SAY Anything to Anyone, Anywhere

5 Keys to Successful Cross-Cultural Communication

A Webinar for Entrepreneurs’ Organization

Presented By Gayle Cotton
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Is *What You Say*... *What You Mean*?

Sometimes it all gets lost in the translation...

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**Sometimes It All Gets Lost In The Translation**

Words Don’t Always Translate – A Few Humorous Examples!

- A Polish restaurant’s specials: “Beef rashers beaten up in the country people’s fashion” or “Roasted duck let loose.”

- A Zurich restaurant’s sign: “Our wines leave you nothing to hope for!”

- A Bucharest elevator sign: “The lift is being fixed for the next day. During this time we regret to tell you that you will be unbearable!”
Sometimes It All Gets Lost In The Translation

Words Don't Always Translate – A Few Humorous Examples!

• A Bangkok dry cleaner’s sign: “Drop your trousers here for best results!”

• A laundry’s sign in Rome: “Ladies, leave you clothes here and spend the afternoon having a great time!”

• A Roman Doctor’s sign: “Specialist in Women and other Diseases!”

SAY Anything to Anyone, Anywhere...
5 Keys to Successful Cross-Cultural Communication

Key One: Create Proactive Communication
Key Two: Rapport Secrets
Key Three: Organize Productive Interactions
Key Four: Strategies For Relationships
Key Five: Success Leaves Clues...

Create Rapport and Organize Strategies for Success!
The ‘Cross’ of Cross Cultural
Key 1
Create Proactive Communication

If you’re not proactive in your cross-cultural communication, you will likely be reactive...

It’s all to easy to unintentionally offend someone with inappropriate communication styles or gestures, so be prepared!
Create Proactive Communication

Different cultures have different perspectives, and everyone has their own pre-existing perceptions. This may create conscious or unconscious strikes against you, and cause credibility challenges.

Are there any potential strikes against you?

Three Strikes In Geneva

When I started teaching Cultural Science at the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland in the mid 90’s, I might as well have looked like this! I had 3 strikes against me – can anyone guess what they were?
Credibility Demanded The ‘Librarian Look’

I needed credibility, so I adopted what was dubbed my ‘Librarian Look’

- The IBM Suit: dark blue, black, gray, brown, beige
- Skirt: knee length or longer
- Hair: the ‘French twist’
- Eye glasses: fake!
- Shoes: high… high heels

More Strikes In Dallas

When we incorporated Circles Of Excellence in Dallas a few years later, I had a new credibility challenge…

I had married a Frenchman (affectionately known ‘Pepe Le Pew’) and my name was now Gayle Cotton-Delpierre
More Strikes In Dallas

In Texas… that name quickly became Gayle Cotton ‘Del Prairie’!
I had moved from the land of
‘Swiss cows’ to ‘Texas cows’
So being proactive, I made the decision to use Gayle Cotton as my
business name to avoid the jokes and maintain credibility

Going Beyond The Strikes… Questions To Ask

Where do you conduct business or travel to?

Europe… London, Frankfurt, Barcelona?
Asia/ Pacific… Shanghai, Manila, Singapore?
Latin America… Sao Paulo, Buenos Aires, Bogota?
The Middle East… Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Jeddah?
Africa… Marrakech, Cape Town, Algiers?

What communication differences can you expect?

Will anyone travel with you, and might they have strikes (age, gender, experience) against them?

Do you speak the language, and if so… how well?

What is the business style, hierarchy structure, and expected protocol?
Going Beyond The Strikes... Understand The Cultural Layer Cake

We All Have Layers In Our Cake!

The Cultural Layer Cake

Few of us belong to only one or two cultures. We are truly a slice of cultural layer cake. These layers are influenced by our

- Country
- Language
- Religion
- Geographical Area
- Race
- Gender
- Experience
- Events

Everyone has ‘cultural overlay’
Reminder Tip For Key 1
‘Create Proactive Communication’

Be prepared, know your strikes, and understand the impact of cultural layers

Key 2
Rapport Secrets
What Is Rapport?

The ability to connect with people anywhere in the world... in person, on the phone, or by email, and make them feel comfortable with you.

This establishes trust, and creates a comfort zone at a deep unconscious level.

Remember this:

If you have good rapport with someone and something goes wrong, they will be more likely to blame the situation or circumstance.

If you have poor rapport with someone and something goes wrong, they will be more likely to blame you.
How Do You Develop Cultural Rapport?

Sometimes You Need To Adapt Your Style!
How Can You Bridge The Cultural Gap To Create Rapport?

It Helps To Know A Little Cultural Science
What Are The Methods Of Communication And How Do They Relate To Cultures?

The 3 Methods Of Communication

1: **WORDS**

An ‘assigned sound’, a symbol assigned to an association of ideas

- Baum-German
- Tre-Norwegian
- Albero-Italian
- Arbre-French
- Arbol-Spanish

- Ki-Japanese
- Su-Chinese
- Cay-Vietnamese
- Boom-Dutch
- Mti-Swahili
The 3 Methods Of Communication

1: **WORDS**

- Words are *entirely subjective*.
- They *rarely convey the exact meaning* you think they do.
- Their *meaning differs* with every person, culture and language.

2: **TONALITY**

- Tempo *(fast / slow)*
- Tone *(high / low)*
- Volume *(loud / soft)*
- Inflection *(nuances)*
The 3 Methods Of Communication

3: **BODY LANGUAGE** is comprised of...

- Facial Expressions
- Gestures
- Mannerisms
- Social Business Etiquette

What Is The Value Of Words, Tonality And Body Language Multi-Culturally?
The 3 Methods Of Communication And Cultures

Global Averages

Average

1: Words 7%
2: Tonality 38%
3: Body Language 55%

The 3 Methods Of Communication And Cultures

Germanic & Scandinavian Cultures

Average

1: Words 44%
2: Tonality 33%
3: Body Language 23%
The 3 Methods Of Communication And Cultures

The English Language Cultures

Average

1: Words 15%
2: Tonality 35%
3: Body Language 50%

The Romantic Language Cultures

Average

1: Words 0 → 3%
2: Tonality 40%
3: Body Language 60 → 70%
What If Your Words Are In Conflict With Your Body Language?

If your Words are in conflict with the Body Language, most people will believe the Body Language.

Communication Tendencies In Various Cultures

The higher the bar graph, the more attention is paid to what is said (the words) with less emphasis on how it is said (the tonality and body language).

1: Germanic, Scandinavian and Nordic Cultures
2: Japanese Culture
3: Asia/Pacific and Chinese Culture
4: English Language Cultures
5: Russian, Eastern European and Slavic Cultures
6: The Middle East, Arabic and North African Cultures
7: Romantic Language Cultures
What Created These Different Communication Tendencies?

Environment?
Climate?
Size of city?
Surrounding cultures?
Mother tongue language?

Tonal Graphs: How Language Melodies Affect Body Language And Communication

Germanic & Scandinavian Cultures
Tonal Graphs: How Language Melodies Affect Body Language And Communication

The English Language Cultures

The Romantic Language Cultures
Reminder Tip For Key 2
‘Rapport Secrets’

Understand cultural tendencies, adapt your communication style, and create a comfortable rapport.

Key 3
Organize Productive Interactions
Understand Multi-Cultural Time Expectations

Are You In Time, On Time, Or Out Of Time?

Multi-Cultural Time Expectations

**On Time Cultures**
- Germanic & Scandinavian Cultures
- The Japanese Culture
- The Chinese Cultures
- English Speaking Cultures

**Flexible Time Cultures**
- The Russian & Slavic Cultures
- The Middle Eastern Cultures
- The African Cultures
- Romantic Language Cultures

Agree upon what “in time” means to other cultures
Avoid Interpersonal Miscommunication...

If it happens - ask yourself

Was it…

- Your words?
- Your tonality?
- Your body language?
- Your actions?

Avoid Phone Miscommunication...

If it happens - it may not be what you said, but how you said it!

- On the phone, your tonality can be up to 84% of the total communication value
- The words can be a low as 16%
Avoid Written Or Email Miscommunication

- **Keep in mind:** Once something is emailed, texted, or posted, *it cannot be undone.* Avoid all race, gender, or cultural specific language and jokes that may cause misunderstanding.

- Use appropriate email, text, and social etiquette.

![Image]

Cultural Email Etiquette

- Email etiquette is *culturally sensitive,* as is most written communication.

- One of the safest ways to avoid offending someone via email is to *model* the format someone uses to email you.

- In general, the Asian/Pacific, Indian, Southern European, Mid-Eastern, and Latin American cultures are *more formal* in their email and written communication.

- The US, UK, Australia, and Northern European cultures tend to be *more direct* and to the point in their email and written communication.
Avoid Translation Errors…

Triple Cross Translate... or you could be sorry!

Caution In Using Battery:

Do not have a short circuit, disassemble, heat or put battery in the fire, and do harm to eyes, also could cause the rupture of a doctor!

Who Wrote These Instructions?

Reminder Tip For Key 3
‘Organize Productive Interactions’

Understand cultural time expectations, minimize translation errors, and avoid miscommunication in person, on the phone, or in written communication
Key 4

Strategies For Relationships

Prepare For Information & Relationship Oriented Cultures

- Relationship Oriented
  - Korean
  - Chinese
  - Japanese
- Information Oriented
  - Scandinavian
  - Swiss-German
  - German
  - French
  - Belgian
  - US American
  - English
  - Italian
  - Spanish
  - Russian
  - Arab
Understand That Relationships Are Like Clay On A Potter’s Wheel

You need to center the piece of clay on a potter’s wheel before working with it, or you will have a wobble in the wheel which creates a warped pot!

You need to center yourself before cross-cultural interactions, or you could have a wobble in the communication which creates a warped relationship!

It's very difficult to undo an unintentional faux pas...
Reminder Tip For Key 4 ‘Relationship Strategies’

Know whether a culture is more relationship or information oriented, center and prepare to avoid any unintentional faux pas.

Key 5

Success Leaves Clues
Cultural Clues & Tips
For Multi-Cultural Success

Tips When Speaking English
Know Your English!

Be aware of the differences between British and American English and the thousands of different word meanings.

For example, in the U.S. “to table something” means to “to take care of it later”. In the U.K. it means “to take care of it now”.

What All Cultures Appreciate

• When you aren’t ignorant about cultural differences.

• When you don’t expect other cultures to “be just like you”.

• When you are willing to adapt to different ways of doing things.

• When you know your geography!

• When you expect answers to the questions you ask. For example, in the U.S. the question “how are you?” is often asked in passing, however an answer is not expected or waited for. While this is normal in the U.S., it may be considered rude elsewhere.
Clarification:

- Explanation of acronyms and slang
- Clear enunciation and confirmation of understanding
- Definition of words that have different meanings and might be taken literally
- Education about cultural specific jargon – including ‘Sports Jargon’.

After all – where is left field?

Tip: Offensive gestures will sabotage you faster than anything else!
Gestures To Avoid

Tip: Open-handed gestures are generally considered safe

Reminder Tip For Key 5
‘Success Leaves Clues’

Know your English, define acronyms and jargon, and avoid offensive gestures
Is *What You Say*... *What You Mean*?

The Crazy Paradoxes of the English Language

Crazy Paradoxes Of The English Language!

- There is no egg in eggplant, nor ham in hamburger.
- There is no apple or pine in pineapple.
- And while no one knows for sure what *is* in a hotdog, you can be pretty sure it isn’t any kind of canine!
- If a vegetarian eats vegetables, then what does a humanitarian eat?
Crazy Paradoxes Of The English Language!

- How can a slim chance and a fat chance be the same thing?
- How is it possible to be hot as hell one day and cold as hell the next?
- How can a wise man and a wise guy be opposites?
- And why, when I wind up a clock I start it, but when I wind up this presentation I end it?

Questions Anyone?
SAY Anything to Anyone Anywhere!

Available online and wherever books are sold

Gayle Cotton
President
CIRCLES OF EXCELLENCE INC.

Has Presented

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About Gayle Cotton

A National Emmy Award Winner, Gayle Cotton is the President of CIRCLES OF EXCELLENCE For Corporate Education. A distinguished and highly sought after speaker, trainer and coach, she has worked with over 50 Fortune 500 companies, and been a TV guest on Good Morning America, PM Magazine, PM Northwest and Pacific Report. She is the author of the bestselling book ‘SAY Anything to Anyone, Anywhere’.

• Gayle was the first American to be accepted as a member of the ‘European Marketing and Sales Experts’, and is a Certified Expert in the ‘Executive Foundation for International Communication’. She is a Global Resource for ‘Young Presidents Organization’ (YPO), World Presidents’ Organization, (WPO), and ‘Entrepreneurs’ Organization’ (EO). An internationally recognized authority on Cross-Cultural Communications, Gayle travels worldwide educating, entertaining, and inspiring others with her fresh and unique approach. Giving new meaning to the concept of creativity and productivity, she is on the leading edge of business communication. She offers Keynotes, Training, and Executive Coaching on the topics of Cross-Cultural Communication, Customer Service, Diversity, Interpersonal Communication, Leadership, International Negotiations, Presentation Skills, and Stress & Time Management.
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