



# WORKBOOK

## Effective Communication

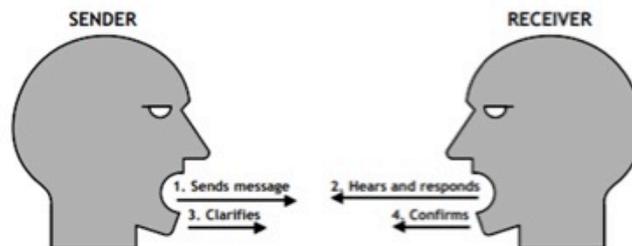


# Effective Communication



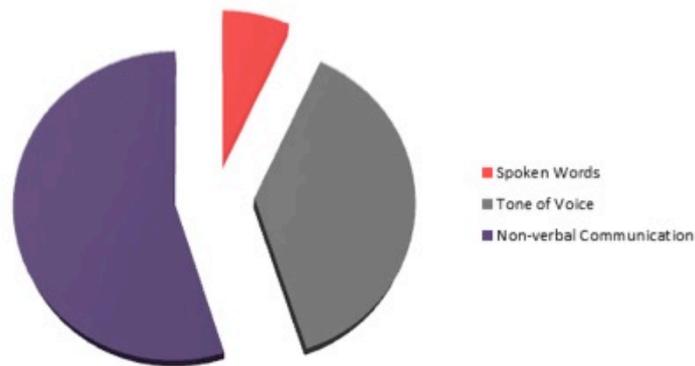
Communications plays such a big part in our lives today. It is hard to think of a single activity that we engage in that doesn't involve communications in some way. In the increasingly diverse communities that characterise all countries in Europe today, effective communications play a pivotal role in bringing people from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds together. Through this communication rewarding relationships are built; a caring and respectful society is created; and people of all ethnicities can achieve happiness in life. Effective communications plays a major role in achieving all of our goals.

## Effective Communication Model



Communication is a two-way process! You have to receive information as well as transmit a message. This means listening, understanding and thinking about what people are trying to tell you, not just letting them know what you think.

## How We Communicate



Many people are surprised to learn that only 7% of what we communicate is based on vocabulary; that 38% of what we communicate is based on voice intonation; and that 55% of what we communicate is based on non-verbal behaviour.

## Communication Styles



PASSIVE  
AGGRESSIVE  
ASSERTIVE



Everyone has their own communications style, and there are thousands and thousands of variations to effective communications. What is most important is that people communicate in a sincere and honest manner with one another, in a style in which they are most comfortable. Few if any people can communicate effectively in a manner or style that does not fit them personally or naturally.

## Passive Communicator

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- Is afraid to speak up
- Avoids direct eye contact
- Shows little or no expression
- Isolates self from groups
- Agrees with others despite feelings
- Values self less than others
- Does not reach goals
- You're okay; I'm not.



Individuals with a passive communication style tend to avoid conflict and can become a "pushover" when they encounter a difficult or highly aggressive person. Passive communicators may even feel intimidated by a person who expresses their ideas and needs. Being a passive communicator does not necessarily mean the person does not have strong opinions; often they do. They just don't voice those opinions due to fear; to avoid creating any tension; or sometimes out of respect for the other person whom they would not like to offend.

# Assertive Communicator

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- Speaks openly
- Makes good eye contact
- Shows expression to match the message
- Participates in groups
- Speaks to the point
- Values self equal to others
- Reaches goals without alienating others
- I'm okay; you're okay.



Individuals with an assertive communication style share their opinions and needs, and are usually interested in hearing the opinion and needs of others with whom they are interacting. Often, they are direct but they avoid being "brutally honest." There is an interest in dealing with another person with respect and integrity, honestly expressing their opinions and feelings about a given topic. Even when dealing with a person described as "difficult," assertive communicators continue to be assertive and professional.

## Aggressive Communicator



- Interrupts and 'talks over' others
- Glares and stares at others
- Intimidates others with expressions
- Dominates and controls groups
- Only considers own feelings
- Values self more than others
- Reaches goals regardless of impact on others
- I'm okay; you're not.



Individuals with an aggressive communication style tend to "walk all over other people" and do not seem to care about the other person. They are concerned only about their own interests and do not mind ensuring they get what they want, often at the expense of the other person. Needless to say, the person with this style can wreak havoc in relationships and group settings and is often the cause of unhealthy conflict and disputes within a group. This type of communicator is often regarded as a bully and overbearing since they will may sure their viewpoint is expressed.

## 5 Things Great Communicators Do

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1. They speak with clarity and influence ✓
2. They advocate a common vision ✓
3. They listen ✓
4. They effectively use body language ✓
5. They are culturally and politically aware ✓



Effective communication skills are rated as one of the most valuable skill-sets for an individual to acquire. There are 5 simple things that all great communicators do.

Number 1 – they speak with clarity and influence by planning and structuring their message; by tailoring it to ensure it is relevant to their specific audience; by being clear what the topic is they are communicating about; by presenting it in a manner and format that is appropriate.

Number 2 – they advocate a common vision which helps to enable open communication; creates a uniform mind-set that everyone can share; makes people feel that they are part of what is being proposed

Number 3 – they listen demonstrating exemplary active listening skills which enables them to hear and interpret what people are saying to them and to probe for clarity in all interactions. This encourages more open communication as other members of the group feel more at ease.

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Number 4 – they effectively use body language adopting appropriate postures, making use of eye contact where possible and using hand gestures to convey and reinforce meaning.

Number 5 – they are culturally and politically aware which ensures that they remove barriers to effective communication and increase the possibility of positive communication outcomes. Sound political judgement and cultural awareness ensure that a simple message can appeal to a broad audience.

# Intercultural Communication



A different language is not just a dictionary of words, sounds, and syntax. It is a different way of interpreting reality, refined by the generations that developed the language.

*Federico Fellini*



When we consider intercultural communication there are additional layers of complexity added to the communication process. Language barriers are immediately obvious and recognisable but speaking a multitude of different languages doesn't necessarily mean that you are an accomplished intercultural communicator.

# Intercultural Communication Patterns



## Collectivist Cultures

- Less focus on verbal interactions
- More focus on nonverbal interactions
- Often communicate using indirect style
- Context of communication is more important
- Socially interdependent
- Duties and obligations define behaviour

## Individualistic Cultures

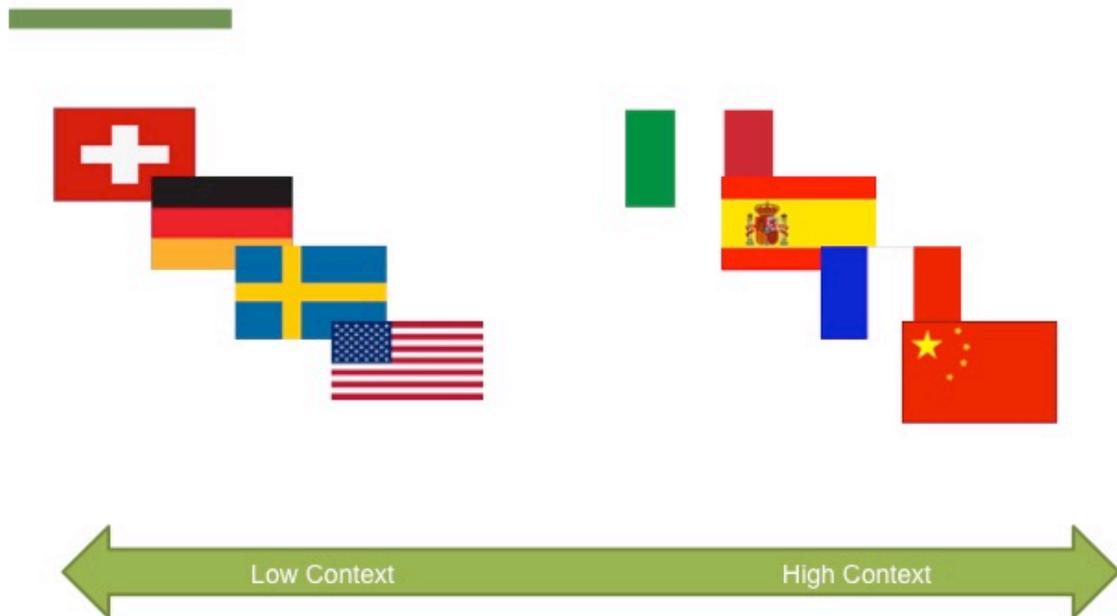
- More focus on verbal interactions
- Less focus on nonverbal interactions
- Mainly use direct communication style
- What is said is more important
- Independent
- Attitudes and personal needs define behaviour



An individual's cultural background affects how they communicate and how they view themselves. Collectivistic cultures that are mostly found in Asia and Africa emphasize the needs and goals of the group as a whole over the needs and wishes of each individual. People from collectivist cultures are more likely to see themselves as connected to others and often define themselves in terms of their relationships with others

By contrast, the individualistic cultures that predominate in Europe, America and Australia are characterised by the prioritization, or emphasis, of the individual over the entire group. These cultures are oriented around the self and focus on being independent and people living in these cultures see themselves as separate from others, defining themselves based on their personal traits.

## Low & High Context Cultures

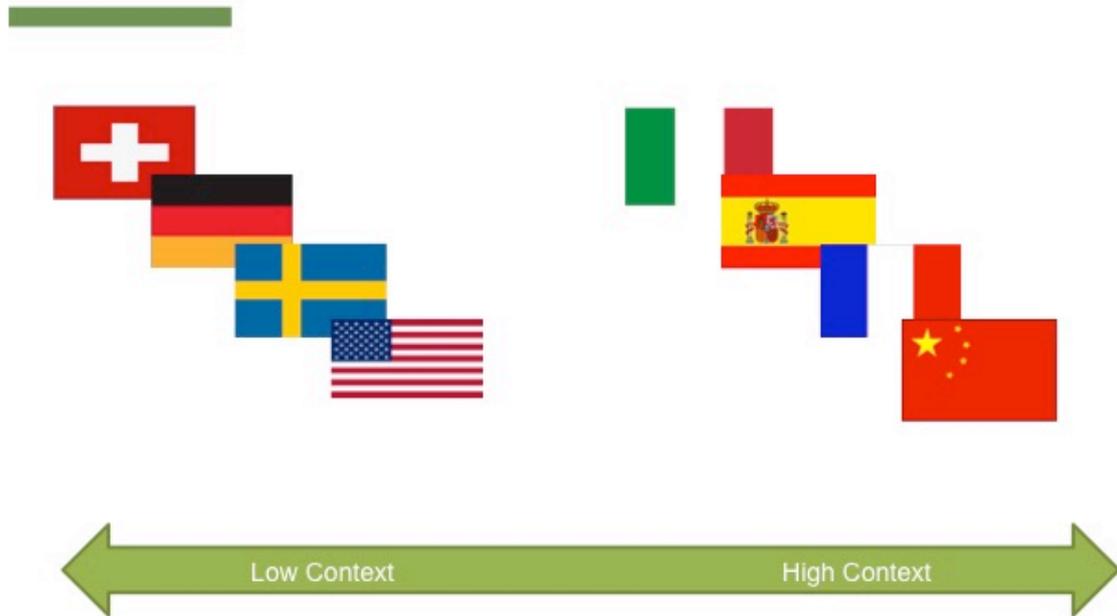


High context culture and low context culture are often used as somewhat crude terms to describe broad cultural differences between societies.

High context cultures like Japan, China, France, Spain and Italy are societies where people have close connections over a long period of time. Many aspects of cultural behaviour are not made explicit because most members know what to do and what to think from years of interaction with each other. Unlike their low context culture counterparts they tend to prefer indirect verbal interaction and understand meanings embedded at many different sociocultural levels and conveyed through a myriad of nonverbal cues. People in high context cultures communicate with simple messages that are often ambiguous. They generally avoid saying no.

Low context cultures like Switzerland, Germany, Sweden, USA and the UK are societies where people tend to have many connections but of shorter duration or for some specific reason. In these societies, cultural behaviour and beliefs may need to be spelled out explicitly so that those coming into the cultural environment know how to behave. In low context cultures people tend to prefer direct verbal communication and understand meaning at one level only. People in these cultures are generally less proficient in reading

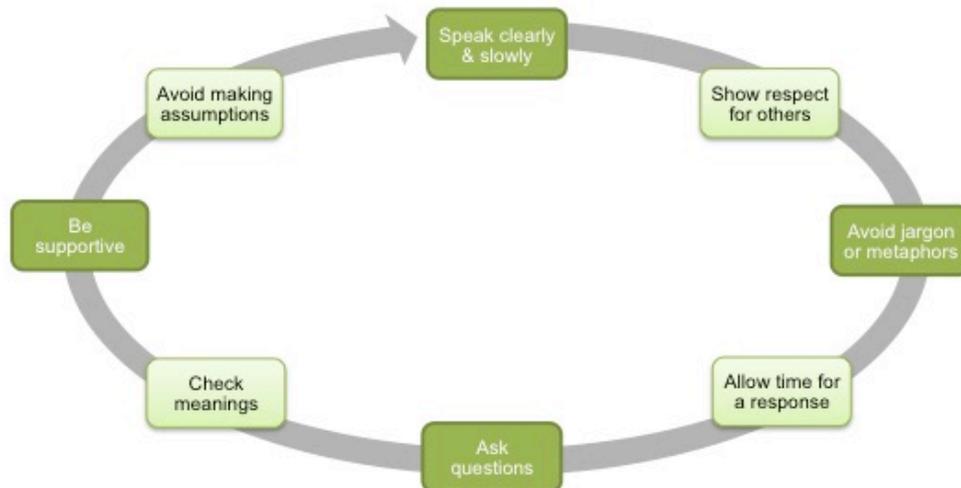
## Low & High Context Cultures



non-verbal cues and instead communicate in highly structured messages that are clear and concise. In low context cultures people say no directly.

While these terms are sometimes useful in describing some aspects of a culture, one can never say a culture is "high" or "low" because societies all contain both modes.

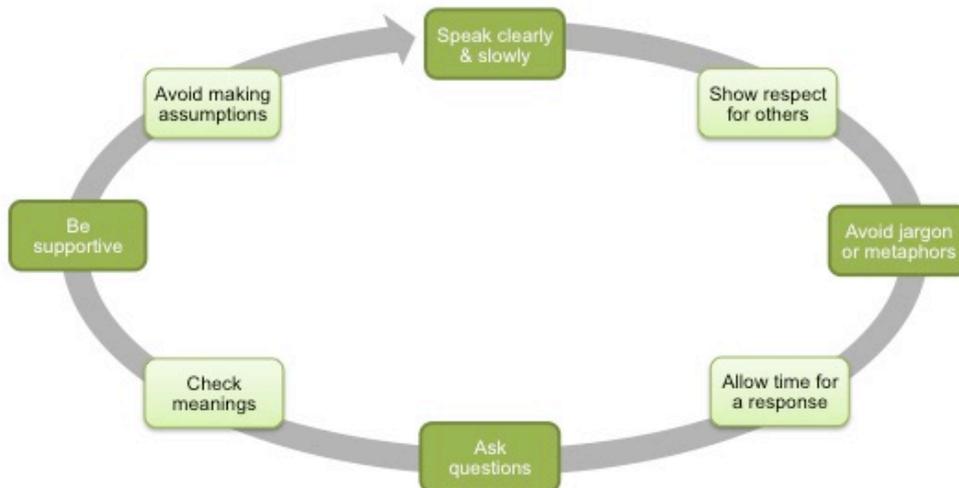
# Tips for Effective Intercultural Communication



Intercultural communication can be dynamic and rewarding and developing an understanding of other people's cultures and behaviours can go a long way to improving relationships and building solidarity. To achieve success there are some basic principles that you can use to help improve your intercultural communication skills.

In an intercultural communication context it is important to take your time so speak clearly and slowly and clearly and avoid using jargon and metaphors. If you are unsure what someone has responded don't be afraid to ask questions. It is equally important that you show respect for those with whom you are trying to communicate. Make sure you allow them ample time to respond to your questions. Be supportive and help them in the communication process. Given the anticipated cultural differences it is imperative that you avoid making assumptions and that you clarify any issues or answers that you are unsure about.

# Tips for Effective Intercultural Communication

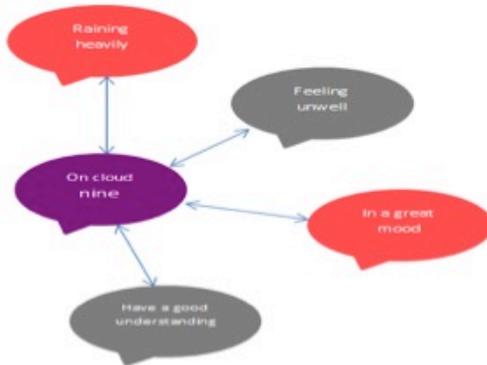


Be patient. Working in an intercultural environment can be a frustrating affair and things may not get done when expected. Intercultural communication can be a tiresome and some of your counterpart's behaviour may be inappropriate. In intercultural communication endeavours it is important to steer clear of blame and conflict. Keep a positive mind-set as this can help in building strategies and solutions to address difficult situations.

# Effective Communication Worksheet & Games



## Understanding Idioms



We often use idioms when we speak. The use of idioms in a language adds colour to it and makes it more interesting for the listeners.

Understanding idioms is an integral part of language fluency and an essential competence for integration into host communities.

Click on the link below to play the idiom game and develop your essential language skills.

[www.theidiomgame.eu](http://www.theidiomgame.eu)



This online exercise can help you to build intercultural communication skills and competences within your group. Play the idiom game in group or online.

# Thanks!

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