

# High-context and low- context communication essay sample

[Life](#), [Friendship](#)



In this case, the Indonesians hesitated to accept the over confident looking contract offered by Indian vendors. On one hand, they did not want to miss such attractive products, cheap and functional, which could solve current problems; on the other hand, they were not sure about the Indian vendor's words. Whether it is true or not that all of the function of their products could be customized to fit to the current needs. In other words, the meaning of "yes" from the Indians vendor was questioned. The difficult situation became a common annoyance these years, as more companies turn towards global markets.

How to lead an effective communication with less misunderstanding is considered by managers of multinational companies. However, before making an essential communication between different cultures, interpreting the real meaning of verbal and non-verbal expression is emergently required. First used by author Edward T. Hall, the expressions "high context" and "low context" are classified for cultural differences between societies. High-context and low-context communication refers to how much speakers rely on things verbal and non-verbal to convey meaning. In general, cultures with low-context communication will pay more attention to the literal meanings of words than to the context potentially provided by them. High-context communication

In terms of high-context communication, surrounding situations, physical environments, and nonverbal behaviors are important for its members. Clues provided in these contexts should be converted in order to search for a real meaning. High-context communication has characters as follows. \* More

indirect expression such as non-verbal communication \* Intuition or feelings is focused more than rational reason and thinking \* Flowery language, humility, and elaborate apologies are typical \* One talks around the point and embellishes it

\* Disagreement is personalized and conflict solved before work or must be avoided \* Emphasize interpersonal relationships, people oriented. \* One's identity is rooted in groups (family, culture, work) \* Business people may distrust contracts and be offended by the lack of trust

#### Low-context communication

In terms of low-context communication, surrounding situations, physical environments, and nonverbal behaviors are relatively less crucial in interpreting meanings. Explicit verbal messages are more important. Low-context communication has characters as follows. \* More direct communication. Message is carried more by words than by nonverbal means \* Decisions are based on fact rather than intuition

\* Verbal message is direct; one spells things out exactly \* Depend on language precision and literally documents

\* Communicators are expected to be straightforward, concise, and efficient in telling what action is expected

\* Shorter duration of communications

\* Disagreement is depersonalized. One withdraws from conflict with another and gets on with the task. Focus is on rational solutions, not personal ones \*

Task-oriented. Things get done by following procedures and paying attention to the goal. \* One's identity is rooted in oneself and one's accomplishments \*

Business people trust contract and even oral permission with clear words

There should be a gap or distance between high-context and low-context communication.

It is necessary to observe, understand and accommodate when transfer from one type to the other. Moreover, in business situation, communication highly depends on how to say rather than what to say. In our case, India, with a high-context communication culture, is looking for deeper understanding and more accurate interpretation verbally and non-verbally. Holding the common goal to benefit from win-win business, both Indonesians and Indians could cooperate together to fill the gap and shorten the communication distance.

### Solutions

Regarding the high-context communication, misunderstanding could be caused by the incompletely expression and different interpretation behind the words. Suggestions for people in this culture to do business could be as follows. Developing trust is an important first step before business. It was the first time for Indian vendor to marketing in the Indonesia company, more efforts could be made regarding as building inter trust. More introductions about their company and products are needed. And interpersonal relationship could be also enhanced in business level. It is natural that in a high-context communication society, relationship and trust building could take a long term.

Patience is required.

Better response is possibly given to more direct and formal communication for marketing. Because people usually face awkwardness due to meaning mistaken when communicate with high-context carriers. At least they may be not confident to convey the words and other expressions. People may ask themselves, does he/she mean this or that? However, business usually would not wait for a correct interpretation. Time is money and efficient communication could bring more benefits and opportunities. We suggest the Indian vendors to rethink about the situation. First of all, their over confident looking promises were taken as saying even we are not able to do, we will try our best to. Thus, they should tell Indonesians how to do as well.

For example, they could explain how to customize their product to deal with the current problem, what its route could be or they had successfully done that before. Secondly, in order to show their ability and persuade Indonesians, Indian vendor may try to fix one problem as a test. Thirdly, it is suggested to use more clear and precise expression such as literal documents when negotiate. Contact should be written in an accurate means. Instead of oral way, paper based introduction of products should be prepared by Indians. And being honest to say no, earning business reputation may be much better than keeping a tricky contract.