Business Communication In Australia

Name

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Effective business communication is one of the integral contributors to the attainment of organisational goals. It facilitates communication between employees, and improves processes, efficiencies and productivity. Besides presenting new information, options, proposing strategies and execution of decisions, communication is pivotal in team building, leadership and day to day operations (Ai, & Wang, 2017). The commitment of the company is to build an effective and efficient work system that executes set strategies and moves the company to attain objectives and goals.

Communication within the workplace is principally established on the concepts borrowed from Australian society. Like all societies, the core value of society links up to form the critical aspects of how people interact. Hence, understanding the national culture is essential to comprehending the business style. To understand business communication, one has to be adept with the Australian approach to formal communication and informal communication. Formal conversations include upward communication, downward communication and lateral communication, while informal discussions include peer to peer interactions (Guffey, & Loewy, 2015). Besides benefits such as quick integration and better interactions, the comprehension facilitates active engagement with vendors, customers and other external entities

The Australian workplace is deeply rooted in Australian culture. The Australian lifestyle is diverse, as its fabric is a combination of different cultures and ethnic backgrounds. Hence it is essential to avoid assumptions on culture, heritage or origins (Bohatko-Naismith, Guest, Rivett, & James, 2016). Australians stand out as grounded and genuine. Egalitarianism is the foundation of all interpersonal and intrapersonal values in Australia. In this, most Australians believe in the right to a 'fair go' regardless of a person's background (Holmes, & Stubbe, 2015). This is in the formal and informal setting and a vital aspect of the Australian culture. Ideally, unlike other societies in Japan and China, wealth, education and status do not necessarily come with respect. However, age does play a critical role in Australian society as well as the business environment.

Most topics of discussion are acceptable in Australian conversations, especially in social settings. Some items such as professional experience, family, sports, place of origin and travel experiences are good picks (Al-Saggaf, Burmeister, & Weckert, 2015). Controversial issues on politics, religion and sexuality should be avoided on initial interactions as well as formal conversations. Australian conversations also tend to be more optimistic, restrained and should

have low context (Guffey, & Loewy, 2015). In such, no background information should be assumed as the words are the primary means of communication.

Besides, relationships are highly valued in both the formal and informal set-up. Commonly referred to as 'mateship' friendships are often long-term, loyal and significantly dependable. People tend to show respect to friends and peers through gestures of equality instead of submissiveness (Mackey, & Marsden, 2015). Considerable effort is put into being fair to everyone in social interactions, be it in the workplace or social settings. Hence, being down-to-earth and straightforward is regarded as good quality and is acceptable in Australian culture (Holmes, & Stubbe, 2015). Therefore, humility is vital in both formal and informal interactions. Besides, do not be bothered by friends giving you a nickname. The practice is mutual and complimentary in Australia.

The Australian approach to communication influences business practices used by the company as well as suppliers, vendors and customers. When approaching challenges, it is imperative to take a direct, individualised, and solution-oriented approach. It is advisable where necessary to seek assistance and input from colleagues without necessarily involving management (Holmes, & Stubbe, 2015). For leaders, primarily of teams, it is essential to shift the focus of motivating people from a monetary reward or promotion to keeping a healthy work/life balance. Further, assessing performance should be more inclined to the target and outcome and maintain objectivity. It should be primarily be established on task-oriented approaches, with realistic deadlines as taking time to work on a task is often regarded as work ethic (Holmes, & Stubbe, 2015). Making upfront notifications is not only necessary but very essential in any work and related social commitments.

The Australian workplace mirrors the Australian culture where hierarchy is minimised, and differences are not openly shown. This influences business communication, as it negates perceptions of upward or downward business communication for more lateral communication. As a result, senior management listens to the input of subordinates during decision making (Holmes, & Stubbe, 2015). Ideally, decisions can be disputed if not deemed agreeable by constituency. This might be unlike most Chinese or Japanese workplaces where hierarchy is paramount. Hence, one should cultivate relationships, be it superior or subordinate relationships and take a balanced approach at it.

Business etiquette is an essential aspect of business communication in Australia. Australians are typically warm and friendly. We interact openly and tend to value interpersonal relations. In formal interactions, greetings often involve a firm handshake with eye contact for male and female business persons (Bohatko-Naismith, Guest, Rivett, & James, 2016). For first time interactions, address the person with a Mr or Ms. Upon clarification, most Australians will prefer to move to a first-name basis. When accompanied by an Australian, take the initiative to introduce yourself. Depending on the situation, your Australian counterpart may expect you to do it yourself as opposed to introducing you to others. In informal settings, first-time meetings are accompanied by handshakes. However, for close friends may hug, back-slap or kiss one another on the cheek, while others may offer a nod. Unlike formal conversations, informal conversations tend to be laid back and more humorous yet positive.

The cultural atlas points out that verbal communication in Australia is more direct and tailored convey an individual's message with clarity. Courtesy and politeness, however, impede criticism, which has to be delivered elusively (Bohatko-Naismith, Guest, Rivett, & James, 2016). The recommended approach is to use clear word choices. Hence, speak very honestly and maintain reasonable sensitivity. Also, Australians are also self-deprecating in conversations to seem as modest, straightforward and relaxed about themselves. Hence, conversations tend to have lots of humour on self. Primarily, humour is used in much Australian communication (Gribble, Blackmore, & Rahimi, 2015). In the workplace, you should expect some humour in conversations including formal conversations. Humour is often used to ease moods or indirectly approach sensitive issues. Local sarcasm can be very dry, humorous and direct. Hence, it is vital to listen, as it will help you gather non-verbal cues actively.

In verbal communication, it is also vital to understand that Australians are tolerant of swearing and vulgar wording. While this regulated in business communication, cursing is more prevalent in Australia than in many other cultures. The media is less censored, and popular culture has desensitised some words that foreigners may find rude and distasteful (Shah, & Barker, 2017). In informal settings, it is reasonable to hear an Australian swear at some point during a conversation. On the other hand, it is also essential to be aware of the use of these words to mark inaappropriate use.

Unlike Chinese and Japanese cultures where silence communicates, Australians may feel uncomfortable when social interactions are punctuated with long periods of pause or silence

(Kameda, 2013). They will, therefore, try to engage in a new converstation or feel uncomfortable. Making sure you communicate openly can help minimise cases of misunderstandings. Coupled with diminished hierachy, the australian workplace's approach to communication is different. Hence, it is recommended that in decision making, problem solving or planning cases voice an informed input on the issues at hand. Not only does it show that one is a team player but it communicates the willingness to take part in improving the workplace. Besides, not communicating and taking part in offering perspectives and opinions on essential areas of expertise makes it hard for other employees to interact and engage freely on not only formal matters but also informal issues.

   Non-verbal communication also plays a crucial role in business communications in Australia. Eye contact is key and should be maintained as it communicates sincereness, honesty and makes one sociable (Gribble, Blackmore, & Rahimi, 2015). In team meetings, it is imperative to make regular eye contact to all. Indegenous Australians are more likely to avoid eye contact in social interactions. For aborginal communities, direct eye contact to older people can be viewed as discourteous (Mackey, & Marsden, 2015). This is also the case with Australian residents from other cultures that also perceive direct eye contact as disrespectful.

   Contrary to American communication styles, the thumbs-up gesture can be interpreted as rude. To show consent and endorsement, it is more common to make a circle with the thumb and forefinger with the other fingers extended. Winking is considered as inappropriate. Using fewer gestures to communicate is better (Ahmad, & Sheehan, 2017). Using arm's length space is the accepted practice and queuing is essential. Besides, punctuality is widely respected, even though Australians are tolerant. On the other hand, dressing is more casual, also informal settings. It reflects the easy-going attitude of Australians.

   Australia stands out for its hospitality and openness. It can be relatively easy to get acquitted to the culture as it values diversity and respects all persons equally. One should generally embrace directness with a sense of sensitivity and clarity in the Australian workplace. Secondly, being modest with accomplishments will make it easy to have insightful interactions with Australians. On the other hand, one should minimise non-verbal cues such as silence in communications in the Australian workplace. Also, it is important to be subtle with criticism and avoid attaching emotions to workplace interactions.

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