

# **INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION**

When we talk about “international communication”, or communication in international relations, we are really talking about seven dimensions of the topic: technology, telecommunication, acultural products, news, mail, cultural relations and language. These seven dimensions account for all political actions concerning international communication. These political actions are: the creation of international organizations concerned with communication; the creation of law regulating international communication; international conferences, mobilization and other actions to exchange ideas by parties concerned with international communication; government paradigms and policies; actions by firms and other players in the economic market; and paradigms and policies of international organizations aimed at regulating international communication or development.

What exactly is "communication"? The words “communication” and “community” both share the Latin root *communis*, meaning common. From this root we got the other Latin word *communicare*, meaning, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, "to make common to many, share, impart, and divide". As a field of study, international communication is a branch of **communication studies**, concerned with the scope of "government-to-government", "business-to-business", and "people-to-people" interactions at a global level.

Communication is vital to sustaining that community because it is only through communication that values, for example, can be shared and made common to the group.

Technology is a key concept in the discourse on international communication because technologies are the key variables in the ability of humankind to create communities. Technology can be defined as the application of knowledge for a purpose. Humankind has struggled to overcome two main difficulties with respect to communication: space and time. Human history has been a long struggle to solve the problem of communicating (sharing) over long distances in as brief a time possible.

## **The Advantages of Intercultural Communication**

### **Productivity and Proficiency**

Intercultural communication helps employees from different ethnic backgrounds to communicate effectively with one another. It also guides the management competencies to design policies that incorporate the diversity in the team, allowing every member to be productive and proficient in their tasks

### **Teamwork**

Intercultural communication fosters teamwork in an organization. It helps staff to understand each other’s cultural differences, and to communicate effectively without misunderstanding. With successful intercultural communication, employees understand the influence of culture on peoples' behavior and communication tendencies. This enhances teamwork, as colleagues respect one another’s cultural background, unique talents and capabilities, which is key to the smooth running of business.

## **Effective Leadership**

Intercultural communication also fosters effective leadership in an organization. Modern organizations are composed of diverse people, and managers are expected to lead their teams by creating understanding of the company's policies while accommodating the diverse views of his team. A company that equips its leadership team in intercultural training enables them to motivate their teams, regardless of their cultural background.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATORY COMMUNICATION**

The negative treatment of people on the basis of their race, ethnic or cultural group, or national origin is defined as racial discrimination. The use of non-discriminatory language means, first, that value judgements based on the ethnic or racial background of a person or a group of people should not be made unless they are essential to the content of a communication.

It is also important to avoid the use of other kinds of discriminatory language, including (but not limited to) the examples listed below;

### **Derogatory slang, threatening or offensive slogans and graffiti**

Many offensive and derogatory terms which refer to specific cultural and racial groups exist within everyday language. The use of this kind of language is frequently a deliberate attempt to cause offence or harm and is considered unacceptable behaviour within the University.

### **Negative differential treatment because of accents.**

Care should be taken to ensure that people are not treated negatively or discriminated against because of their accents. It is useful to remember that we all speak with an accent, and it is through historical accident, not linguistic superiority, that a particular accent (or language) is dominant in any given setting. Assumptions made about a person's ability or worth, based solely upon their accent, are likely to be erroneous and may overshadow important skills or contributions that an individual could make in their role at the University.

### **Use of outdated terminology**

Language is a dynamic medium, and many terms and phrases which have been used widely in the past are no longer acceptable. For example, when referring to North America's indigenous people, the terms red men, Indians, and Native Americans have all had acceptance at various times in history. It is incumbent on individuals to identify and use the terms that are currently acceptable to the group being described. Phrases that are relics of colonialism in various countries (e.g. 'in darkest Africa' or 'mother England') may be offensive and should be avoided.

### **Stereotyping**

Stereotyping involves ascribing traits or characteristics to people based on their group membership, usually in the absence of personal evidence. Individuals can be prejudged by having characteristics attributed to them based on their group membership rather than their individual qualities. Such stereotypes prevent the individual from showing the full range of

his/her skills and potential. Care should be taken to avoid suggestions of:

*Deficit:* Having a different racial or cultural background should not be equated with inherent disadvantage. If disadvantage in an educational context is being considered, be specific about the nature of the disadvantage (e.g. people who are not native speakers of English may be disadvantaged in an English language-based situation).

*Paternalism:* Racism and cultural paternalism stereotypes people from different racial and cultural groups as being dependent and childlike, and members of the dominant group as inherently self-reliant and benevolent (e.g. providing welfare for "our Aborigines").

*Peculiarity:* People from different racial or cultural groups should not be described as inherently different, nor should antisocial or criminal behaviours by individuals be related to their racial or cultural background.

### **Racial Identity**

Great care should be taken when making reference to the colour of a person's skin. Usually, such a reference serves only discriminatory purposes. In addition, using terms that make reference to racial purity should not be used, because they too serve discriminatory purposes. Aggressive and derogatory labels should be avoided at all costs.