²⁾

In our jobs, we may have occasions to communicate with people in other countries or from other cultures. Whether we are buying, selling, consulting, or simply trying to obtain information, we will need to get across ideas to an audience we are not used to dealing with. Just as we need to understand the characteristics of our audience when we communicate with others from our own country, we need to understand something about the culture, business customs, and communication styles of foreign audiences.

Here, then, are some tips to assist you in your intercultural³⁾ communications.

1. Be Clear And Simple.

Whether communicating orally or in writing, avoid long, complex sentences, highly technical language, jargon⁴⁾, and colloquialisms⁵⁾. Don't be condescending⁶⁾, but do use simpler words when they are available.

2. Don't Assume That Someone You Hear Speaking English Will Understand You.

If you talk too fast, slur your words or have an accent, even a foreigner who seems to speak perfect English will have a hard time following you. An added problem is that many English-speaking foreigners are too polite to let you know they haven't understood.

3. Learn The Business Customs And Terminology Of Those You Will Be Communicating With.

For example, we use the metric system of measurement, the US uses a different system of measurement. And many countries use the day / month / year system for dating as opposed to the US system of month / day / year. A meeting arranged in one of these countries on 7. 5. 89 is scheduled for May, not July.

4. Use Written Messages Whenever Possible.

You read English more easily than you understand spoken English. If you communicate by phone, follow up with a confirmation in writing to guard against miscommunication.

5. Don't Be In A Hurry To Get To The Point.

Europeans, Africans, and Arabs in particular, are put off by the straight-to-the-point style of North American business communication. They prefer a more round-about approach.

6. Don't Ask Questions That Require A Yes Or No Answer.

Whereas North Americans tend to say yes when they mean yes and no when they mean no, that's simply not the case in most other cultures. In Asian countries, for example, it is considered impolite to say no, so Asians may answer affirmatively⁷⁾ if only to mean "Yes, I heard you." Europeans, on the other hand, may initially react negatively to any question, but they actually mean "maybe" or "it depends." In many countries, the answer you get is what the person thinks you want to hear.

7. Learn About The Country's Body Language.

Gestures⁸⁾ have various meanings in different places. In Yugoslavia turning the head from side to side means yes; in Japan, looking someone in the eye is considered

judgmental or hostile; and in Ghana, thumbs up is a rude gesture. To avoid giving offense, keep your hands quiet.

8. Control Your Style Of Expression.

The North American style of expressing emotions is considered impulsive and wild by Asians but restrained and cold by Latin Americans. You need to be aware of how your habits of emotional expression will affect people in a particular culture.

9. Don't Interrupt Periods Of Silence.

Many foreigners are offended by the North American penchant for jumping in to fill any gaps in a conversation. Speakers in many cultures enjoy periods of silence and use them to gather their thoughts. Be patient. Allow the person to formulate what he or she wants to say, and try not to be “helpful” by putting words into the other person's mouth.

国际商务交往成功的九要诀

在我们的工作中，我们可能有机会同来自其他文化国度的外国人打交道。无论是做买卖、协商，还是仅仅获得信息，我们都需要使那些我们从未与之打过交道的人弄明白我们的意思。正如当我们同本国同胞打交道时需要懂得他们的特点一样，我们也需要了解外国交往对象的文化背景、商业习俗以及交谈风格。

这里有一些建议能帮助你在国际交往中成功。

1、简明清楚。

无论用口头或书面形式交往，要避免长句和复合句、高深的技术词语、行话以及俚语。不要显得屈尊俯就，但要尽量用简明的词语。

2、不要以为讲英语的人都能听懂你的话。

如果你讲话太快，吞音或有口音，即使讲一口流利英语的外国人也很难听懂你的话。再者，问题是许多讲英语的外国人很有礼貌，他们不会告诉你他们没有听懂你的话。

3、了解你交往对象的商业习俗和术语。

例如：我们使用公制计量法而美国却使用一种不同的计量法。还有，许多国家写日期的顺序是日、月、年，而美国的顺序却是月、日、年。如果在前者某一国家开会，会议时间定为“7.5.89”，这是指在5月开会，而不是在7月。

4、尽可能用书面形式交往。

阅读英语比听懂英语要容易。如果你打电话进行交往，打完后要写下一份书面实录，以防止误解。

5、不要匆忙作出判断。

欧洲人、非洲人，尤其是阿拉伯人，对北美洲商人在交往中的直率作风感到不快。他们喜欢比较迂回的交际方式。

6、不要提那些答案是“是”或“不是”的问题。

北美洲人心里想说“是”就说“是”，心里想说“不是”就说“不是”，而在其他许多国家，情况就根本不是这样。例如：在亚洲国家，说“不”被认为是不礼貌的，因此亚洲人的肯定回答可能只是说“是的，我听到你说的了。”另一方面，欧洲人对任何问题开始都可能作出否定的反应，但是，实际上他们的意思是“可能（或许）”或“看情况再说（视情况再定）”。在许多国家，你所得到的回答是同你交往的人认为你想听到的话。

7、懂得外国的身体动作语言。

学英语，练听力，上听力课堂！

在不同地方姿势有着不同的意思。在南斯拉夫，摇头意味着“是”；在日本，正视某人的眼睛被认为是指责或有敌意；在加纳，翘大姆指是粗鲁手势。为了避免得罪他人，双手最好别乱动。

8、表达方式要克制。

亚洲人认为，北美洲人表达情感的方式是冲动的和狂热的，而拉丁美洲人却认为他们是克制的和冷静的。你必须明白你表达情感的习惯在某一特定文化背景下会对人们产生何种影响。

9、不要在沉默时插话。

北美洲人爱在交谈间隙中插话，许多外国人对此感到不愉快。许多国家的人喜欢在谈话中间有沉默的间隙，以便进行思考。此时，要耐心。让人家琢磨好自己想要说的话，不要试图插话“帮助”人家把话讲出来。

NOTE 注释：

1. tip [tip] n. 技巧，要诀
2. audience ['ɔ:djəns] n. 接见，拜见
3. intercultural [,intə(:)'kʌltʃərəl] adj. 不同文化间的
4. jargon ['dʒɑ:gən] n. 行话
5. colloquialism [kə'ləkwɪəlɪz(ə)m] n. 俗语，白话，口语
6. condescending [kɒndɪ'sendɪŋ] adj. 谦逊的
7. affirmatively [ə'fɜ:mətɪvli] adv. 肯定地
8. gesture ['dʒestʃə] n. 姿态，手势，表示