

# CROSS-CULTURAL BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

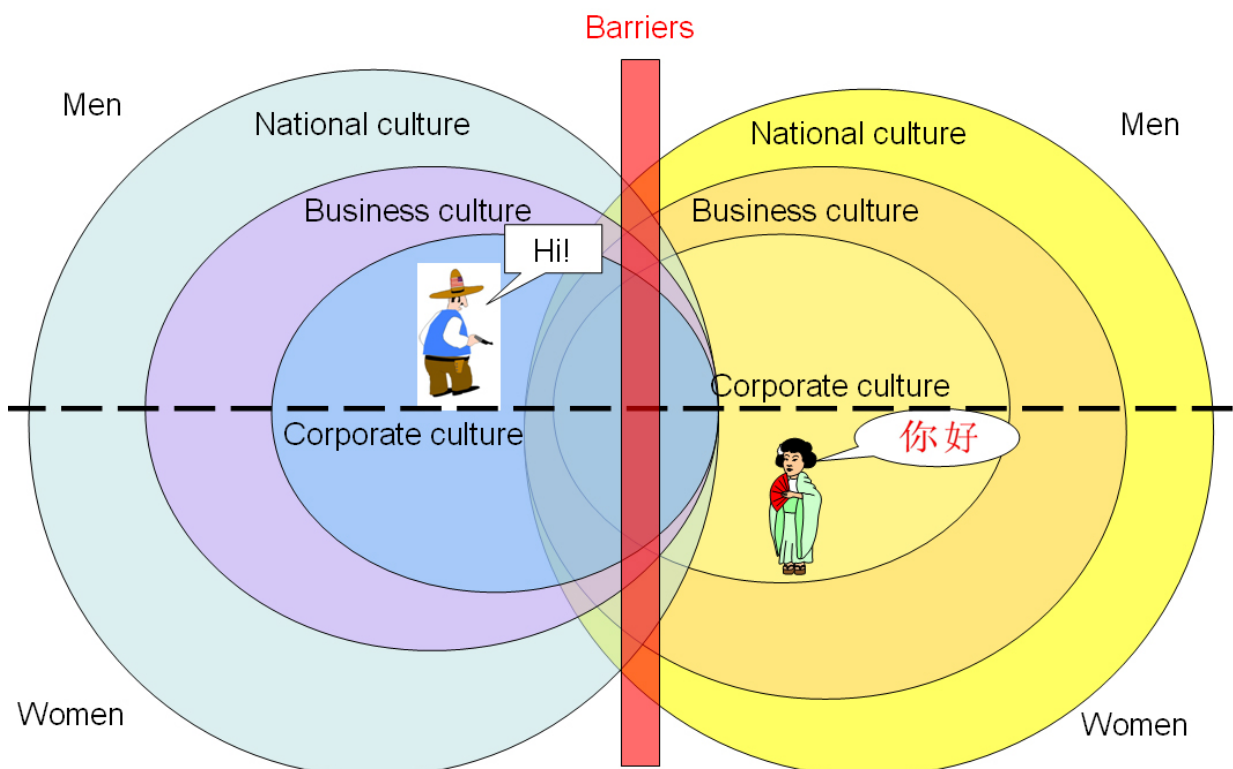
## Practical Course in Business English Communication in Multi-National Environment

**Course description:** Communication is about **people**. All people are different, we do not always communicate the same way from day to day, since factors like context, individual personality, and mood interact with the variety of **cultural influences**. Any type of communication is cultural and the results of communication are influenced by cultural differences. Sometimes we can't find a common ground with our family members, how could we get along with our colleagues at work! "Men are from Mars, women are from Venus", that's why we often meet problems and misunderstanding even inside our families. On the other hand, villagers, for example, do not feel themselves comfortable in a highly dynamic and complex cultural environment of big cities.

This situation becomes even more complicated in today's business – both small and transnational. How to deal with your partners and clients? How to effectively communicate inside and outside your company – with your boss, peers and subordinates? How to present your views and how to persuade your listeners? How to manage conflicts and get what you want? And, what is much more complicated, – how to **do all that in English**. We are to face the reality: 70% of world's mail is addressed in English; 85% of all international telephone conversations are in English; 80% of all the data in computers in the world is in English.

Look at this picture. People tend to interact and communicate inside an area of cultural intersection. Here we can find a common ground:

### Cross-Cultural Business Communication Model



While interacting with people from foreign cultures, and sometimes unfriendly nations, we have additional **barriers** - problems and troubles. The reasons are obvious: we speak different languages, we have different perceptions, stereotypes, rules, habits and customs. Stuck by misunderstanding while dealing with foreigners, we traditionally call them "strange": strange Americans, strange Japanese, strange Brits. But for them, we are "strange" people!

Vodka, Kalashnikov, piroshky... Russian mafia and KGB... Stereotypes are strong enough.

Does that mean that successful cross-cultural communication is simply impossible? Definitely not! In spite of all national stereotypes and personal perceptions, effective communication is both possible and necessary.

But for that we need sincere desire and eagerness to communicate. In addition to our ability to hear and see, we desperately need understanding! Do **THEY** hear and understand what **WE** are trying to say? Are **WE** listening well in response?

Karen Paik, an American schoolgirl, put this idea brilliantly in the following way:

"Knowledge is a mighty thing  
To have in the hand,  
But I would trade it all  
If I could only understand".

Here is an important message: cross-cultural understanding or **cultural awareness** is a key to successful communication in contemporary globalised business environment.

**Features:** The course focuses on things everybody should know about communication in general and business communication in particular in a multi-national cultural environment nowadays. Participants are expected:

- to gain **background knowledge** in an area of cross-cultural communication;
- to acquire practical **skills** in effective cross-cultural business communication;
- to deepen and improve their **English language** levels.

**Target Audience:** The course is intended for all levels of executives and managers, as well as for ordinary employees, or anyone who needs a better cross-cultural awareness.

**Trainer:** Igor M. Popov, professional lecturer, author and instructor in general management, psychological operations, cross-cultural communication and business English. MS degree from the National Defense University (Washington D.C.), Stanford University Visiting Professor, Candidate of Science degree (in History), Professor.

**Format of the course:** This course consists of **12 units**. Each unit is covered in one week for 6 hours: 3 hours of intensive training twice a week. Although all units are logically interconnected, each one of them is a separate topic for learning, discussing and practicing.

Each lesson is a combination of a PowerPoint Presentation and interactive discussions as well as case studies and role plays. Participants are invited to share their views and experience and actively participate in all exercises.

## **Tentative Draft Program of the Course:**

### **Unit 1. Breaking the ice. Communication is about people.**

1. English as the universal language of the world.
2. Be the first to say "Hello!"
3. Making a good first impression. Meeting new people and introducing yourself.
4. Speaking about yourself: know-how techniques. "Lady Me" concept.
5. Starting a conversation.
6. Small talk techniques.
7. The art of asking questions.
8. Conversation golden rule: Q – aq – AQ – aq – AQ ...
9. American manners and customs. How to propose a toast.

### **Unit 2. Different nation's cultural profiles. How to get along with different cultures.**

1. Different nations – different cultural profiles.
2. National values and international issues.
3. Different ways of thinking.
4. Time is money.
5. "East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet"
6. When civilizations collide: the West vs. the Rest.
7. Say what you mean and mean what you say.
8. Barriers to effective communication across cultures.
9. Networking in today's globalised business environment.

### **Unit 3. Business culture.**

1. The world of business.
2. Corporate culture.
3. Management and cultural diversity.
4. Marketing and advertising across cultures.
5. The impact of culture on business.
6. Action-oriented American business culture.
7. Russian business culture.
8. Asian business culture.
9. How do different business cultures interact?

### **Unit 4. Conflict management.**

1. Facing a conflict: what to do?
2. Interpersonal relationships.
3. Types of personalities: individual strengths and weaknesses.
4. How to deal with difficult people and how to handle conflicts.
5. Positive thinking vs. negative thinking.
6. Conflict at work: when you don't like your boss and he (she) doesn't like you...
7. Caring about your customers.
8. Problem-solving techniques.
9. Building relationships and networking.

### **Unit 5. Ladies first. Men are from Mars, women are from Venus.**

1. Women in different cultures: Muslim society vs. American realities.
2. Gender psychology: men and women are different!
3. How do men and women think and take decisions?
4. Language of cross-gender communication.
5. Women in business: trends and statistics.
6. Women are experts in establishing relationships.
7. How to sell to women.
8. Women rights movement: Be careful, as you may get what you ask...
9. Sexual harassment: nightmare of American culture.

### **Unit 6. Team building and leadership**

1. Hiring and firing: how to get good employees and keep them.
2. Carrots and sticks: the ABCs of motivating employees.
3. One for all and all for one: building teams that really work.
4. Persuading your colleagues and customers.
5. Dealing with complaints.
6. Success is teamwork, luck and our own contributions.
7. Leading across cultures.
8. Leadership styles.
9. The anatomy of a great executive.

### **Unit 7. Effective business meetings**

1. Meetings are ubiquitous in corporate America.
2. Agenda, timing, planning, logistics.
3. Conducting a meeting: tips for a chairperson.
4. The 6 golden rules of meeting management.
5. The DESC stages of a meeting.
6. Brainstorming.
7. Questioning techniques.
8. Dos and don'ts in US meetings.
9. Follow-up of a business meeting.

### **Unit 8. Making a presentation**

1. American style of presentation: the "friendly American approach,"
2. Analyze your audience: cultural considerations
3. Structure of a presentation.
4. Opening and closing are extremely important.
5. Language of a presentation: KISS.
6. Describing a graph.
7. Q and A period: handling difficult questions.
8. Useful tips for giving a presentation.
9. Leave a great final impression.

### **Unit 9. Decision-making**

1. Decision: what is it, by the way?
2. Effective models and techniques for decision-making.
3. Mistakes and barriers for effective decision-making.
4. Different styles of decision-making in business.
5. National styles of taking decisions.
6. Shooting from the hip: Cowboy style of decision-making.
7. Risk-taking: cultural differences.
8. Decisions individual and in groups.
9. Consensus building.

### **Unit 10. Negotiating**

1. In business, everything is negotiation.
2. What is negotiation?
3. Preparing for a negotiation.
4. Know your BATNA.
5. Be careful with facts and figures.
6. The most powerful negotiating skill is listening.
7. National styles of negotiations.
8. Win-win strategies for negotiations.
9. Tips for effective negotiations.

### **Unit 11. Business interview**

1. Job-seeking and job-hopping.
2. Self-promotion: how to sell yourself.
3. Prepare your CV (resume) beforehand.
4. Language of confidence.
5. Body language.
6. Listening skills are highly important.
7. The most FAQ at the interview.
8. Russian immigrants in the US: stories of success and disaster.
9. Head-hunting in today's Russia.

### **Unit 12. Cross-cultural business communication: wrap-up session.**

1. English as the universal language of the world.
2. Small talk techniques.
3. Effective communication across cultures: how to overcome barriers.
4. The impact of culture on contemporary business.
5. Building relationships and networking in today's globalized world.
6. Women in business: trends and statistics.
7. Useful tips for conducting a meeting and delivering a presentation.
8. National styles of decision-making.
9. How different nations negotiate.