

Intercultural Communication Team Assignment and Presentation

To learn about cultural differences in the ways individuals and groups communicate within and between organizations, you will work in your own intercultural groups and draw on the expertise of your classmates as well as additional resources. You will ultimately demonstrate what you have learned about particular aspects of communicating across cultures in a team presentation to a business audience.

The Task

Culture influences our values, attitudes, and behaviors. Assume you are members of a consulting team specializing in international business. You have been hired by a company that is preparing to send a group of employees to another country. Your purpose is to provide these employees with information about communicating in this new culture which will help them adjust and succeed at their goals.

You should choose the country of one student in your group to be the focus of the presentation. Begin by asking the student to describe his/her culture, referring to the list of questions in the packet. Then talk specifically about business-related communication and customs in that country. Finally, consider what types of business interactions might be particularly important for the success of the group of employees you are addressing. Some such types of interactions might include the following:

- A negotiation between two companies
- A meeting in which an important decision must be made
- A conflict or conflict resolution between two parties

Your goal in this team presentation is to help the business audience (and, secondarily, your classmates) understand underlying cultural norms, values, and communication patterns of a specific culture and how they might affect a specific type of business interaction. Remember that communication patterns can include verbal and nonverbal characteristics.

You should be careful about presenting stereotypes of a specific cultural group. Stereotyping involves a form of categorization that organizes our experience and guides our behavior toward ethnic, national, or other groups. Stereotypes never describe individual behavior; rather, they focus on the behavioral norms for members of a particular group. Stereotypes, like other forms of categories, can be helpful or harmful depending on how they are used.