

Cultural Diversity in University Business Curriculum: Placing Business Communication into the Global Context

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Abstract

Globalization has ushered in a new era of doing business. The business environment has expanded to include new markets in various geographical locations which has brought along with it a myriad of diversity including cultures. Globalization has shrunk the world and it cannot be business as usual where communication is concerned. As much as people are being brought closer together, globalization does not necessarily change individual cultures. Though cultural issues are discussed in a social context, it still creeps into the business arena as people bring their beliefs, norms and mannerisms into play. Business transactions are affected by the culture of the participants and cross cultural, or intercultural communication have become a critical soft skill required for all international and global business executives, managers, and employees. Successful business negotiations and relationships may bank on the appreciation and respect for regional, country, and international cultural differences, known as cultural diversity. Communication is by en large culturally based more so non verbal communication namely body language, gestures and paralinguistics. Added to that, other issue like gift giving and negotiations are all forms of communication whose cultural base may make or break any business transaction. This paper seeks to expound on the importance of including cultural diversity in the business communication curriculum to better prepare business graduates for the global environment they are likely to face. The premise being that ignorance of this soft skill will be at the peril of the contemporary business graduate.

Key words: cultural diversity, culture, business communication, soft skill

Introduction

It is now more than ever that the business world has shrunk into the renowned global village where people from different nations cross boundaries they never dreamt of three decades ago. Business success no longer banks only on business

acumen, the size of the bank account or the level of influence one has with the government or the ruling party, but also on the ability to communicate across cultures. Cultural misunderstandings can be humorous or serious to the point of creating mistrust or even conflict and in many cases costing a valuable customers or potentially profitable business relationships. To succeed in a global marketplace, individuals and organizations need an understanding of the cultures, behaviours, languages and business thinking of others (Carté and Fox 2008). The knowledge, appreciation and respect for the regional and country cultures can stand one in good stead in negotiations and building business relationships.

Business Communication has been largely accepted as a necessary soft skill but the question is does the business degree curriculum includes enough emphasis on the cultural aspects of business communication necessary in the now globalized environment. In as much as business graduates are taught how to write reports, make presentations and know aspects of non verbal communication, to what extent does all that allude to the cultural aspects. Communication is culturally biased and the diversity of cultures is also the diversity of communication methods and acceptable communication mannerisms and behaviours.

Ranging from written, verbal or non verbal, culture creeps into the way people express themselves both socially and in business. Because culture is inculcated in humans from birth one cultural group grows up believing that their method is correct and the only way possible to communicate. Unbeknown to them, other cultures may find this embarrassing or downright offensive. Words for instance in one language might be so sweet to the palate and the ears but in another setting the very same words can be unmentionable even in secret. For instance the name of a popular Japanese sports utility vehicle is 'Pajero' which is Spanish slang word meaning 'He who fiddles with himself for sexual gratification' (urban dictionary.com 2014). The vehicle is now marketed as the Mitsubishi Montero in Spanish based markets. More so with non verbal communication which in many cases speaks louder than words or enhances the spoken word, gestures, body language and facial expressions can have diverse meaning the ignorance of which might be very costly to organizations. For example the common wave of the hand from side used in Zimbabwe to mean goodbye actually means 'no' in Mediterranean Europe and Latin America (Goman 2009).

Added to that the giving of gifts communicates volumes in different cultures and efforts not to offend must be examined. Lack of investment in cross cultural training and language tuition often leads to deficient internal cohesion and worse still to external embarrassments. Payne (2010) posits that some of the business deficiencies like 'the loss of clients/customers, poor staff retention, lack of competitive edge, internal conflicts/power struggles, poor working relations, misunderstandings,

stress, poor productivity and lack of co-operation' are all by-products of poor cross cultural communication.

The business graduate, even at first degree level may therefore be half baked without a firm grounding in business communication which places great emphasis on culture and communication to prepare them for a career in the international business forum. This is a concept paper which is advocating for an understanding of the role of culture in business communication thus filling the knowledge gap of the role culture has in different communication contexts. It also allows business graduates to be armed and ready in the globalized business world.

Concept of culture in business communication

As defined by Al-Rodham (2006) "Globalization is a process that encompasses the causes, course, and consequences of transnational and trans-cultural integration of human and non-human activities." This integration has now the order of the day. This has brought with it international businesses with a highly diverse workforce in terms of nationality and cultural background who face challenges from the differences in language, values, belief systems, business ethics, business practices, behaviour, etiquette and expectations Payne N (2010). Globalization brings more businesses and more business people into contact with those from other nations. The more boundaries crossed, the further the contact, the more scope there is for misunderstanding Carté and Fox (2008). Cross cultural differences can negatively impact a business in a variety of ways, whether in team cohesion or in staff productivity.

People from different cultures inhabit definite sensory worlds. They see, hear, feel and smell only that which has some meaning or importance to them from their own cultural frames of reference (Barna,1972). Managing people successfully requires communication and a manager spends at least 90% of the time communicating (Kitchen and Daly, 2002) and the quality of communication between people within an organization is "a crucial variable determining organizational success. This quality of communication today includes the cultural context. The review of literature will focus on culture in following communication contexts

- Eye contact
- Body language
- Proxemics
- Gift giving
- Time
- Verbal

Eyes

Eyes have been known to 'speak' volumes and the phrases describing the eyes as 'the window to the soul' are common and thus, visual contact is a powerful means of communication. Examples of eye phrases being

- 'He gave an icy stare'
- 'She looked daggers at the other woman'
- 'If looks could kill'
- 'He looked down his nose at us'

Goman (2008)

Eyes are the primary way people get information. People give and receive information from the eyes more than from any other part of the body Goman (2008). A single glance can communicate a myriad of emotions like hostility, amusement, reserve, suspicion embarrassment, or boredom. Eyes can also convey information involuntarily which in many cases can hardly be misconstrued. For instance universal reactions such as dilation of eyes in bad light or widening of eyes when one is enraged, surprised or afraid. The cultural context is generally in the voluntary aspects. Some cultures, greatly respect holding eye contact while conversing as it is deemed to mean one is speaking the truth and are engrossed in the conversation. Little or no eye contact can be interpreted as indecorous, insincere or even dishonest Goman (2008). In agreement Nightingale (2010), indicates that in some cultures, looking people in the eye is assumed to indicate candour and straightforwardness; in others it is seen as confrontational and rude. Most people in Arab cultures share a great deal of eye contact and may regard too little as disrespectful. In English culture, a certain amount of eye contact is required, but too much makes many people uncomfortable. On the contrary in many cultures, such as East Asia, Nigeria, and other parts of Africa it is respectful to look the dominant person in the eye, but in Western culture this can be interpreted as being "shifty-eyed", and the person is judged badly because "he wouldn't look me in the eye" (Galanti 2004). Shifty eyes are regarded with a high level of suspicion concerning an individual's unrevealed intentions or thoughts (Kathane, 2004).

Negative 'eye language' is also noted, such as darting eyes and staring which are considered rude in some cultures. Staring is overdone eye contact which does not increase liking but is generally considered as rude or threatening. According to Nightingale(2010), different cultures vary in the amount that it is acceptable to

watch other people. Some experts call these high-look and low-look cultures. British culture is a low-look culture. Watching other people, especially strangers, is regarded as intrusive. In some cultures it communicates a desire to dominate, a feeling of superiority, a lack of respect or a wish to insult (Goman 2008). People who are caught 'staring' usually look away quickly and are often embarrassed. Those being watched may feel threatened and insulted. In high-look cultures, for example in Southern Europe, looking or gazing at other people is perfectly acceptable; being watched is not a problem. When people's expectations and interpretations clash, irritation and misunderstandings can arise (Nightingale 2010). Darting eyes are associated with deceit or with defensive, nervous or insecure behaviour. Placed in a business context darting eyes might be regarded as negotiating in bad faith because the whole truth is not being revealed.

Furthermore, Boothman (2010) indicates that eyes can give valuable clues about how a person thinks.

People have different mental maps which drive their behaviour. Kinaesthetic people tend to look down more, while visuals spend more time looking up, and auditories look sideways. "This is because they each favour one sense to code and store general information as well as express it'. "If you asked, "How was the Stones concert?" a visual would first remember how it looked, an auditory how it sounded, and a kinaesthetic how it felt. But eye cues can tell you more than who you're dealing with; they can also tell you what you're dealing with." When people look up and right, they are probably constructing, or making up, their answer. When they look up and left, they are more than likely remembering it.'

Body language

Probably the best-known type of nonverbal communication, is body language. Also known as kinesics it is a term that refers to body movements and the meaning they communicate (Goman, 2008). This is the language of gestures, expressions, and postures. People spend a lot of time decoding body language, a wrinkled forehead, a raised eyebrow, a tug on the ear, fingers tapping on the table top, legs crossed and uncrossed, arms crossed over the chest are observed. These movements should be considered in relation to the message itself; however, many times the nonverbal communications come through louder than the words that are actually being spoken (Hopkins , 2010). Body language is in fact the most mistranslated form of human communication in our world today because of the cultural differences (Karr 2010).

Ekman and Friesen (1969) early experts in nonverbal communication classified these body acts as emblems, illustrators, affect displays, regulators and adaptors, and environmental aspects.

- Emblems : these refer to symbolic actions where the movement has a very specific verbal meaning known to most subscribers to a subculture or culture and typically is employed to with the intention of sending a message for example a nod
- Illustrators: These are nonverbal acts which are tied to or go together with speech and illustrate what is being said verbally like a curled forefinger and thumb to show a zero.
- Affect displays: are the facial configurations which reveal emotional states. They can and usually occur subconsciously and may repeat, augment, contradict or be unrelated to the verbal message. Majority opinion is that these do have similar meanings world-wide with respect to smiling, crying, or showing anger, sorrow, or disgust. However, the intensity varies from culture to culture. Some cultures express grief (Asians , Latinos) while others (Americans, British) suppress it for instance.
- Regulators: These are non verbal acts that serve to maintain and modulate the flow of speech and listening interactions. Mainly involving head and eye movements, they may indicate attention or lack of it and a desire for the speaker to hurry up or slow down. Regulators are among the most strongly culturally determined. Their improper usage often connotes rudeness.
- Adaptors: They include postural changes and restless leg or arm movements which might be interpreted as aggressive, seductive or defensive. They may be triggered by verbal or non verbal behaviour and they usually occur without awareness of the subject for instance folding of the arms.
- Physical characteristics : These are influential non verbal cues which are not movement bound. They include qualities such as general attractiveness, size, skin/hair colour and texture, relative health and breath/body odours.
- Artefacts: This category of nonverbal communication includes the manipulation of objects such as perfume, clothing, cosmetics and jewellery in contact with the interacting persons. Such objects act as non verbal stimuli.
- Environmental factors include furniture and interior decoration, lighting, smells, colours, temperature the addition of sound of music and

arrangements of space. Variations in arrangements, material, shape or surface of objects in the interacting environment can be extremely influential.

It is generally acknowledged that body language is partly genetic (inborn - 'nature') - hugely so in certain aspects of body language - and partly environmental (conditioned/learned - 'nurture'). Some body language is certainly genetically inherited and consistent among humans from different races, for instance emotional face expressions like happiness, sadness, fear, disgust, surprise, anger. Such are generally involuntary in nature. However the use and recognition of less fundamental physical gestures (hand movements for example, or the winking of an eye), and aspects of personal space distances, are now generally accepted to be environmentally determined (learned, rather than inherited), which is significantly dependent on local society groups and cultures (Axtell, 2010). For example, the "okay" sign made by fingers on the hand means that everything is all right, in the USA (Spinks and Wells, 1997). In Southern Africa this is also denotes the same thing but it has a vulgar connotation in some countries in Brazil it is the equivalent of using your middle finger which generally is a rude gesture to brusquely tell someone off in America and England. The 'OK' hand gesture is also taken as an insult in most Latin American countries, Austria and France. (Karr, 2010). Thus gestures that most people take for granted and even used by little children can have a profoundly negative effect in some cultures.

Shaking of hands is a very common gesture in many business settings and is used as a form of greeting, to mark agreement, to signify the end of negotiations or express joy on a positive undertaking in Southern African countries. This is also the case in America, where the cultural gesture of shaking hands upon greeting is considered the norm when doing a person-to-person introduction. In fact to refuse a handshake is considered a very rude gesture. In Saudi Arabia, however, one can shake a man's hand after meeting him but cannot shake a woman's hand at all in greeting. Under the Sharia Laws, it is immoral for a woman to greet any man in public other than her husband (Karr, 2010). Given that people form opinions of someone they meet for the first time in just a few seconds, and this initial instinctual assessment is based far more on what they see, and feel about the other person than on the words they speak Axtell R. E. (2010), people will often make personality judgments based on the kind of handshake used even before the person speaks a single word (Goman C.K 2008).

Proxemics

Proxemics is the science of personal space and can be defined as the amount of room that people find comfortable between themselves and others. The distance

between individuals during, for example, a conversation, a meeting or a shared activity differ from culture to culture. As far back as 1973, Hall studied this aspects of nonverbal communication most extensively and described personal and social categories of distance in the which he classified as “space bubbles” or distances in four types given in the table below.

Zone	Distance	For	Detail
1. Close intimate	0-15cm 0-6in	lovers, and physical touching relationships	Sometimes included with the 2nd zone below, this is a markedly different zone in certain situations, for example face-to-face contact with close friends rarely encroaches within 6 inches, but commonly does with a lover.
2. Intimate	15-45cm 6-18in	physical touching relationships	Usually reserved for intimate relationships and close friendships, but also applies during consenting close activities such as contact sports, and crowded places such as parties, bars, concerts, public transport, queues and entertainment and sports spectating events. Non-consenting intrusion into this space is normally felt to be uncomfortable at best, or very threatening and upsetting at worst. Within the intimate zone a person's senses of smell and touch (being touched) become especially exercised.
3. Personal	45-120cm 18in-4ft	family and close friends	Touching is possible in this zone, but intimacy is off-limits. Hence touching other than hand-shaking is potentially uncomfortable.
4. Social-consultative	1.2-3.6m 4-12ft	non-touch interaction, social, business	Significantly hand-shaking is only possible within this zone only if both people reach out to do it. Touching is not possible unless both people reach to do it.
5. Public	3.6m+ 12ft+	no interaction, ignoring	People establish this zonal space when they seek to avoid interaction with others nearby. When this space is intruded by another person is creates a discomfort or an expectation of interaction.

Source: Hall 1973

Personal space dimensions depend notably on the individual, cultural and living background, the situation, and relationships and assumptions about relationships can be made based on zones. In the business arena deals can be made or lost by the spatial behaviour of individuals and due care must be taken to ensure that culturally acceptable zones are known and observed.

Time

'There is no hurry in Africa' goes a popular adage. According to this adage, the pace of doing business is regarded as slow compared to other parts of the world. The concept of time differs greatly from culture to culture. Different countries have their own preferred or default way in managing time. The two main protagonists in managing activities (time) are: the sequential way and the synchronic way Bool (2006). In the sequential way – which is the preferred method in the northern European countries you manage time in a first-in-first-out way. Like the queue in a show; you have to draw a number and wait for your turn. People who have learned to organize their life in this way tend to do "one thing at the time." And ... they strongly prefer planning and keeping to plans once they have been made. Time commitments are taken seriously. Staying on schedule is a must. (http://www.7d-culture.nl/Content/dim_6.htm). In synchronically organized cultures, people usually do several things at a time. To them, time is a wide ribbon, allowing many things to take place simultaneously. Time commitments are desirable rather than absolute. Plans are easily changed. Synchronic people especially value the satisfactory completion of interactions with others Bool (2006). In the USA, time is a precious item that is not to be wasted. Time is scheduled carefully and holding to a time schedule is a virtue. Completing tasks ahead of schedule is usually something for which one should be proud. Americans are generally impatient and usually become irritated when someone is late for an appointment Spinks & Wells ,(1997). This is in direct contrast to Southern Africa where no one bats an eyelid when one is late and if they have a high post might not even apologize for it.

Americans usually like to get down to business quickly in a meeting. People from other cultures may be offended if a prolonged social discourse is not held prior to either party's mentioning the impending business. Even then, the discussion probably will proceed at a much slower pace than US business people are accustomed Spinks & Wells (1997).

Gift giving

Gift giving is an integral part of conducting business both domestically and internationally. Three gift giving situations can be noted. First, gifts are commonly

given in appreciation for such things as past client relationships, placing a new order, referrals to other clients. Sometimes gifts are presented in the hopes of creating a positive, first impression which might assist to establish an initial business relationship. Finally, giving may be perceived as a *quid pro quo* (i.e. returning a favour or expecting a favour in return for something). Though in some cases gift giving banks on unethical business practice, it has been accepted as a normal means of conducting business. Businesses have increasingly been using gifts as a means of promoting their products and services by strengthening relationships with customers and suppliers Incentive (1992). Gifts have been used in the establishment of business relationships, on meeting new business partners and as a fore to business negotiations. Added to that business gift giving encourages reciprocal relations by discharging a minor social obligation or expressing gratitude in return (Fadiman, 1986). It puts reciprocity in motion and reciprocal relations can increase the chances of a sale (Shama & Thompson, 1989). In addition, the giving of a gift can foster goodwill by expressing positive attitudes towards the recipients. Despite these potential benefits, some executives think of business gift giving as a “necessary evil” and express their desire to dispense with the practice (Meredith & Fried, 1977).

Given the global nature of business brings the cultural dimension to gift giving and business executives, especially those who are dealing with international clients and suppliers, face an increasingly complex situation when it comes to the issue of giving business gifts. An individual’s gift-giving behaviour and perception of the type of gift seems to be influenced by his/her personal value system and value orientation (Keng, Razzaque, & Qian 2007). Cross-cultural business gift giving is a practice which must be sensitive to cultural, legal and ethical aspects across national borders. Business gift giving, if improperly executed, could stop sensitive negotiations, ruin potential new business relationships and/or lead to legal complications in the international arena. Lemak, Tansuhaj & Arunthanes (1994). For instance a gift of a knife to a Japanese may be very inappropriate as it suggests that they should commit suicide (Goman 2008).

There are etiquettes and local customs when it comes to business gift giving. In cultures where a business gift is expected, but not presented, it is an insult to the host. In countries where gifts generate an obligation, such as Japan and China, it may be beneficial to engage in the practice (Fadiman, 1986). Yet, in other cultures, offering a business gift could be misinterpreted as inappropriate, thus offending the recipients. Some economies perceive gifts as a form of bribe and can ruin intended relationships. For example, in Germany and Switzerland, local executives do not feel comfortable accepting gifts because they do not like being obligated (Fadiman, 1986).

That being the case, careful consideration has to be given to the size, colour, timing number of the gifts and type of gift which are greatly influenced by the customs and practices of the domestic culture. In Europe for instance, corporate gifts are usually given on special occasions, while Asia it is often necessary to bring a gift for the first business meeting. In terms of colours, in Chinese idiom a man wearing green cap means that his wife is conducting adultery behind his back (Mintel, 1997) thus it is unwise to give such a gift to a Chinese. Purple is a mourning colour in some parts of India, so is yellow in Egypt, white carnations symbolize death in Japan. In terms of numbers, in Asia the number 14 is bad luck and in Japan odd number or the number four, are bad luck and four sounds like the word for death. Thus in these mentioned cultures the ceremony of gift giving is laden with meaning and more important than the gift itself.

Verbal communication

Language is often cited as the major difficulty in cross-cultural communication. In as much as most international communication is written in English or other common international languages, like French or Spanish, the cultural nuances and hidden meanings are embedded in them (Zaharna,1996). The kind of written document considered appropriate in one culture may not be considered appropriate in other cultures. Also, the formality needed in written documents may vary from culture to culture. Writing styles that are common in some cultures may be considered offensive in others.

Content and style of written organizational communications also may differ among various cultures. In some cultures, direct approaches to messages are taken. It is not surprising in some cultures, for the main message to be preceded by several polite sentences that have little or nothing to do with the primary purpose of the message or the main message to be preceded by reference to the weather and the family situations and may be followed by several polite or complimentary sentences that also bear little or no relationship to the communication purpose (Spinks &Wells,1997).

Strong positions are taken in written messages in some cultures; while in other cultures, such strong statements are considered improper. Attitudes and intentions of the communicator may be left to implications in these cultures. In Lesotho for instance requests and even rights are generally preceded by a humbling statement which is viewed as polite culturally. In Japan most written communications are apologetic and contain statements that place writers in inferior positions. Japanese executives may consider written documents received from US executives to be too bold, direct, and self-centred; conversely, Americans may perceive Japanese executives to be weak and without commitment to their positions (Spinks &Wells 1997).

Furthermore words that are commonly used may have different connotations from country to country. For example, the word "dear" which is used in salutations in business correspondence has a special connotation in Spain, as the word is a term of endearment or a show of affection for a loved one or a family member. Therefore, when writing a business letter to someone in Spain, the salutation of the letter should not contain the word "dear" (Spinks & Wells 1997). According to Ivey and Galvin (1984) in many Asian settings, questions are considered intrusive and rude. Similarly, Hall and Whyte (1960) in talking about Japanese culture, maintain that "one avoids the direct question unless the questioner is absolutely certain that the answer will not embarrass the Japanese businessman in any way.

Semantics are also of great interest in verbal communication with some words if taken literally will cause immense confusion in business settings. The examples below though amusing push the point home.

'A "hot item" will not burn a finger that touches it; the item is usually one that is selling well or one that has been stolen. The "non-stop flight" usually stops at its intended destination. Passengers actually do not get "on" the aeroplane, they get "in" the aeroplane. Other travellers really do not "take" a train, as that would be illegal; in addition, the train would be quite heavy to carry. Still other travellers actually do not "catch" a bus, they enter the bus through a door while it is parked.' 'For example, a "cool dude" does not mean that the person's body temperature is below normal; instead, the expression usually refers to the individual's personality (Spinks & Wells 1997)'

Business negotiations

International negotiations face a lot of challenges including different languages, different economic situations, legal and political issues and differing regulations. To add to an already complex situation are cultural aspects of communication which can make or break the negotiations. In as much as culture might not be the subject of negotiations per se, unique cultures have profound effects on the outcome or progress of the negotiations. Negotiating styles differ across cultures and one side might want to conclude swiftly but the other side might be observing protocols and decision making hierarchies. Business owners from some countries may want to spend time building relationships and working slowly toward the achievement of that agreement instead of rushing into a new business deal (Herbig & Gulbro, 1999). Thus, the knowledge of culture and the concept of time becomes very handy.

Different cultures focus on different aspects of the negotiations. Some might take pains with the exact wording of contracts while other cultures are interested in creating a relationship first and note the implications of the letter of the contracts later. In those exacting cultures, a legal adviser is often included in the team to reduce the level of misunderstanding and conflict after signing. In Anglo cultures, the action of signing a contract symbolizes an intention to fulfil the stated terms, while in the Chinese setting, the contract may not represent finality but a starting point. The objective of US negotiators is usually to arrive at legalistic contracts, and therefore the dominant concern is with getting the details right, and to use all relationships to facilitate the achievement of understandings which are unambiguous (Martin, 1997).

When negotiating internationally, ideas, expectations, etiquette and behaviour can be culturally unique. The level of directness, frankness or truthfulness have to be culturally acceptable. In Zimbabwean culture for instance, it is not appropriate to be too direct to some of the indigenous people. Rather to go around the issue often using idioms and proverbs in alluding to the issue at hand. In this context therefore, being straightforward and aggressive may not necessarily be acceptable behaviour. Other cultures use the concepts of give and take, of bargaining, or of compromise. Asiatic countries for instance use this concept a lot where if bargaining has to be part of the negotiations otherwise the agreement will not be fulfilling. The value of being frank and direct may be helpful to some and would help reach a quick agreement, but may not be acceptable behaviour in another culture(Martin 1997).

Discussion

As articulated by Hattersley and McJannet (2005) “the best idea in the world can fail if it’s not communicated effectively” and in addition, knowledge is power, and a thorough knowledge of cultural aspects in business communication enhances the power of the managers and increases their monetary gain. To what extent does business curricula offer such a comprehensive understanding of communication? Of the 10 top Southern African universities business curricula examined by the author only 3 universities had business communication as a course .Of note is that the former technikons which are now universities of technology across South Africa are the ones that offer courses in business English or some form of business communication course. Closer to South Africa, the National University of Lesotho does not offer any business communication course let alone cultural aspects of business communication to the business students. Zimbabwean universities by en large offer business communication courses but there does not

seem to be any emphasis on cultural aspects of it. The inadequacy of the business graduate in the globalized environment is therefore enormous. What then are these graduates missing?

The graduates are missing the fact that the globalized economy is here to stay and international communication has to take into account cultural aspects for organizations to optimize returns. Non verbal cues are very influential in forming impressions on first meeting of business colleagues. There is no second time to make a first impression and body language, on conscious and unconscious levels, largely determines people's initial impression thus understanding the cultural nuances prevents unnecessary blunders that can be costly to organizations.

The graduates are also missing that success in cross-cultural negotiations requires an understanding of others and using that understanding to realize what each party wants from the negotiations. The proficient international negotiator understands the national negotiating style of those on the other side of the table, accepts and respects their cultural beliefs and is conscious of personal mannerisms and how they may be viewed by the other side. Other things must be taken into account, differing decision making, status protocol, social aspects of negotiations, how time is viewed and personal relationships all which are culturally based.

Graduates in marketing for instance might fail in the global sphere especially in promotion where words, colours and gender whose interpretation has cultural connotations. In preparing promotional material for example, western designers will undoubtedly encounter cultural preferences in visual design and aesthetics. Brochures are not common in an oral society and what "looks good" is culturally relative – and debatable. Lesotho for instance is an oral society and what a marketer might think is brilliant might not even be read and if it is in English it is regarded as snobbish and can be dismissed. A brochure with "style" for an American may have a single, dramatic image on the cover, lots of white space, consistency in the typeface and balanced lines and images. In contrast, a brochure with "style" in the Arab culture would not "waste" space and instead fill every inch with as many different typefaces, borders and images as possible – and be warmly received by Arab audiences. "Good style" is a culturally relative assessment (Zaharna,1996))

In sales non verbal communication is priceless and inadequate graduates would miss opportunities to close sales, to persist or to retract indicated by body language. Non verbal communication tip salesman off if the prospect is impatient, sceptical, or enthusiastic and interested in the sales presentation. The beauty of nonverbal communication in selling is that the prospect will be unknowingly revealing valuable information (Teng Fatt ,1998). Use of eye contact body cues like fidgeting,

leaning back or forward all come together to alert the salesman of the need to change focus, to continue.

Conclusion

It is evident then that though a business graduate is conversant in economics, accounting and information systems they might not bring optimum value to the globalized economy if they cannot communicate this knowledge more-so if they fail to understand the cultural aspects that fall in with international communication. By non inclusion of such courses, universities are bringing out half baked graduates who are useful in the domestic scenario but short change the organizations in the international environment where a lot of organizations are finding themselves in.

Recommendations

A revamping of the business curricula needs to be considered. Not only to include business communication as a course but to emphasize the cultural aspects which plague all aspects of communication. A deliberate policy to ensure that all business graduates master this important business aspect which can render all commercial knowledge null and void has to be coined for business success and maximum profitability.

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