

Intercultural communication and globalization



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Inter-cultural Communication and Globalization The essay aims to discuss intercultural communication and globalization. Primarily, the discourse would address the following issues, to wit: (1) define intercultural communication and globalization; (2) to discuss the importance of intercultural communication and globalization in the workplace; and finally (3) to discuss some of the cultural variables that exist in the workplace between the United States and China which affects the globalization process.

Intercultural Communication and Globalization In order to discuss the relationship between inter-cultural communication and globalization, a definition of the terms is important. Jens Alwood defines inter-cultural communication as “ the sharing of information on different levels of awareness and control between people with different cultural backgrounds, where different cultural backgrounds include both national cultural differences and differences which are connected with participation in the different activities that exist within a national unit” (Alwood, 1985). Globalization on the other hand is “ the process of interaction and integration among the people, companies, governments of different nations, a process driven by international trade and investment and aided by information technology” (The Levin Institute, n. d.).

The 21st century marks the importance of intercultural communication and globalization in the workplace. Nowadays, companies all over the world are doing business in a global context to ensure success. Intercultural communication and globalization is important for the business because it enables the organizations to maximize the use of their resources.

Furthermore, since no country is self-sufficient, companies are able to depend on other countries for resources which are not readily available to them, at even much lower cost. With globalization, exports increase; thus,

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foreign exchange is earned. Globalization also creates employment. Various government incentives are also given to companies which go global. Another importance of globalization is the technology transfer which maximizes the profits of corporations because of increase in efficiency. Lastly, since globalization encourages free and fair competition, companies try to produce quality products at reduced prices which in the end benefit the consumers (Haider, 2010). With globalization comes intercultural communication. The importance of communication among various cultures in a globalized business cannot be undermined. It means having a competitive edge in the world market (Rumsey, 2007). When employees of different cultures are able to understand and work together efficiently, it will lead to a more profitable business. An example of two cultures that are rapidly becoming intertwined is that of the United States (US) and China. There are several barriers in the intercultural communication between the US and China which should be addressed so that globalization between these two countries can prosper more. Among them are the verbal and non-verbal differences which have the greatest impact. A handshake may be common among Americans during business meetings while most Chinese would rather bow or nod to acknowledge a new acquaintance. Even in the manner of dressing in the workplace, one can notice the glaring difference between the Chinese and the Americans. The Chinese women are more conservative. Chinese businessmen consider it offensive for women to wear revealing clothing (Hofstede, n. d.) Chinese beliefs and practices vary much from the Americans. For example, the Chinese would probably consult a feng shui master in deciding the lay-out of an office while the Americans would rather consult an interior designer. For decisions on when to open a store, the

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Chinese might want to consult the stars while the Americans would simply look at the calendar. Another cultural difference in the corporate world between the Chinese and Americans is that the Chinese consider it improper to discuss business during meals while this is a very common practice among Americans (Hofstede, n. d.). In conclusion, one can say that intercultural communication is a necessity for globalization to prosper. If the cultural differences are properly addressed, then problem-solving and decision-making will be quicker. There is a need therefore for a greater understanding of the cultural differences, manners, beliefs, practices and protocols among nations for the advancement of globalization. References Allwood, J. (2009). Intercultural communication. Retrieved 14 April 2011. [citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi= 10. 1. 1. 63. 5067](http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.63.5067) Haider, M. (2010). Importance of globalization. IndiaStudyChannel. com. Retrieved 14 April 2011. <http://www.indiastudychannel.com/resources/127540-Importance-Globalization.aspx> Hofstede, G. (n. d.). Geert Hofstede analysis: China. Cyborlink. com. Retrieved 14 April 2011. <http://www.cyborlink.com/besite/china.htm> The Levin Institute, (n. d.). What is globalization? Globalization101. Retrieved 14 April 2011. http://www.globalization101.org/What_is_Globalization.html Rumsey, D. (2007). Intercultural communication and globalization. Articlesbase. Retrieved 14 April 2011. <http://www.articlesbase.com/communication-articles/intercultural-communication-and-globalization-104792.html>