

# Communicating Across Cultures

# Communicating Across Cultures

- ❑ The communication process
- ❑ The culture-communication link
- ❑ Information technology – going global and acting local
- ❑ Managing cross-cultural communication

# What is Communication?

- ❑ Communication describes the process of sharing meaning by transmitting messages through media such as words, behavior, or material artifacts.

# How Do Cultural Factors Pervade the Communication Process?

- ❑ “Culture not only dictates who talks with whom, and how the communication proceeds, it also helps to determine how people encode messages, the meanings they have for messages, and the conditions and circumstances under which various messages may or may not be sent, noticed, or interpreted. In fact, our entire repertory of communicative behaviors is dependent largely on the culture in which we have been raised. Culture, consequently, is the foundation of communication. And, when cultures vary, communication practices also vary.”

## Terms in Communication

- ❑ Intercultural communication is when a member of one culture sends a message to a member of another culture.
- ❑ Attribution is the process in which people look for the explanation of another person's behavior.

# Guidelines for Creating Trust

- ❑ Create a clear and calculated basis for mutual benefit.  
There must be realistic commitments and good intentions to honor them.
- ❑ Improve predictability: strive to resolve conflicts and keep communication open.
- ❑ Develop mutual bonding through regular socializing and friendly contact.

# Cultural Variables Affecting Communication

- ❑ Attitudes: attitudes underlie the way we behave and communicate and the way we interpret messages from other people. Ethnocentric attitudes are a particular source of noise in cross-cultural communication.
- ❑ Social Organization: our perceptions can be influenced by differences in values, approach, or priorities relative to the kind of social organizations to which we belong.
- ❑ Thought Patterns: The logical progression of reasoning varies widely around the world. Managers cannot assume that others use the same reasoning processes.

# Cultural Variables Affecting Communication

- ❑ Roles: societies differ considerably in their perception of a manager's role. Much of the difference is attributable to their perception of who should make the decisions and who has responsibility for what.
- ❑ Language: Spoken or written language is a frequent cause of miscommunication, stemming from a person's inability to speak the local language, a poor or too-literal translation, a speaker's failure to explain idioms, or a person missing the meaning conveyed through body language or certain symbols.



# Cultural Variables Affecting Communication

- ❑ Nonverbal Communication: behavior that communicates without words (although it often is accompanied by words).
- ❑ Time: another variable that communicates culture is the way people regard and use time.
- ❑ Monochronic time systems – time is experienced in a linear way
- ❑ Polychronic time systems – tolerate many things occurring simultaneously and emphasize involvement with people.

# Forms of Nonverbal Communication

- ❑ Facial expressions
- ❑ Body posture
- ❑ Gestures with hands, arms, head, etc.
- ❑ Interpersonal distance (proxemics)
- ❑ Touching, body contact
- ❑ Eye contact

## Forms of Nonverbal Communication

- ❑ Clothing, cosmetics, hairstyles, jewelry
- ❑ Attitude toward time and the use of time in business and social interactions
- ❑ Food symbolism and social use of meals