



RESOURCE

Tips for Communicating Effectively with Non-Native Speakers

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MASTERING
CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

As a speaker, you should...

1

Avoid shouting or raising your voice. The only thing this accomplishes is to scare the listener.

2

Speak slowly and distinctly. Understand that native speakers speak too fast.

3

Emphasize keywords during the conversation.

4

Allow for pauses in the conversation. This gives your listeners time to interpret what you are saying.

5

Use lots of visual aids such as handouts, slides, diagrams, etc.

6

Avoid jargons and stick with familiar words and phrases.

7

Check for understanding frequently. If you wait until the end, it may be too late.

As a listener, you should...

8

Ask the speaker to slow down so you can follow the conversation.

9

Repeat what was said to verify your understanding.

10

Ask the speaker to write down any word you are having difficulty comprehending. This is specially helpful with names.

11

Get in the practice of reading lips to aid your comprehension.

12

Allow for pauses and give speakers plenty of time to express their thoughts.

13

Listen with the intent of understanding. don;t go into a conversations expecting you will not understand the speaker.

14

In addition to the words being spoken, pay attention to the speaker's nonverbal messages as well.

Also keep in mind...

15

An accent is not reflective of the speaker's proficiency in the language.

16

Just because individuals are not communicating with you, it does not mean they are not understanding you.

17

Just because individuals sound rude, it does not necessarily mean they are being rude. Certain groups are more emotionally expressive.

18

When you hear individuals speaking their native language, they are not deliberately trying to exclude you. It is just less stressful to speak in your native language.

19

Pay attention to the need for some groups to safe face.

20

Understand that there are far more to the message than the words being spoken.

21

Remember that we always approach situation or conversations with our own cultural lenses on.

22

Keep in mind that differences in communication styles can lead to the wrong interpretation.



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To communicate successfully across differences, you need to (1) learn about different styles, and (2) avoid projecting your style onto someone else.

~ Luiza Dreasher