

CHAPTER 1

CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION

Test Bank

Essay Questions

1. Discuss the two primary reasons for learning about culture for doing business internationally. Give examples.

Ans: pp. 1-4 Difficulty: Easy

The two primary reasons for learning about culture are a) to understand how others make sense of the world, and b) with that knowledge, to avoid mistakes—especially mistakes in communication. The basis for the study of culture is that cultures inform how people think, act, and process information. Two corollary points are a) people from different cultures are in much more direct contact than ever before, and b) people from different cultures really are different. In order to cooperate successfully, businesspeople need to know about the differences and find ways to integrate them.

2. Discuss typical reactions to an unfamiliar culture: hostility, curiosity, denial, and cooperation. Give examples.

Ans: pp. 6-9 Difficulty: Moderate

Hostility toward difference occurs on a cultural level as well as an individual level. Individuals have been curious about other cultures for millennia, as the biography of Ibn Battuta shows. Denial involves the assumptions of superiority for one's culture and the assumption that regardless of geography, cultures have universal values. Ethnocentrism (the view that one's own culture is normative) is another form of denial. Cooperation involves the motivation to get along in spite of difference and beyond that, to adopt difference, and experience the rewards of connections with people from other cultures.

3. Define and discuss *culture*, using the definition from the textbook, and explain what culture is and what it does. Furnish examples.

Ans: pp. 9-13 Difficulty: Moderate

Culture is the learned, shared, coherent view of a group or society that underlies values (which identify what is important in a society), attitudes, and behaviors. Onstage culture is observable, but backstage culture—the workings of which determine onstage behavior—is not visible.

4. What is *culture shock*? Explain the four stages in culture shock and also touch upon reverse culture shock.

(Ans: pp. 17-19 Difficulty: Moderate)

Adapting to another culture, even for a short time, involves some culture shock. The term is inaccurate, since culture shock occurs not in one jolt, but over time. The four stages of euphoria, disillusionment and frustration, adjustment, and integration may recur in this sequence for longer sojourns, and are usually experienced also in reverse culture shock, when the sojourner returns home.

5. Discuss self-knowledge and the related factors of bias, prejudice, and discrimination. Give examples.

Ans: pp. 19-22

Difficulty: Moderate

Knowing one's own culture is the best starting point for learning about another culture, and knowing one's own biases and prejudices is one way to understand one's own culture.

6. Explain the concept of Cultural Intelligence; describe its three factors and demonstrate in examples how it is a useful way to describe adjustment to another culture.

Ans: pp. 23-24

Difficulty: Moderate

CQ conceptualizes successful adaptation to another culture as based upon cognition/knowledge (knowledge about the culture, knowledge of how to go about doing things in a culture), motivation to succeed culturally, and behaviors including adaptive behavior. This simple structure applies to the individual psyche and the individual's actions, and is a way of characterizing how culturally sensitive and effective an individual is in an unfamiliar culture.

7. Discuss cultural change and give examples. Refer to *deep culture* and *popular culture* in your discussion.

Ans: pp. 24-26

Difficulty: Hard

The notion that culture changes is popular and widespread in popular literature, where change is usually actually change in popular taste. However, deep culture changes very slowly. Even in situations where radical new forces are at work—such as the one-child policy in China introduced in the 1970s—the traditional Chinese values surrounding the importance of offspring, filial responsibility of children for their parents, family togetherness, and the impact of the child's success on the welfare of the family all remain strong. That is one example. Other points of discussion include the determination of societies to hold on to their cultures in spite of political challenges. The relationship of technology to culture and change is another topic that can be included in this question. Technology means tools for dealing with the environment in which humans operate; technology may affect the way a culture acts out its values, but probably doesn't change those values.

Finally, in all cultures values exist that compete with one another depending on contexts. What may appear to be a culture change may actually be an emphasis within a particular situation on one value over another, but the competing values will have been part of the culture for a very long time.

8. Discuss the distinction (from Gudykunst) between intercultural communication and cross-cultural communication, and explain how well you believe this distinction works.

Ans: pp. 27-29

Difficulty: Hard

Cross-cultural communication examines each culture's communication and then compares them. Both emic and etic studies may be involved. Intercultural communication focuses on what happens when someone from one culture communicates with someone from another culture. However, as Gudykunst points out, this is not a hard distinction. In order to talk about what happens when people from different cultures communicate, some understanding of each individual's communication style, derived from his or her culture, is necessary. Comparisons in cultural styles are salient when people from different cultures attempt to communicate.

However, having an agreed definition can make discussions about culture and communication clearer.

9. Discuss the two broad paradigms for social science study, including the study of communication, and explain the strengths and weaknesses of each.

Ans: pp. 30-34

Difficulty: Hard

The two paradigms are positivist and interpretivist (also called functionalist) and interpretivist (also called humanist). Positivist researchers assume what they study has objective reality, and their study is also objective. The act of studying the phenomena does not affect them. Positivist researchers collect data from many respondents, often in numerical form, and analyze data numerically. The researchers use analyzed data to make generalizations and predictions about the phenomena they study. Their research is high in reliability, but since it cannot capture nuances of context from which the responses come, their research is low in validity.

Interpretivist researchers assume what they study is created by social influences and has subjective reality; furthermore, the act of studying influences the phenomena they study. Interpretivist researchers collect data rich in nuances and contextual variations from a relatively small sample. The findings are analyzed qualitatively, and lead to conclusions about the specific phenomenon, but do not lead to abstracted conclusions that can predict outcomes in other studies. For this reason, their research is low in reliability but high in validity.

10. Explain intercultural business communication through two models, one showing the role of perception and one showing how communicators actually use *schema* or projections they create of the other culture in their communication.

(Ans: pp. 35-39 Difficulty: Hard)

Perception plays a huge role in the intercultural communication of businesspeople. Perception involves being aware of a signal, paying attention to it, categorizing it and decoding its meaning, which is stored. Signals vary according to culture, and mental categories are themselves the product of culture. Meaning, then, is based in culture.

Schemata (or schemas) are mental categories constructed to make ordered sense of information. Some mental categories contain information about culture and intercultural interactions. Initially, communication from the holder of a cultural schema is more in line with the schema than the real culture and the real person who is the communication partner. As the schema grows with new information and understanding, it resembles reality more and more.

When a schema of a culture has little information in it, some expectations of that schema may be unsatisfied. The individual holding the schema may not be able to overcome the unexpected information, especially if it is negative. The result is a frozen category that cannot move to become a more accurate representation of the culture.

True/False and Multiple Choice Questions

True/False

11. The study of culture is not something businesspeople need to spend a lot of time on, since businesspeople are the same around the globe.

Ans: False Page 2

Difficulty: Easy

12. Every culture is coherent and complete within itself.
Ans: True Page 10 Difficulty: Easy
13. You are born with your culture in your genes.
Ans: False Page 11 Difficulty: Easy
14. One response to an unfamiliar culture is curiosity.
Ans: True Page 7 Difficulty: Easy
15. Values lie behind attitudes and behaviors.
Ans: True Pages 12-14 Difficulty: Easy
16. Attitudes are the same thing as values.
Ans: False Pages 13-14 Difficulty: Easy
17. Eventually, with the spread of technology, everyone will have the same culture.
Ans: False Page 24-26 Difficulty: Moderate
18. If you know what your own culture believes is normal and natural, you will be able to figure out where other people's ideas are different.
Ans: True Page 19 Difficulty: Moderate
19. Culture shock is a sudden episode experienced by people who go to a foreign culture.
Ans: False Page 17 Difficulty: Moderate
20. Reverse culture shock is the term given to the adjustment following re-entry into one's own culture after living abroad.
Ans: True Page 18 Difficulty: Moderate
21. The belief that everyone who encounters my culture will want to adopt it is an assumption of my culture's superiority.
Ans: True Page 7 Difficulty: Moderate
22. The belief that my culture is normal and central to human experience is called the assumption of universality.
Ans: False Page 8 Difficulty: Moderate
23. The idea that everyone underneath is just the same after all is helpful to business communication.
Ans: False Page 8 Difficulty: Moderate

24. Cultural Intelligence is part of the procedural toolkit of spies in foreign countries.
Ans: False Page 23 Difficulty: Moderate
25. A characteristic of the discipline of intercultural communication is that it focuses on nations.
Ans: False Page 29 Difficulty: Moderate
26. Cross-cultural communication involves a comparison of communication styles while intercultural communication involves what happens when people from different cultures communicate.
Ans: True Pages 28-29 Difficulty: Moderate
27. Research that follows the positivist paradigm produces studies that can be replicated.
Ans: True Page 30 Difficulty: Moderate
28. Research that follows the interpretivist paradigm has low reliability.
Ans: True Page 34 Difficulty: Hard
29. A schema is a mental representation about something such as a culture.
Ans: True Page 36 Difficulty: Moderate

Multiple Choice Questions

30. Understanding another culture:
- is important for businesspeople because they can appear to be better informed.
 - is best achieved through "do's and don'ts" lists
 - enables businesspeople to know how foreign associates make sense of their environment
 - isn't necessary for businesspeople
- Ans: c Page 2 Difficulty: Easy
31. Culture, for purposes of business communication, is:
- a soft add-on that is not always relevant
 - values, attitudes and behavior
 - unnecessary to investigate
 - constantly changing
- Ans: b Pages 12-13 Difficulty: Easy
32. Every culture is learned, and therefore:
- a person can describe his or her own culture completely
 - culture is learnable
 - culture is something you know from birth
 - it is not possible to live outside your own culture

Ans: b Page 11

Difficulty: Easy

33. Values in a culture:
- are what that culture thinks is important
 - are the same in all cultures
 - are attitudes about power
 - are the result of attitudes

Ans: a Page 12

Difficulty: Moderate

34. The best response to diversity (or differences in cultures) is to
- assume people are all alike
 - assume superiority of your own culture
 - assess another culture by its similarity to yours
 - agree to be different and celebrate diversity

Ans: d Page 9

Difficulty: Easy

35. Biases are
- something you can erase if you try hard enough
 - preferences
 - something not everybody has
 - not always operating in business encounters between members of different cultures

Ans: b Page 22

Difficulty: Moderate

36. When biases are acted upon,
- the result may be discrimination
 - the person acting upon them clearly recognizes that fact
 - communication is clearer
 - the result is typical of modern cultures

Ans: a Page 22

Difficulty: Moderate

37. The study of communication across cultures began
- in France
 - by focusing solely on national surveys
 - by focusing what happens when people from different cultures communicate
 - by being multidisciplinary

Ans: d Page 27

Difficulty: Moderate

38. Two broad approaches to social science research are
- individuals and whole cultures
 - positivist and interpretivist paradigms

- c. emic and etic studies
- d. intercultural and cross-cultural communication

Ans: b Page 30 Difficulty: Moderate

39. Positivist research

- a. does not allow a researcher to generalize from results
- b. does not have high reliability
- c. does not produce quantitative data
- d. does not allow the researcher to explore the context for the respondent's answers

Ans: d Page 33 Difficulty: Hard

40. Perception involves

- a. recognizing communication signals, paying attention, categorizing them, and assigning meaning to them
- b. speaking and listening--the oral communication skills
- c. matching incoming signals with outgoing signals in one's databank
- d. implicit messages that are typical of high-context cultures

Ans: a Page 35 Difficulty: Hard

Answer Key

True/False Questions

- | | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 11. F | 15. T | 19. F | 23. F | 27. T |
| 12. T | 16. F | 20. T | 24. F | 28. T |
| 13. F | 17. F | 21. T | 25. F | 29. F |
| 14. T | 18. T | 22. F | 26. T | |

Multiple Choice Questions

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|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 30. c | 32. b | 34. d | 36. a | 38. b |
| 31. b | 33. a | 35. b | 37. d | 39.d |
| | | | | 40.a |