



Class: BSc Sem 5

Subject : Business communication

Subject Code:

Chapter: Unit 2 Chp 4

Chapter Name: Effective cross cultural communication

Today's Agenda

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 1. Characteristics of culture
 2. How cultures differ
2. The Iceberg metaphor
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1 Define Culture



Culture is a concept that encompasses the social behavior, institutions, and norms found in human societies, as well as the knowledge, beliefs, arts, laws, customs, capabilities, and habits of the individuals in these groups.

Culture refers to a group or community with which a person shares common experiences that shape the way the person understands the world.

In easier terms, culture can be defined as those customary values, beliefs and shared system of symbols and behavior patterns passed on from generation to generation that distinguish groups of people, societies and countries.

1.1 Characteristics of Culture

Culture is socially shared

Culture is learnt & acquired

Culture is cumulative

Culture is based on symbols

Culture gratifies human needs

Culture is integrated

1.2 How cultures differ

Cultures may be said to differ from one another on the basis of the following:

1. Nature of Complexity

While some cultures are direct and easily accessible, others have deep underlying tones. For example, India has 14 official languages. Within each language however there are numerous dialects, accents, slangs, jargons and other such variations.

2. Composition Mix

Cultures are often made up of many layers of sub-culture. The greater the layers of sub-cultures, greater the communication difficulties as it is necessary to keep in mind and consider more potential differences.

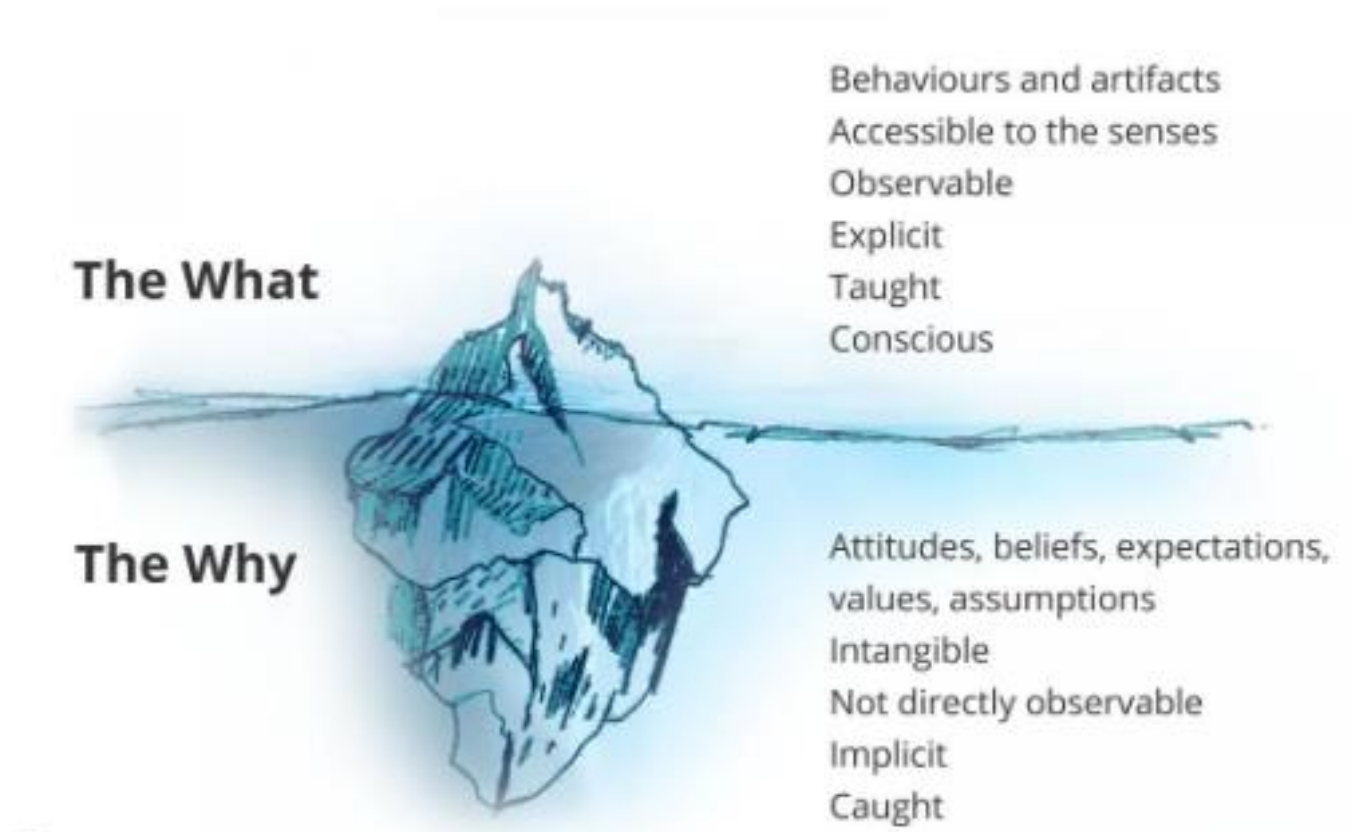
3. Attitude toward Outsiders

Cultures may be open or closed and vary in their treatment of outsiders. Some could be openly hostile; others might maintain a detached aloofness and some others could be overly friendly toward strangers. For example, the French are very rigid about conversing in French even when they know the other person cannot understand French. Indians, on the other hand, would go to any length to speak in English with foreigners and make them feel comfortable even if they are not very proficient in the language.

2 The Iceberg metaphor



Iceberg Metaphor for culture shows that culture is like an iceberg - part of it that is immediately visible, such as dress, language, colour, etc. while the other part of it emerges and submerges with the tides, and its foundations go deep beneath the surface.



2 The Iceberg metaphor

Above the Waterline: Surface Culture

There are several aspects of culture that are explicit, visible and taught. Components belonging to surface culture have low emotional levels, and people belonging to that culture are flexible to adapt and modify these components. These are the tangible aspects, such as dress, festivals, language, literature and even the way people season their food.

On the Waterline: Transition Zone

Here, implicit understandings about the culture start being talked about. Hidden meanings behind the cultural representation start coming to the fore as we move to the depths of the iceberg.

Below the Waterline: Shallow Culture

This comprises the hidden aspects, i.e., the habits, assumptions, understandings, values, judgements that we know but do not or cannot articulate. Matters of space, time, facial expressions and other non-verbal forms of communication also fall under this domain. As an outsider, this layer cannot be fathomed unless one spends considerable period of time and makes a deliberate effort to understand the nuances.

3 Cultural intelligence



Cultural intelligence is the ability to adapt to a different cultural environment and work with people from different and diverse cultures.

Cultural intelligence has three dimensions:

1. Cognizance
2. Motivation
3. Behavior

3 Cultural intelligence

Advantages of a higher CQ :

- Business professionals with a higher CQ are well equipped at setting goals, discussing as well as leading projects while working with people from different cultures. They can resolve differences in order to negotiate profitable outcomes.
- They can work toward developing global plans as they understand new markets well.

3 Cultural intelligence

Given below are some characteristics of a higher cultural quotient:

- One must acknowledge, respect and appreciate the other culture. The foundation of a higher CQ is respect for cultural differences.
- Curiosity toward other cultures leads to one trying to know more about the other culture.
- One must refrain from homogenising people from one place and their culture. A critical approach toward stereotypes would be to consider them a beginning point for understanding a culture instead of end points.
- Concept of time vary from one culture to another, and one needs to be patient to understand and adjust to the time pace of the particular culture the work is being done with.
- English is considered the global language in the contemporary scenario; however, there are still countries that speak limited English, and communication can become difficult. Some of the ways of overcoming language barrier is communicating without judgement, speaking slowly and clearly for better understanding of the one listening, avoiding slangs and jargons because such things may differ from one culture to another.

4 Important terminologies

Inter-Cultural Communication

The term 'inter-cultural' implies interaction and involves communication between people from different cultures. Inter-cultural communication focuses on social attributes, thought patterns and the cultures and customs of different groups of people.

Cross-Cultural Communication

In actual usage, 'cross-cultural' applies to something that covers more than one culture. It is a comparison of different phenomena across cultures. Cross-cultural communication treats culture as a theoretical variable and compares verbal and non-verbal communication behaviors across culture.

Intra-Cultural Communication

A large part of 'intra-cultural' communication is the exchange of meaningful messages amongst members of the same cultural group or communication within the same culture. However, communication within cultures can also be different.

4 Important terminologies

Enculturation

Enculturation is a process by which a society culture is transmitted from one generation to the next, and individuals become members of their society.

Acculturation

Acculturation is the process of adjusting or adapting to another culture. Usually, this process involves a high level of uncertainty and anxiety that can be decreased by trying to understand the new culture and by being open to differences and similarities.

5 Tips for effective cross cultural communication

- Recognise different world views and social value orientation of people from different cultures
- Learn to read body language. It will be easier to grasp the meaning of what is being said
- Appreciate the difference in communication patterns of people from different cultures
- Accept that people have different concepts of time.
- Understand differing status symbols and learn how to demonstrate them
- Realise that people from all cultures do not like to make decisions quickly. Some like to think through and consider all options
- Respect different comfort zones and different viewpoints of appropriate personal space of people belonging to different cultures.
- Understand how etiquette differ from culture to culture.
- Make oneself aware of legal and ethical behaviour patterns of a particular culture

6 Corporate culture

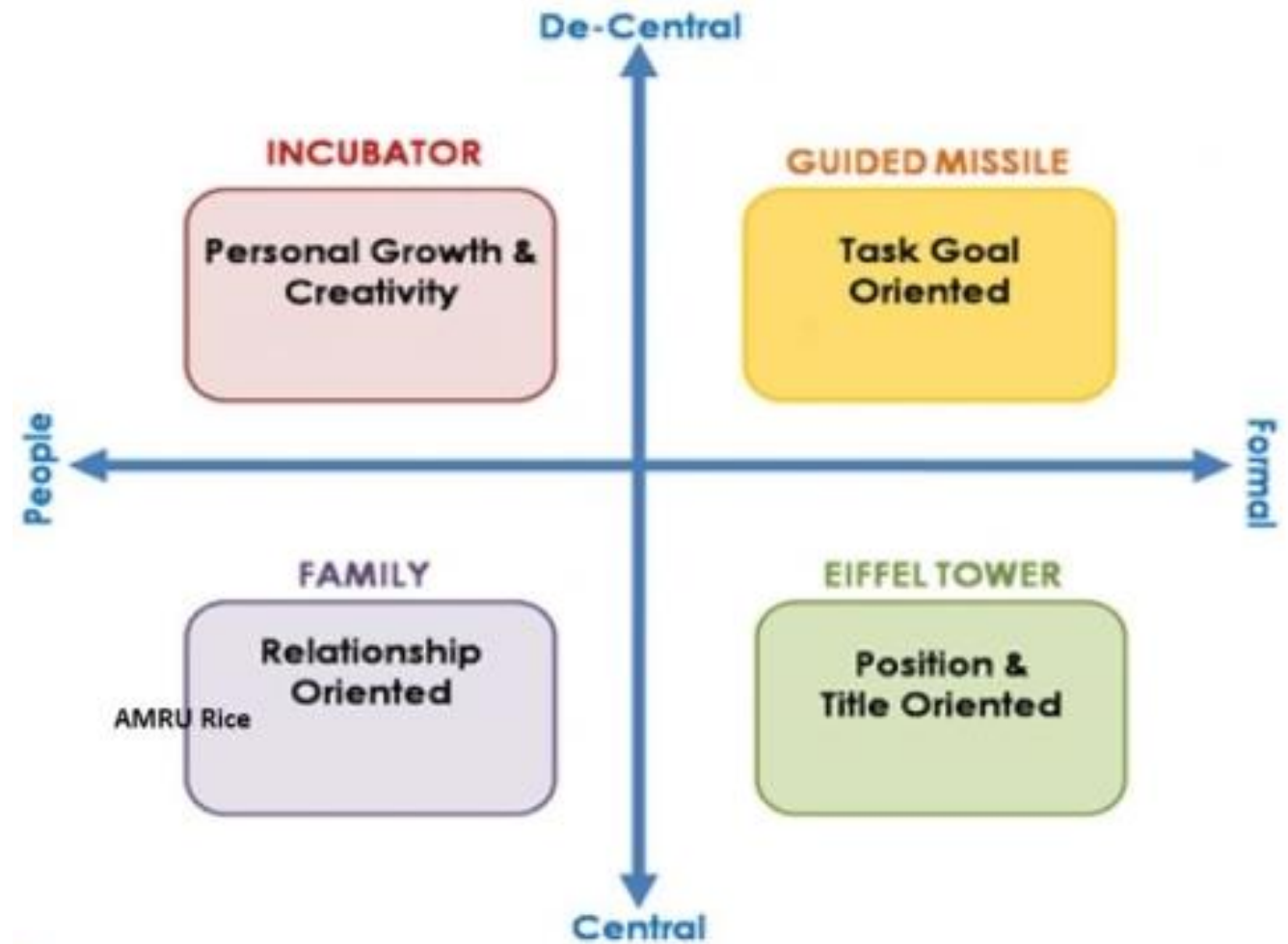


Corporate culture is the shared set of attitudes, beliefs and norms that are passed along among organizational members.

Corporate culture is the total sum of the values, customs, traditions and meanings that make a company unique. Corporate culture is often called 'the character of an organization'.

6.1 Corporate cultural models

Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner' proposed four corporate cultural models to study the emerging organisations' structure.



6.1 Corporate cultural models

Incubator culture :

It serves the self-expression and self-fulfilment needs of its employees and performs best within an intensely emotional environment. Personal development is the sole driving force of this model. Such organisations are also termed as individualistic and viewed as transitional rather than permanent. Many entrepreneurial start-ups form with this kind of setup. This kind of model is commonly found in Canada, Denmark and Switzerland.

Guided Missile Culture:

This is a task-oriented project-based structure but contrasts with the Eiffel Tower by being 'ends-oriented' rather than 'means-driven'. Here, people are considered important to achieving ends. This culture believes in continually renewing itself through feedback and open systems. IT companies typify this culture. Such structures can be found in Ireland, Norway and the United States.

Eiffel Tower Culture:

It corresponds to a formally bureaucratic structure where the role within the structure strongly defines one's legitimate role and place within the organisation. In such a structure, emphasis is given to status and power. Examples can be found in Australia, France, Hungary and Venezuela.

6.1 Corporate cultural models

Family Culture:

It reflects a power structure seen in a traditional home, with a dominating parent as the leader who takes care of the family unit and has the decision-making power ubiquitously accepted by the family members. The leader in such a setting is influential and unchallenged, with most of the information residing with him.

7 Barriers to cross cultural communication

One of the major factors influencing effective inter-cultural communication is our ability or inability to understand other cultures. Since the work today involves crossing boundaries and meeting diverse people, it is important to overcome these barriers.

Ethnocentrism

- People usually assume their own culture as normal and assess all other cultures on the basis of how closely they resemble their own culture.

Stereotypes

- People tend to hold an oversimplified, general mental image of a group or class of people, type in another frame.

Prejudice

- People may have an adverse preconceived idea about people from another culture. This evaluative opinion may have no factual basis and hinders cross-cultural communication.

7 Barriers to cross cultural communication

Bias

- A bias for something is a preference. In other words, a bias against something is a negative attitude.

Discrimination

- When prejudices and biases are acted on, discrimination is being shown.
- Cultural discrimination exists when an individual from different culture are treated unequally by other people because of their different lifestyle

Language

- Language is not vocabulary, codes and grammar alone. Each time we send a message by selecting words and sentence patterns, we make cultural choices. If language is used without understanding or cultural implications, wrong messages may go out.