

How to avoid cross-cultural miscommunication?

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Today in our professional lives, we come across people from different cultural backgrounds. With the rapid expansion in businesses, many individuals are facing a tough time in communicating across several cultures. Therefore, it is important to learn how to communicate effectively with cross-cultural audiences.



7 Tips for effective cross-cultural communication

Speak simple English

Always, remember to use simple English. Speak shorter sentences and use familiar words. Avoid speaking puns, slang, jargons and making specific cultural references.

Speak slowly

It is important that you speak clearly and slowly, especially when communicating with people who are not native English speakers. When you speak slowly, you give abundant time to the listener to interpret your words. However, don't raise your voice while you enunciate.

Encourage feedback

In order to understand that your message is received as intended, make sure to encourage a feedback. You may ask questions here and there and encourage the listener to share his views. Just a nod or a smile may not indicate that your message is received well. Therefore, always have a two-way communication and don't wait till the end to ask a feedback. A question and answer session after every little discussion will do more good in effective communication.

Observe non-verbal communication

Look into the eyes of your listener and try to gather what it says. Does it have a blank look or a disinterested look or an alert look? Take cues from non-verbal communication while speaking in English with a person from a different cultural background.

Be a good listener

Avoid interrupting the other person in between if you have a doubt. It may come across as a rude gesture. Instead, be a good listener first and let the speaker finish his sentence or idea before interrupting.

Smile

Don't forget to smile at all times when communicating in English with a cross-cultural audience. According

to an international behavior expert, smile is the single most understood form of communication in both personal and business world.

Practice to follow-up

To make sure you do not make any oral miscommunication, always ensure to follow-up in writing. Send an email or a follow-up letter with conclusion/agreement of the meeting. You can take help of a local translator if there is a need to draft proposals and legal contracts.

Conclusion

The rules of speaking any language vary from country to country. You can join our [online English speaking class](#) and learn to speak politely and empathetically.

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- By Shailja Varma

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