

The silent language

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The Silent Language

Just like many people from different parts of the world, Americans have engaged in doing business with foreign countries apart from their own states. This, therefore, involves interacting with diverse cultures and the development of some important social skills to enable successful negotiations while doing business. People of different countries have diverse culture regardless of varying languages. This can become a barrier to successful business transactions for an American, who has no prior knowledge of the culture of the people he or she is doing business with. In his book ' ', Edward T. Hall notes down the importance of mastering these skills for an American, who aspires to conduct successful business abroad (Cardon, 2008). This paper will, therefore, evaluate the important things that an American businessman needs to familiarize with while in a foreign land as addressed in The Silent Language in Overseas Business (Hall, 1960).

Some things are acceptable in one culture, but may also be offensive in another culture. For instance, as Hall notes, an American will realize that a Latin American time might be quite spontaneous with their time, but when doing business with an Arab, he will realize that Arabs will tolerate interruptions in between. However, that will not lessen the seriousness of the business being conducted. With this in mind, an American should seek to understand the various cultural practices in a foreign state by acquainting himself or herself with the social, ethnic and economic dissimilarities of the people in that state. As Hall has stated, an understanding of various cultural differences will go a long way to make business transactions quite easier to conduct (Cardon, 2008). This includes an understanding of the communication in terms of time, space, material possessions, friendship

patterns and agreements. Hall makes it clear that people's actions can act as a perfect means of conversing in one culture, while in others; it is words that do most of the expression (Hall, 1960). A person's behavior communicates a lot and so are the attitudes and material possessions.

Cultural interactions, according to Hall, can be explained in three levels; formal, informal, and technical. Formal forms include those instances when one does something inappropriately, but is corrected and shown the right way. Informal involves learning the ways of a certain people by imitating them. Technical forms of learning, on their other hand, are similar to the experience of a teacher to a student (Hall, 19560). These three forms of learning are, however, accompanied by change over time. Different societies respond differently to these changes. Some adapt quite easily as compared to others. Hall designed a way to described all ways of communication, including language. He referred the components of the sets as isolates, for instance, sounds. Moreover, the ways used to string the sets together to give them meaning are referred to as pattern of instant language.

In conclusion, the understanding of Hall's work helps one to gain an appreciation of the diversity of culture. Culture holds a large part of heritage that defines humanity and human trend. Understanding different cultures is, therefore, vital for any American doing business abroad, since this will help them understand negotiation skills, which are valid in the foreign state. It will also help the American understand how time, space, property possession and treaties communicate different things for different people.

Reference List

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