

the global one series

Intercultural Communicating

INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE



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INTRODUCTION

HOW TO USE THIS PROGRAM

Objective:

To enable the participant to communicate more effectively with the diverse people of today's global environment.

Who should use this program?

- All personnel working in an international or multicultural environment
- Students of international business and cross-cultural or language studies

Materials:

The accompanying video, Intercultural Communicating, which is approximately 45 minutes in length divided into the following sections:

1. Introduction
2. Language
3. Translation
4. Physical Communication
5. Style
6. Topics
7. Indirect Communication
8. Context

This instructor's guide is designed to enable the instructor to create the most effective learning experience.

Instruction Suggestions

- Prior to viewing the Intercultural Communicating video program, give each participant a copy for the video outline in this guide.
- After viewing the program, use the discussion questions in this guide to prompt reflection on the material covered.
- Finally, use the role-playing exercises in this guide to further stimulate understanding of the issues.

VIDEO OUTLINE

OUTLINE

For every different culture in the world, there's a different way of communicating. We speak different languages and have varying styles of interaction. We talk about different things, and have conflicting rules of proper protocol. To be effective in the global environment, you need to understand – and make yourself understood. You need to learn the secrets of effective intercultural communicating.

1. INTRODUCTION

What is communicating? In its purest form, it's giving and receiving information. Naturally, it's vital that this exchange of information be accurate and achieves intended results. However, all of us have miscommunicated with coworkers or loved ones, which can lead to unintended results.

When communicating with people from other cultures, the chances are even greater that the message won't get through.

We often make the dangerous assumption that all humans are fundamentally the same. People are people. But this is incorrect, and it's equally false to believe we communicate the same way.

In India, for example, people might shake their head from side to side to say yes. In the Middle East, people read from back to front, and from right to left, the opposite of the West. And in China, you need to be clear about dates and deadlines because the Chinese language has no past or future tense.

When addressing an e-mail, even the smallest typo means your message won't get through. It's the same with cross-cultural communication. Even the smallest of errors can lead to the wrong message. And this can insult customers, damage relationships, and lose business.

Thus, the purpose of this program is to help you become aware of general guidelines in intercultural communication. To communicate effectively with others, we must become aware of different communication patterns. Then, we must adapt our communication styles to create an effective connection, exchange information accurately, and achieve intended results.

To sum up our introduction:

- **Communication is the exchange of information between two or more people;**
- **Intercultural communication involves additional variables of social behavior;**
- **And effective cross-cultural communication is vital not only to exchange accurate meaning, but also maintain rapport and achieve intended results.**

VIDEO OUTLINE

2. LANGUAGE

When communicating with people from other cultures, the first bridge to cross is language. Experts estimate there are as many as 10,000 languages in the world. Some countries are home to more than one tongue. India, for example, has 18 official languages.

And there is tremendous variation. Whereas written English is comprised of 26 letters, in Chinese you need to be able to recognize about 10,000 characters to read a newspaper.

Furthermore, different cultures use the same language in different ways, as Americans discover when interacting with the British.

If you're going to be living in a foreign country, or visiting there frequently, it's a good idea to learn the local language. In our daily life, we learn a lot by reading and overhearing. If you don't learn the local language, you'll be cut off from vital information.

Further, be careful about what you speak where. Sometimes a seemingly obvious choice can be offensive. In Belgium, for example, the population is divided between people who speak French and those who speak Flemish. Using the wrong language can be rude. Another sensitivity is historical factors. Although many people in Eastern Europe speak Russian, that language can bring back bitter memories of Soviet rule.

At the same time, knowing a foreign language isn't always practical. A person working in tiny Switzerland, for example, can't be expected to learn all four languages spoken there.

When speaking English or your native tongue, it's always polite to ask permission first.

Whenever a foreign counterpart is speaking your language, they've already come more than half way to communicate with you. So show great appreciation and respect. And be sure to speak slowly and clearly.

Let's recap the key points of language:

- **There are as many as 10,000 diverse languages in the world;**
- **If you're going to spend time in a country, language skills are important for greatest effectiveness;**
- **And if you don't speak the local tongue, ask first before speaking English or your native language**

VIDEO OUTLINE

3. TRANSLATION

To bridge languages effectively, you must translate effectively. And this requires the transfer of meaning rather than words.

Further, translating often involves shades of meaning and subtle nuances, and thus you'll need to spend a lot of time making sure the meaning gets through.

Taking words and casually replacing them with foreign equivalents can lead to disastrous results, as in the following examples:

- When the food brand Jolly Green Giant was introduced to the Middle East, the name translated as Jolly Green Ogre
- Coca Cola in Chinese was originally interpreted as “Bite the Wax Tadpole;”
- And finally, General Motors' popular Nova model didn't sell well in Mexico because in Spanish “no va” means “it doesn't go.”

Thus, even if you have a strong knowledge of a foreign language, you might need professional translation. Whether you're negotiating a minor deal, or preparing a major marketing campaign, always have local associates double check for accurate conversion of meaning.

Translators can also interpret subtle cultural nuances such as body language. And be sure to hire an associate who will give you all pertinent information.

In a face-to-face meeting, be sure to look at your foreign counterpart, not the translator. This will also allow you to read other important messages such as body language.

An important safety measure is back-translation. When working with critical information, always translate it back into the original language to double check for awkwardness or loss of meaning. Bouncing back information can verify understanding. In some cultures, for example, employees might say they understand you – when in fact they don't – to avoid embarrassment. To confirm understanding, gently ask your foreign associate to repeat information back to you.

Finally, avoid humor and slang, which are often lost in translation. For example, the words “hot” and “cool” are opposites. But in American slang, they mean the same thing. Clearly this can cause confusion. Humor, on the other hand, involves not only words but perceptions and values, which vary. In Northern Europe for example, a joke might be seen as flippant in business – which is considered serious.

VIDEO OUTLINE

To understand other cultures, you'll need to translate meaning. Let's review how:

- **Effective translation involves transfer of meaning rather than words;**
- **Always work with professional translators for important discussions or documents;**
- **As a safety step, use back-translation and reiteration to reduce misunderstandings;**
- **And finally, avoid slang and jokes, which translate poorly.**

4. PHYSICAL COMMUNICATION

Experts estimate that in the West, up to 70% of communication is physical interaction such as body language. In other parts of the world, that figure is even higher.

One important contrast is personal space, or how close people are when talking. In the West, people generally stand apart about arm's length. But in Arab and Latin cultures, people stand together as close as six inches. It's important to be comfortable with close quarters. Backing up could be taken as a sign of rejection and be insulting.

A related issue is touching. In Latin America, two men might greet each other with a hearty embrace known as an abrazo. In contrast, many Asians are averse to touching. They will shake hands on first meetings, but avoid physical contact on subsequent encounters. This can be particularly sensitive with women.

Another issue to watch is eye contact. In societies such as the Middle East and the United States, it's highly regarded and a sign of sincerity.

But in other cultures, it's considered rude and should be avoided. In India or Japan, for example, looking a senior in the eye is disrespectful.

Finally, it's best to avoid hand gestures, which have different meanings in different cultures. In the USA, a thumbs up indicates approval or agreement. But in countries around the world, that gesture is obscene.

From posture to tone of voice, try to ask or observe locals to learn which gestures and other forms of physical communication are appropriate – and which aren't.

To review the foremost points of physical communication,

- **Personal space varies, so learn to be comfortable with close quarters;**
- **The appropriateness of touching is viewed differently;**
- **The meaning of eye contact differs, so be aware of local decorum;**
- **And finally, it's best to avoid hand gestures, which might be taboo.**

VIDEO OUTLINE

5. STYLE

To communicate effectively, you'll need to adapt to differing communication styles. One difference is formality. In the United States and Australia, communication tends to be informal. But in many other parts of the world, it's quite formal indeed.

This is also evident in languages. Japanese has three different levels of politeness, the use of which is determined by status. Thus, a businessman might use three different ways of speaking with his superior, wife, and servant.

French, German, and Spanish all have different versions of the word you, determined by factors such as age and familiarity. Indeed, English is rare in that it doesn't distinguish between formal and informal pronouns.

This protocol is also seen in forms of address. In some countries, first names are used immediately. But in most, the family name is preferred.

Long-distance communication raises similar issues. In some cultures, an old-fashioned letter is preferred to phone calls or newer technologies. Faxes and emails are seen as informal, and thus are often less effective forms of communication.

Another variable is pacing. In some countries, communication is slow with many pauses. But in places such as France, the pace might wear you down. Indeed, you might be expected to interrupt your counterpart to show you're paying attention.

It's equally important to be aware of silence. In the Far East, conversation is interspersed with lengthy pauses, which indicate polite consideration to what is being said.

In contrast, Americans are often uncomfortable with silence, and move quickly to fill the void. As a result, they might appear impatient or insincere. Thus, be aware of and try to adapt to differing conversational pacing.

Finally, there are differing levels of emotion. In the Middle East, a conversation can easily turn into a heated shouting match with limbs flailing about. That's okay, because loudness is seen as strength.

In contrast, raising your voice or showing anger in Southeast Asia is likely to cause embarrassment and burn bridges.

Indeed, different cultures have different unwritten rules outlining when and how much emotion is acceptable. If you show too little emotion, you might come across as aloof and cold. If you show too much, you might be considered hotheaded and embarrass yourself.

VIDEO OUTLINE

Generally speaking, Japan, Northern Europe and North America are regions where emotions are kept in check. In contrast, you're likely to find voices raised and emotions high in Latin America, the Middle East, and Southern and Eastern Europe.

Many people also enjoy a good argument. From Brazil to France to the Middle East, you're likely to find passionate people who enjoy a lively exchange. Again, it's a good idea to monitor emotional levels and adjust accordingly.

There are also different views on when certain emotions are appropriate. For example, an Asian doctor might laugh when giving a bleak prognosis. But this laughter is often used to convey nervousness or get out of an awkward situation.

Different cultures have different styles of communication; let's review the most important points:

- **The formality of communication varies from society to society;**
- **Interaction also varies in pacing, and the amount of silence within conversation;**
- **And emotions vary among people - some preferring colorful exchanges, others are more restrained.**

6. TOPICS

In the same way that people have different ways of communicating, they also talk about different things.

In Brazil, for example, questions about your counterpart's family are highly appreciated. But in Saudi Arabia, personal questions about someone's family could be intrusive.

One topic that is almost guaranteed to win favor is any sincere compliment or question about a culture. If you're traveling, share any favorable comments about your visit.

To be on the safe side, let your counterpart set the topics for discussion. And a rule of thumb: avoid talking about politics or religion, or criticisms of other cultures.

Also, be prepared for comments or questions that might surprise you. An Argentine might comment about someone's weight, while Asians might ask new acquaintances about their salary.

On a related topic, people are moved by different types of information. Germans, for example, like data, facts and figures. Thus, a presentation or marketing campaign should focus on statistics and specifications. In Latin America, in contrast, a sophisticated presentation is likely to have greater appeal.

VIDEO OUTLINE

When getting to know the French, they'll want to discuss the arts or debate current events. They will want to understand how you think, and test your ability to reason and argue.

Another important contrast is the balance between understatement and overstatement. The British, for example, tend to understate. Thus, if a British person were to refer to a small problem, the problem might be very large indeed.

This can lead to major differences. Whereas American advertising uses adjectives such as bigger and better, Germans focus more on modest statements of fact. Thus, Germans believe Madison Avenue overstates everything, while Americans find German marketing dull.

A related issue is how we talk about ourselves. While Americans often boast about accomplishments, their British or Australian counterparts are more self-effacing. A British tennis champion, for example, might portray himself as a mediocre player.

To get along with other cultures, you might need to modify your approach accordingly.

Let's recap the highlights of conversation topics:

- **Take note that appropriate conversation topics vary from culture to culture;**
- **Different people are moved by different types of information;**
- **Some societies tend toward overstatement, others understatement;**
- **And finally some people enjoy boasting, while others prefer modesty and humility.**

7. INDIRECT COMMUNICATION

In some parts of the world, people might give you directions even if they have no idea how to get there. The reason: they don't want to disappoint you or embarrass themselves by telling you they don't know.

In the West we say "give it to me straight." Generally speaking, people in the USA tend to be direct, and North Europeans even more so. If confronted by a North European, it's okay to be firm about your opinions.

But in other cultures, people believe conflict is dysfunctional and would rather be indirect and diplomatic. In indirect cultures, the emphasis is on social harmony. Thus, people are often indirect to avoid conflict, embarrassment or hurt feelings.

These roundabout communication styles can cause problems, from getting accurate feedback from employees, to getting a yes or no answer. For example, a South

VIDEO OUTLINE

American passenger jet crashed near New York in the early 1990s after the cockpit crew failed to be direct about the severity of their lack of fuel.

In many cultures, the most difficult word is no. In Thailand, there's no such word. In Japan, there are more than a dozen different ways to give rejection, each appropriate for different occasions. Rather than saying no directly, people might say "maybe" or "not yet."

Even yes doesn't always mean yes. In many cultures, yes might mean "yes I have heard you" rather than "yes I agree with you."

To get more direct information, you might try gently asking a question several different ways. Another strategy is to seek information through third parties, especially local associates. Finally, try a change of setting. An Asian executive might be more open in an informal setting like a golf course, or a Latin American subordinate more forthcoming behind closed doors.

At the same time, you'll need to be more diplomatic to avoid seeming pushy or rude. Thus, avoid forcing direct answers. You'll also need to give information diplomatically. For example, if you need to criticize an employee, you might make comments aimed at a group rather than an individual.

Let's summarize the key points of indirect communication:

- **Some people are indirect to avoid conflict, embarrassment or hurt feelings;**
- **Solutions for getting accurate meaning include rephrasing, changing settings or going through third parties;**
- **And finally, adjust your style and learn to ask for and give information diplomatically.**

8. CONTEXT

On a topic related to indirect communication, styles of interaction vary in their emphasis on content or context, as in the following examples:

'So are you interested in our proposal?'

'Sure.' (with enthusiasm, smile)

'So are you interested in our proposal?'

'Sure.' (with sarcasm, rolling eyes)

In the preceding examples, the same word was used to answer the question. But the message was radically different.

VIDEO OUTLINE

In North America and Northern Europe, communication is content-based. In these cultures, the emphasis is on words and what is said.

But in Asia, the Middle East and Latin societies, what's more important is context. In these cultures, the emphasis is on non-verbal factors and how something is said. People rarely say what they mean. Indeed, factors such as body language, eye contact, setting, and who is present might be more important than what is said.

These differences can lead to cultural problems. Content-based communication can be seen as pushy and rude, while contextual interaction might be viewed as vague or deceitful.

An important determiner in contextual communication is hierarchy and relationships.

In important situations or those involving important individuals, people are likely to be less direct. Thus, you'll need to focus more on context to get accurate understanding.

For example, a Mexican executive might tell a peer "maybe" rather than "no" to avoid hurting feelings. Or subordinates in Asia might avoid telling a manager that a project won't be completed on time. In both cases, you need to look at the relationship between the people involved. This will help you understand the context of what's really being said. Another important factor in contextual communication is body language and the like.

Clues that you'll need to watch for in contextual communication include:

Body language
Facial expressions
Tone of voice
Sounds or noises
Eye contact

These clues vary from culture to culture, and it takes time to read them accurately. Thus, a translator or local associate can be helpful in reading between the lines.

To communicate effectively, you need to build a bridge between content and context. Here's how:

- **In contextual communication, how something is said can be more important than what is said;**
- **Hierarchy and relationships affect contextual dialogue; the greater the status, the greater the context;**
- **And finally, look for clues such as body language, facial expressions, tone of voice and eye contact.**

VIDEO OUTLINE

No matter how you translate it, the word is communication. And the goal: to understand and be understood.

Whether you're moving overseas or just have occasional contact with foreign associates, you'll need to practice intercultural communication and build a bridge of understanding.

Preview Only

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Communication is the exchange of information between two people. Name as many different types of communication as possible. Give some examples of how cultural factors can affect communication.
2. Why is effective cross-cultural communication vital in maintaining good relationships? Why is it important in terms of getting the job done and achieving objectives?
3. Imagine you're suddenly unable to speak your native language. How would your day-to-day life change? What about your social life? What about access to current events and the arts?
4. Imagine you're living in a foreign country where you don't speak the language. Describe at least five aspects of your life that would be affected. What kinds of handicaps would you face?
5. Why is it important to ask before speaking your language in another country? How would you feel if visitors to your country started speaking their language and expected you to understand?
6. When translating, why is it important to transfer meaning rather than words? Can you cite examples of literal translation that led to awkward results?
7. Under what circumstances might you hire a professional translator? When do you feel you could do without one? Name some of the benefits of having a translator.
8. Many experts recommend translating important documents back into the original language. Do you see this as wasteful? What are the reasons for back-translation? What are the benefits?
9. Why is it wise to avoid jokes and slang? When should humor be avoided in your culture? If possible, exchange jokes with foreign acquaintances. Did you find each other's jokes humorous?
10. Personal space varies between cultures. Try standing face-to-face with another person. Now take one step forward and have a conversation. What was your experience like? Were you uncomfortable?
11. Give at least three examples in which touching is appropriate in your society. Give three examples of when it is inappropriate. Compare your notes with acquaintances from other cultures, and see how your lists vary.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

12. Cite instances in which eye contact is appropriate in your culture. Give three examples of when it is inappropriate. Again, compare your notes with foreign acquaintances and discuss the differences.
13. What hand gestures do you use in daily life? What hand gestures are taboo? Discuss gestures that are accepted in some cultures but avoided in others. What's the best strategy when traveling in a foreign country?
14. Do you find that you speak more formally with some people than with others? Give examples. In your society, do you typically address people by their personal names or their family names? How would you react if suddenly the opposite were true?
15. Have you found that people from some cultures tend to speak more quickly or slowly than you? How do you react? Are you comfortable with silence or does it make you uncomfortable?
16. Are strong emotions admired – or disdained – in your culture? Give an example of a country where emotions run high, and another where people are more restrained. Describe an experience in which someone showed particularly high – or low – emotions, and how it made you feel.
17. When making casual conversation, what topics are acceptable? What topics are not? How do your habits in this regard differ from those of other cultures?
18. Are you moved by facts and figures or by intangibles and emotional concepts? Pretend you're preparing a marketing campaign for a culture that prefers qualitative information: how would you craft the campaign to suit that market?
19. In your society, who is more admired: someone who boasts about his abilities or downplays them? Which type are you, and what would it be like to be the opposite? What situations might arise when these two cultural types interact?
20. Do people in your society tend to be direct or indirect? What are the benefits of being direct? What about indirect? What strategies might you adopt when working with someone from the opposite culture?
21. Describe an instance in which someone was very direct and how it made you feel. In contrast, describe an instance in which someone was indirect or evasive, and how you reacted.
22. In an indirect society, what tactics might you use to get accurate information? How would you avoid seeming rude or blunt? If you were interacting with a more direct society, what steps would you take to avoid being offended?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

23. How would you describe the difference between context and content-based communication? Which is prevalent in your society? How would you adapt in a culture of the opposite persuasion?
24. Hierarchy and relationships have a strong influence on contextual dialogue. Why? Why would someone of lesser status be indirect with someone of higher status? Describe a situation in which you would have high status, and would need to rely on contextual factors.
25. What are some of the non-verbal clues in contextual communication? Pretend you must give someone a message, but can't do it in words. What non-verbal clues would you give to get a message across?

Preview Only

ROLE PLAY

ROLE PLAY

Global One Travel Journal: Intercultural Communicating

To get the most out of your global experiences and quickly enhance your cross-cultural skills, a personal travel journal is a must. After filling out your Global One passport, you may proceed to the following sections:

Section One: Solo Exploration –

To build awareness of your own biases. This section includes a series of reflective writing assignments that rely on experiences in our own culture. These can, but don't have to, be used for the group discussion.

Section Two: Doing Safari –

To increase sensitivity to other cultures. These are outside activities, or social experiments, that are designed to be done with people who are not travelers. They must be your co-workers. These activities also can be used for group discussions.

Section Three: Going Native –

To develop some strategies for working cross culturally. These are role-plays and games that require other students in this training to engage in.

ROLE PLAY

GLOBAL ONE PASSPORT

Notice

This Passport must not be used by any person other than the person to whom issued or in violation of the conditions or restrictions placed therein or in violation of the rules regulating the issuance of passports. Any willful violation of these Laws and regulations will subject the offender to prosecution under Title 18, United States Code, section 1998.

Your name:

Nature of the international business you are engaged in:

What is your travel history? Do you have any other cross cultural experiences?

ROLE PLAY

SECTION ONE: SOLO EXPLORATION

A critical skill in intercultural communicating is the ability to read the context of a situation. The context is often unspoken, even in English. Consider the statement:

We'll meet tomorrow at 9 a.m.

This can mean many different things.

Draw a line to connect the meaning with the expanded sentence.

The facts	Because of the quality of your work, we'll meet tomorrow at 9 am.
Significance	We'll meet – you and me without them – tomorrow at 9 am.
Blame or praise	They don't have to meet, but we'll meet tomorrow at 9 am.
Include or exclude	It's really important that we meet tomorrow at 9 am.
Assign responsibility	We'll meet for the first time tomorrow at 9 am.
Signal a course of action	We'll meet tomorrow at 9 am, not 8:30 am.

ROLE PLAY

Look at the situations below. Then put a check mark in one of the two columns: under “literal translations” when the exact meaning of each word is critical, or under “context” when it is not.

Situations	Literal Translations	Context
Directions to a place		
Forms of greetings		
Terms of a contract		
Technical specifications		
Family history		
Yes or no		
A toast at dinner		

Your foreign host has asked you to write down some notes about yourself that she can use to compose an introduction for you to members of her team. What would you write down if:

Her culture values pride?

Her culture values humbleness?

ROLE PLAY

Assess your own personal communicating style.

Personal Space

I usually speak with a business associate at a distance of

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5
Less than 12" _____ greater than 24"

Touching

My most common physical contact with associates is the...

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5
Handshake _____ pat on the back _____ embrace

Eye contact

When speaking, I'm making eye contact...

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5
Rarely _____ often _____ always

Formality

In business meetings my posture is usually...

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5
Casual _____ formal

Pacing

When I speak, I usually speak at a speed that is...

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5
Leisurely _____ intense

Silence

During silent pauses, I can stay quiet before speaking for a...

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5
Short time _____ long time

ROLE PLAY

Ask two colleagues at work how they would score you in these categories and make their responses with different color pens.

Were there any surprises?

Personal Space

I usually speak with a business associate at a distance of

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5
Less than 12" _____ greater than 24"

Touching

My most common physical contact with associates is the...

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Handshake _____ pat on the back _____ embrace

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During silent pauses, I can stay quiet before speaking for a...

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5
Short time _____ long time

ROLE PLAY

SECTION TWO: DOING SAFARI

Historically people in the US have admired egalitarian values. But hierarchies based on responsibility, expertise, or pay differences are a part of most businesses. Observe the signs of hierarchy at work and inventory them here.

Check the behaviors that distinguish between subordinate and superior. Make note of the specific behavior difference i.e. “the superior always spoke first” or “the superior was always louder.”

<i>Behavior</i>	<i>Behavioral Difference</i>
Tone of voice	
Form of address	
Physical posture	
Seating position	
Type of clothing	
Quantity of speech	

Based on your observations, what are the distinguishing behavioral signs of co-worker equality?

<i>Behavior</i>	<i>Behavioral Difference</i>
Tone of voice	
Form of address	
Physical posture	
Seating position	
Type of clothing	
Quantity of speech	

ROLE PLAY

For one day at work, interact with associates using a communication style different from your own. For example, use several or all of the following behaviors, and record your experiences below.

Speak with people at a distance of less than 12”.

Be more physical: give pats on the back, and embrace colleagues when saying goodbye or hello.

In conversations, completely avoid eye contact.

Start every conversation with observations about your personal or family life.

ROLE PLAY

Plan to have three conversations in the areas below this week. In the course of these conversations, pause for at least 5 seconds before replying.

At the completion of these conversations, write down your experiences below.

With a family or friend

On politics or culture

In your business

ROLE PLAY

SECTION 3: GOING NATIVE

The following activities are designed for two or more people. The role-plays involve two or more characters with secret instructions. Players are not to share their characters' secret instructions before or during the role-play. Others in the group can function as observers, timekeepers, or coaches. Each situation has a natural conclusion, and players should be encouraged to reach the endings themselves.

At the end of the role-play, discuss these questions:

- What was the result? For example, what was the decision, was the communication successful, and who won?
- What did it feel like to play the characters? Players can share their secret instructions.
- What did the players do to achieve or to fail to achieve the result?

The secret instructions are scattered in the next few pages. This way a player can see his own secret instructions without reading that of the other character.

Preview Only

ROLE PLAY

EVERYTHING IS OKAY, MATE.

Situation

EON is a manufacturing plant in Asia. In the first month, the American Manager has been working with the English-speaking Floor Leader to communicate with the other non-English-speaking workers. In their language there is no “yes” or “no.” Bad news is never directly reported to the boss – it is considered disrespectful.

A half-hour ago some black smoke set off an alarm in the assembly area. From a distance the Manager sensed confusion and fear among some of the workers. The disturbance was remedied, and people are back at work. The Manager is meeting with the Floor Leader to find out what happened.

DISCUSSION OF ROLE-PLAY

What was the result?

***What did it feel like to play the characters?
Players can share their secret instructions.***

What did they players do to achieve or to fail to achieve the result?

ROLE PLAY

HE SAID, SHE SAID

Situation

Two representatives are discussing details of a joint venture between two companies. The negotiations have reached an impasse. Vukmar Ltd. wants Golden Horse Enterprises to commit 50% of its production next year to Vukmar, while Golden Horse wants Vukmar to commit to building a plant nearby.

DISCUSSION OF ROLE-PLAY

What was the result?

***What did it feel like to play the characters?
Players can share their secret instructions.***

What did they players do to achieve or to fail to achieve the result?

ROLE PLAY

EVERYTHING IS OKAY, MATE:

Secret Instructions for the Manager

You admire the inventiveness and hard work of these workers. From the outset you have treated the Floor Leader as an equal team member, and you think your relationship is a good example to the other workers. You want to establish a high consciousness for safety at this plant, but you're worried they won't commit to it. You must find out what happened.

HE SAID, SHE SAID:

Secret Instructions for the Vukmar representative

Your company is willing to build a Vukmar plant at Golden Horse's neighboring site, but only after 18 months of successful Golden Horse shipments. You will not disclose this position until after your counterpart agrees to sell 50% of next year's production to Vukmar. In your country, successful people use overstatement. They speak at a fast pace and interrupt all the time, which is considered listening actively. Use these communication traits in your conversation.

ROLE PLAY

EVERYTHING IS OKAY, MATE:

Secret Instructions for the Floor Leader

The American-made, computerized mill machine caught on fire because your untrained co-workers disabled some of the safety features. You see the manager as superficially pleasant but quick to anger and blame. Start with, "Everything is okay, mate."

HE SAID, SHE SAID:

Secret instructions for Golden Horse representative

Your company is willing to commit 50% of next year's production to Vukmar, but only after Vukmar agrees to build a plant at Golden Horse's neighboring site. You will not disclose this position until after your counterpart praises your products as first in quality. In your country successful people use understatement all the time. They speak at a slow pace, and use silence as a sign of respect. Use these communication traits in your conversation.

Preview Only

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