

Раздел 3. Деловая коммуникация.
MODULE 3. Business Communication

ПР17. Межличностные и межкультурные отношения.

ПР17. Interpersonal and Intercultural Contacts

Culture, in the broadest sense, refers to how and why we think and function. It comprises all sorts of things—how we eat, play, dress, work, think, interact, and communicate. Everything we do, in essence, has been shaped by the cultures in which we are raised. Similarly, a person in another country is also shaped by his or her cultural influences. These cultural influences impact how we think and communicate.

Culture in today's context is different from the traditional, more singular definition, used particularly in Western languages, where the word often implies refinement and education. Culture is the beliefs, values, attitudes, and practices of a group of people. It includes the behavior pattern and norms of that group—the rules, the assumptions, the perceptions, and the logic and reasoning that are specific to a group.

Culture is really the collective programming of our minds from birth. It's this collective programming that distinguishes one group of people from another. Much of the problem in any cross-cultural interaction stems from our expectations. The challenge is that whenever we deal with people from another culture—whether in our own country or globally—we expect people to behave as we do and for the same reasons. **Culture awareness** most commonly refers to having an understanding of another culture's values and perspective. This does not mean automatic acceptance; it simply means understanding another culture's values and how its history, economy, and society have influenced what people think. Understanding so you can properly interpret someone's words and actions means you can effectively interact with them.

When talking about culture, it's important to understand that there really are no rights or wrongs. People's value systems and reasoning are based on the teachings and experiences of their culture. **Cross-cultural understanding** requires that we reorient our mind-set and, most importantly, our expectations, in order to interpret the gestures, attitudes, and statements of the people we meet. We reorient our mind-set, but we don't necessarily change it.

Professionals often think that, in today's shrinking world, cultural differences are no longer significant, but it's wrong. It's a common mistake to assume that people think alike just because they dress alike; it's also a mistake to assume that people think alike just because they are similar in their word choices in a business setting. Even in today's global world, there are wide cultural differences, and these differences influence how people do business. Culture impacts many things in business, including

- the pace of business;
- business protocol – how to physically and verbally meet and interact;
- decision making and negotiating;
- managing employees and projects; and
- marketing, sales, and distribution.

Study the following words.

Culture	культура
Cultural influence	культурное влияние
Culture awareness	культурное самосознание, уважение культурных особенностей
Cross-cultural (intercultural) understanding	межкультурное взаимопонимание
Beliefs	верования
Values	ценности
Expectations	ожидания

Manners	манеры
Rules of conduct	правила поведения
Attitude	отношение
Gestures	жесты
Work ethic	отношение к работе

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Read excerpts from a brochure by a global organisation on how to handle first meetings in four different countries.

Kazakhstan

Greetings are rather formal due to the hierarchical nature of society. The common greeting is the handshake, often done with both hands and a smile. Some men will not shake hands with women, so be sensitive to these religious differences. Wait until invited before using someone's first name, although the invitation generally comes early in the relationship.

Germany

Greetings are formal. A quick, firm handshake is the traditional greeting. Titles are very important and show respect. Use a person's title and their surname until invited to use their first name. In general, wait for your host or hostess to introduce you to a group. When entering a room, shake hands with everyone individually, including children.

Japan

Greetings are very formal and ritualised. It is important to show the correct amount of respect to someone based upon their status relative to your own. If at all possible, wait to be introduced. It can be seen as impolite to introduce yourself, even in a large gathering. A foreign visitor may bow the head slightly, since no one expects foreigners to generally understand the nuances of bowing.

Senegal

When people greet, they take time to ask about the health and welfare of family members. It is customary for these questions to be asked over a very long handshake. People should be addressed by their academic, professional or honorific title and their surname or first name.

Here are some open questions which you could use in a first conversation with a stranger:

1. **Job:** What do you do for a living? – Кем вы работаете?
2. **Company activity:** What line of business is your company in? – Чем занимается ваша компания?
3. **Work location:** Where is your company based? – Где находится ваша компания?
4. **Arrival:** When did you get here? – Когда вы приехали?
5. **Hotel:** Where are you staying? – Где вы остановились?
6. **Duration:** How long are you staying for? – Как надолго вы приехали?
7. **Travel:** How many times have you been to Russia? – Сколько раз вы бывали в России?
8. **Time working for company:** How long have you worked for your company? – Как давно вы работаете в этой компании?
9. **Departure:** When are you leaving? – Когда вы уезжаете?

Practice asking and answering these questions.