

Research on Internal Communication Management Methods of Cross-Cultural Corporations

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Abstract: With the rapid development of economic globalisation and big data technology, international business activities are becoming more frequent and complex, and multinational corporations have an increasing number of branches in various countries and regions. Cultural differences and inappropriate communication methods in the management process can lead to intense collisions and inevitable conflicts at any time. By recognising and applying the right cross-cultural management communication methods, corporations can achieve their goals and grow steadily in the face of increasing global competition. This paper explores the use of cross-cultural communication strategies with the LEARN model through an in-depth understanding of the Hofstede cultural dimension theory, and provides some ideas and thoughts for internal communication management in cross-cultural corporations.

Keywords: Cross-Cultural Corporation Management; Communication Model; Internal Communication

1. Introduction

Increasingly, cross-cultural corporations are benefiting from economic globalisation. Strategies for mutual understanding and communication of cultural differences are essential in the cross-cultural management process. The management process involves the integration of corporate cultures in order to integrate different cultures quickly and thus better resolve obstacles and conflicts caused by cultural differences. The establishment of smooth and effective communication in the process of cross-cultural management is key to the healthy and steady development of the enterprises. It is also fundamental for employees to ensure the integrity and accuracy of information in the process of transferring information within the corporation. It greatly improves overall efficiency, further increases the loyalty of employees to the corporation and promotes team cohesion, which in turn plays a positive role in the day-to-day management of cross-cultural enterprises.

2. Cross-cultural management theory

The Dutch psychologist Hofstede ^[1] is a senior scholar and theoretical pioneer in the study of communication in different cultural arenas. He put forward the theory of cultural dimensions to provide a theoretical basis for cross-cultural communication management. He conducted a large-scale interview survey of IBM employees and conducted in-depth research on theory and practice to develop five cultural dimensional theories of intercultural management. The first is the gender difference in cultural values. This dimension examines the quality tendencies of men and women, distinguishing between value differences and communication styles; the second is the interrelationship between individualism and collectivism. There are huge differences in the human environment and business communication between collectivist and individualist cultural enterprises, with different communication styles and emphases. The third is the issue of power distance. This dimension examines the extent to which people accept inequality of authority in business, and power distance also influences the setting of organisational structures in business. Fourth is uncertainty avoidance and customs. This dimension examines the extent to which people tolerate threats caused by perceived ambiguity or uncertainty. The higher the level of avoidance of the unknown, the more members of society are likely to be accustomed to following traditional dogma. Fifth, there is the long-term and short-term orientation dimension. Members of societies with a long-term oriented culture are more tradition-oriented

and anticipate the future, whereas members of societies with a short-term oriented culture usually focus on short-term interests and do not plan and think too much about the future.^[2]

Cultural differences have an impact on managers' decision-making patterns, styles of working and business objectives, so effective cross-cultural communication can be used to better harmonise and integrate cultural differences, which can be turned into an advantage to change the quality of management and decision-making. Each culture and its derivatives have their own strengths and weaknesses, and culture clashes are accompanied by culture clashes, and communication with new cultures. Conflicting perceptions caused by people's different positions and thinking perspectives can, if used wisely, contribute to a corporation's strategic planning and improve the quality of decision-making. The use of these conflicts can help corporations to plan strategically and optimize the quality of their decisions. Cross-cultural integration and convergence is a kind of cultural innovation, and the new culture is inclusive enough to require consensus, mutual understanding and trust among all members. The creation of cultural values for people within the corporation on this basis and the establishment of unified values is also a need for the development of the corporation's culture itself, and then the fundamental problem of cultural conflict would be solved when the values emerge an effective convergence.

3. The significance of cross-cultural internal management

The conflict is a double-edged sword, as it can create a new corporate cultural identity, which does not simply follow the cultural patterns of one party or compromise on the local culture, but rather sprouts a new corporate culture on the basis of the original culture, spontaneously forming a corporate cultural innovation. However, cross-cultural conflicts can also damage the existing cultural pattern of a corporation, it can gradually falls away and be eliminated by fierce market competition during the process of rebuilding. It is precisely because of the huge differences within cross-cultural corporations that the process of establishing and forming organisation's own unique corporate culture is quite enduring and complex that it is a widespread phenomenon for corporations to explore the balance in all kinds of interwoven cultures within the the melting pot of markets. In the case of corporations that have stood out in the fierce international market competition, they play the role of incubators in cross-cultural management, acting like communication vessels and giving full play to their autonomous initiative to continuously integrate cultural differences and eventually form their own unique cross-cultural management concepts. Cross-cultural management communication is the embodiment of multiple skills that combine cross-culturalism with management and communication into one, while internal communication management plays a vital role in the entire communication chain, which can be used to improve the effectiveness of internal management communication, increase mutual understanding, upload and communicate to resolve unnecessary conflicts and disputes. It can also improve the company's trust in its employees and increase their motivation and sense of responsibility for their work, their sense of belonging to the corporation and their identity as an intercultural company. Through the promotion of intercultural mechanisms within the corporation, cultural differences are correctly understood and objectively analysed. It is indispensable to explore the root causes of problems and build communication solutions to promote the smooth development of multinational enterprises and achieve win-win goals within the respect of countries and between companies and employees.

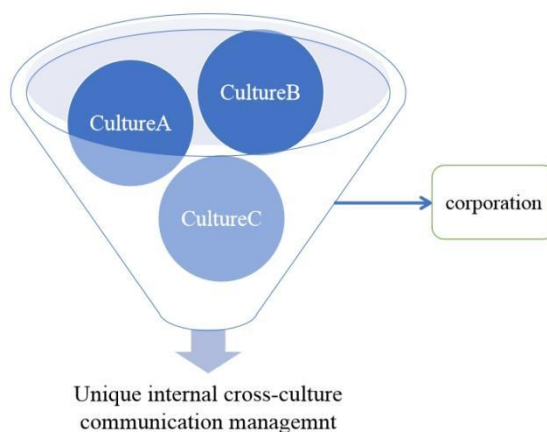


Figure 1 Corporation as container to generate a unique cultural communication management

4. The Cross-cultural communication management model

For corporations that operate internationally or cooperate across borders, it is important to place emphasis on the use of cross-cultural management in the day-to-day management activities of the corporation. In the internal corporate communication management, employees are not only required to be aware of the differences between national cultures, they are also required to communicate in the same language and to achieve efficient information dissemination. Through an in-depth understanding of Hofstede's five-dimensional model of culture, combined with the requirements of cross-cultural communication management, the LEARN model of internal communication management has been developed.

4.1 The content of the LEARN -model

The LEARN model is mainly composed of five parts, respectively represent Listen, Empathy, Assist, Renew, Need. Listening is the process of gathering information from the speaker and understanding the language, emotions and situation, and responding to the different items of communication. Empathy is the process of recognising the emotions and body language of the talking person, which identified what is being expressed, and try to uncover the underlying motives, Firstly, from a macro perspective, it is important to summarise the focus of the communication, and initially find and judge the angle with the entry point of the communication. Need represent what the participants want to achieve through the conversation. as the person initiating the communication wants to work with others to complete a project and achieve a desired outcome. But the premise is to have an insight into other's needs and collaborate with each other, and it is important to understand the needs of both parties at this time. Renew means that it is necessary to update each other's knowledge systems after exchange a deeper opinions between the participants, and rebuild the concept of communication and cooperation, not eliminate the individuals will of one party when the interests of both parties can be guaranteed, correcting deviations in understanding through communication, and create a unified understanding of the various levels and parts of the communication project. Assist is to help, based on a mutually agreed structure, to explore solutions that are mutually co-operative, so that the communication project progresses smoothly, and to assist each other in agreeing on the time, content and progress of feedback to ensure the real implementation of help and the development of project implementation. Through mutual assistance to establish a cooperative relationship, information sharing, mutual learning to update the blind spot of knowledge, continuous communication to achieve complementarity, improve the quality of work, improve the ability to work and performance, and become collaborators in each other's work.



Figure 2 The LEARN model

4.2 The use of the LEARN model under Hofstede's cultural dimensional theory

Gender differences in cultural values. Masculine and feminine cultural societies shape leadership communication styles differently. Male workers in corporations tend to be efficient and fast-paced in their work, and are best characterised by direct problem solving. Female workers are more focused on the process and feeling of problem solving and are able to build good interpersonal relationships after communication. The LEARN model has a different emphasis on internal communication, with male workers focusing on being informed and solving problems, and female workers focusing on listening and empathy.

The interrelationship between individualism and collectivism. In individualistic cultures, members emphasise personal interests

and self-centred, whereas in collectivist cultures, members emphasise the collective honour of the individual, creating a positive corporate atmosphere and giving employees a sense of belonging. Individualist cultural corporations can spend time on the satisfaction of employee needs when using the LEARN model, while collectivist cultural corporations can operate in corporate cultural identity.

The issue of power distance. The acceptance of unequal authority directly affects the efficiency of internal management, mainly in terms of upward and downward communication. The order of communication elements in the LEARN model can be adjusted. Upward communication is that the employees report to the leaders and put forward their views, and the model's process of 'Listen' and 'Empathy' can be skipped, directly for operating the process of 'Renew', then the employees and leaders' perceptions of project content are updated. Downstream communication is usually about leader communicating, motivating and evaluating employees, so the LEARN model can be used throughout the communication process.

Uncertainty avoidance and customs. In internal communication, employees with low uncertainty avoidance tend to work more boldly and confidently, and they are less anxious about agreed-upon customary dogma. Employees with high uncertainty avoidance value rules of behaviour and communicate to convey feelings and conform to expectations formed by all parties. When using the LEARN model you can experiment with both single and multiple elements, depending on the characteristics, so that internal communication can be done efficiently.

Long-term oriented corporations tend to communicate will take the time to understand the person and background of the communication and create a harmonious communication environment. This facilitates the resolution of projects for all parties involved and provides a good basis for future project follow-up. This is in line with the effects of the LEARN model. Generally employee communication within a corporation is long-term in nature and requires a long period of effort and cooperation between all parties, so the tendency is to use all elements of the model. Short-term oriented corporations aim for short-term benefits, they maintain interpersonal relationships while ensuring personal benefits, and a direct-to-the-point communication approach can use some of the elements of the LEARN model.

5. Conclusion

In cross-cultural internal communication, business managers use effective communication methods to determine the focus of the conversation and the mood of the target audience. They are able to grasp the entire communication process from a macro perspective and to find the right solutions and breakthroughs through a rational thought process. The LEARN model provides a way of thinking about communication. When using the model to communicate, a step-by-step approach to output and input that follows a basic logical approach makes communication more structured and allows you to get to the point. By mastering the rules of conversation, cross-cultural managers are able to take a long-term view of relationships and gradually build a sense of deeper communication identity. This has a positive effect on the management and efficiency of staff within the whole cross-cultural corporation.

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