

INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT ENGLISH

Managing Change



Fiona Mee



International Management English

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York Associates

Communicate professionally anywhere

1. Edition 1⁴ 3² | 2021 20 19

DELTA Publishing 2013

www.deltapublishing.co.uk

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70178 Stuttgart, 2017

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Edited by Catriona Watson-Brown

Designed by Caroline Johnston

Photos and cartoons by Cartoonstock (pages 19, 29, 40, 59, 79);
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54, 55 (middle), 61, 62 Dongliu/Shutterstock.com, 64, 68, 70, 73, 80)

Cover photo © Getty

Cover design by Clare Webber

Printed by Elanders GmbH, Waiblingen

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank the following people for their help during the writing of the book: Jeremy Comfort, Steve Flinders, Bob Dignen, Jackie Black and Jon Dyson for all their help, and my family and the YA team for tolerating my lack of attention whilst I was absorbed in writing. Also Catriona Watson-Brown and Chris Hartley for all their support and patience.

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ISBN 978-3-12-501333-9



9 783125 013339

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Introduction

At York Associates, we always aim to develop the skills which help professionals to do their jobs better. In recent years, we have worked hard to enrich our Business English and professional communication training with intercultural content. More recently, we have included a focus on important interpersonal and management skills for listening, building relationships and trust, influencing, etc.

Our approach is built on the premise that good communication is vital to achieving results at work. Effective international communicators need a blend of language, professional communication, intercultural and management skills to be successful.

Welcome to *International Management English*, a new series published jointly by York Associates and Delta Publishing. The four titles in this series are:

- *Leading People*
- *Managing Projects*
- *Working Virtually*
- *Managing Change*

Each book includes either one or two audio CDs.

Professional language training with a management focus

Each book consists of eight units of study, containing four sections per unit:

- **Section A: Discussion and listening**
Engaging and relevant content in areas of international management and teamwork
- **Section B: Communication skills**
Opportunities for the practice of key skills in areas such as conflict management, team-building and giving/receiving feedback, as well as more familiar topics such as presentations, meetings, negotiations and writing e-mails
- **Section C: Professional skills**
Authentic texts from leading management writers and thinkers, designed to encourage reflection and debate among readers
- **Section D: Intercultural competence and Case study**
A focus on raising intercultural awareness, followed by an illustrative case study drawn from the author's experience of the international business world

In addition, each unit offers:

- a strong emphasis on vocabulary learning, with glossaries of key terms at the end of each unit
- practical tips on how to improve performance at work
- the opportunity to use a learning diary, which encourages the setting of realistic goals to implement the learning points from each unit.

At the end of the book, the Word list provides a useful list of key words, referenced to the first occurrence of each word.

Having worked through the book, you will have developed not only your business language skills but also your ability to communicate and manage real challenges in your international working environment.

To the teacher

The four titles in this series represent a new development in ELT. They broaden the scope of teaching to include highly relevant management topics and skills. The materials are not only engaging for teachers, allowing them to introduce and develop new management communication skills in an ELT classroom; students are also motivated as they learn how to manage real professional communication challenges which they face at work on a daily basis.

Each title is designed primarily for work with both small and larger groups, but can also be used in one-to-one situations and has many features which will support self-study.

Across the eight units of each title, there is a strong focus on developing fluency and skills to communicate effectively in real work situations. There are opportunities to practise listening, reading and writing skills. The intercultural case studies in Section D are drawn from real-life examples and provide engaging discussion and problem-solving material for the ELT classroom.

There is online support for trainers (www.delta-publishing.co.uk/resources) in the form of notes for each unit, which provide background information on the management topics and skills presented.

A final word

To both learner and teacher, we would like to express the hope that you find the materials stimulating, and that they help people to communicate more effectively at work.

Learning diary

Accelerate your learning by using this Learning diary. Make eight photocopies of this page, one for each unit. Note down important new words and expressions from the unit as you study. Make notes to help you remember any good advice you get on how to communicate and be effective across cultures. Then decide on some actions you can take to help to consolidate the things you have learned.

Unit number: _____

1 Language

Important (new) words and expressions for me from this unit are:

2 Professional communication skills

Important (new) expressions and communication tips for me from this unit are:

3 Intercultural competence

Important information/tips to be effective across cultures for me from this unit are:

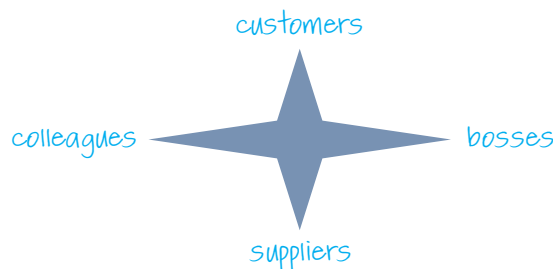
4 Actions

To help me to consolidate all the learning points above, I need to:

Needs analysis

Introduction You can use this Needs analysis to help you think about how to make the most of this course and to maximise your learning.

Managing your communication network Think about who you communicate with in English. Draw a diagram to represent your network of communications, showing the important individuals or groups of people you communicate with. Follow the example and then note down the channel of communication you use, e.g. face-to-face, phone, video conference, e-mail, etc.



How effectively do you use your network? Are you connecting with the right people in the best way at the most appropriate time? Are you spending enough time communicating with each individual or group?

Brainstorm some ideas for ways in which you could use your network more effectively.

I should spend more time planning my longer e-mails rather than writing them quickly and sending without considering the message. That way, I would get a more positive response from some colleagues.

Your communication needs What do you have to do in English, and how challenging is it? Build your own communication profile by completing the following tables for change-management skills, professional communication skills and interpersonal skills. Tick (✓) the tasks you most commonly do. Then note down how challenging you find them, using a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = very easy, 2 = easy, 3 = occasional problems, 4 = challenging, 5 = very difficult). If you score 3 or more for a task, write down a reason why it is challenging.

Change-management skills

skill	✓	scale of challenge
Creating a sense of urgency		
Developing a change strategy		
Communicating change		
Dealing with resistance		
Convincing others to accept change		
Developing change leaders		
Measuring and monitoring change		
Consolidating change		
Other		

Professional communication skills

skill	✓	scale of challenge
Presenting		
Meeting		
Negotiating		
Writing (reports, e-mails, etc.)		
Socialising		
Decision-making		
Problem-solving		
Other		

Interpersonal skills

skill	✓	scale of challenge
Building and maintaining relationships		
Networking		
Building and maintaining trust		
Influencing people		
Listening actively		
Managing conflict		
Other		

Your language and communication challenges

You manage change in an international context and you use a foreign language to do so. What are the biggest language and communication challenges that you face?

- 1
- 2
- 3

Your intercultural challenges

What are the biggest intercultural challenges that you face?

- 1
- 2
- 3

Your current learning objectives

What would most help you to improve your ability to communicate effectively in an international change-management context?

- 1
- 2
- 3

Your future learning targets

As part of your learning plan, what targets can you fix for yourself? Start a learning diary (see page 5) and set yourself targets for future learning using this frame:

- In one month's time, I aim to be able to
- In three months' time, I aim to be able to
- In six months' time, I aim to be able to
- In one year's time, I aim to be able to

Change happens

AIMS

- A To identify contexts for change
- B To clarify information and listen actively
- C To create a sense of urgency
- D To understand differences in company culture

A Discussion and listening



Think about it

The winners of tomorrow will deal proactively with chaos, will look at the chaos per se, as the source of market advantage, not as a problem.

Tom Peters (1942–), American business writer

1 Discuss these questions with a partner.

- a What kind of organisation do you work in? How big is it? What changes have you seen in it since you started working there?
- b What is your role in the organisation? How has your role changed since you joined the organisation?

2 With a partner, complete the phrase below with three or four of your own ideas. Then compare with other pairs.

Change happens when an organisation ... *becomes too large and complex.*

3 In his book *Thriving on Chaos*, Tom Peters says: 'If it ain't broke, you just haven't looked hard enough. Fix it anyway.' What does he mean? Do you agree with him?

Listen to this



1

Listen to an interview with Gilberto Ferreira, the CEO of a bank in Brazil, about a change at the bank, the impact it had on people, and how he managed it. Then answer these questions.

- a What were three of the weaknesses Gilberto identified in his organisation?
- b What was his main reason for implementing change?
- c Why did some managers feel there was no need for change?
- d Why were the changes difficult for some mid-level executives?
- e What two pieces of advice does he give?

- 5 Do you have any experience of the kind of change described by Gilberto Ferreira? Would you add anything to the advice he gives? Discuss with a partner and write down your ideas.**

Focus on language

Look at this statement from the interview:

Innovation and the flow of ideas within the company were not as good. I thought that we needed to change this if we were going to maintain our competitive edge.

Change often happens when companies feel the need to increase their **innovation** and **performance** in order to remain **competitive**.

- 6 Complete each of these sentences with the correct form of the word *compete*.**

- a Due to strong in mature markets, many companies are changing their strategy by moving into emerging BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China).
- b We keep ahead of our larger because we are a more flexible, innovative company with low overheads. This means we can respond to change more easily.
- c Managers increasingly need to in a global marketplace for the best positions. One essential competence is the ability to manage change.
- d In times of recession, organisations are likely to fail. This is often a sign that they have not adapted to change.

- 7 a Complete these collocations (a–f) with the correct form of the word *innovation*.**

- a an manager
- b-driven growth
- c product
- d to survive
- e strategy
- f a leading

- b Match each collocation above (a–f) with the correct definition (1–6).**

- 1 Implementing a strategy for increasing performance, often when it is considered that cost reductions and restructuring are not enough
- 2 A specific plan to achieve innovation with milestones and targets in order to achieve commercial results
- 3 A professional who successfully produces new ideas and ways of doing things, turning these into reality
- 4 Making new things that are different to what is currently available
- 5 A person or company that is ahead of others in creating new products and/or ways of doing things
- 6 The belief that a company must continuously be looking for new and better ways to work in order to stay in business

- Let's talk 8 Use these questions to interview your partner and make notes of their responses. When you are giving your answers, try to use as many of the terms from Exercises 6 and 7 as you can.**

- a In your organisation, does your team engage in open debate? What can the advantages of this approach be in a change context?
- b How is innovation encouraged in your organisation/department/team?
- c Do you think you are an innovative manager? Give some examples.
- d What changes have you made in your department/organisation in order to maintain a competitive edge?
- e Have you ever had to make tough people decisions? Why did you / your organisation have to make this decision? How did you communicate it?
- f Have you ever struggled to adapt to a change? Why?

B Communication skills: Clarifying information and listening actively

Think about it

As business becomes more global, changes in the way people communicate are inevitable. Here are two examples of typical problems:


- Native speakers use complex or colloquial expressions that are not easily understood by non-native speakers.
- Non-native speakers who are not confident using English may pronounce words incorrectly.


Tip

Working in geographically dispersed teams can be challenging. As a first step, it can be useful to agree some communication guidelines.

- 1 a Can you think of any other communication problems caused by changes in how we communicate, the channels we use, or who we communicate with?
b Compare your answers with the rest of the class and write your list on a board. Discuss any experience you have had of the problems on the list.
- 2 Work in groups. Brainstorm some solutions to one or two communication problems from the list in Exercise 1. Each group should brainstorm a different problem. Present your solutions to the other groups.

Listen to this

- 3  2 Serge Manet is a French project manager for an international food company. A larger organisation has recently bought his and other smaller companies around the world as part of a global expansion strategy. Listen to him talking about the change this has caused in his part of the organisation and answer these questions.
 - a What was the key change implemented?
 - b What was the goal?

- 4 a  3–5 Listen to comments from three members of Serge's team: Kristina (responsible for planning, based in Ingolstadt, Germany), Juana (project team member, based in Puebla, Mexico) and Tom (sales manager, based in Michigan, USA).
 - b When Serge asked project members what impact they had experienced due to the changed ways of working, what three pieces of feedback did he get?
 - c If you were Serge, what would you do as a result of this feedback? Discuss some ideas as a group and suggest some possible actions that he could take.

- Focus on language** 5 Complete each of the sentences below with a phrase for clarification from the box.

Tip

It's a good idea to use clarifying phrases in order to confirm understanding.

When you say ...	Could we clarify ...	If I understand ...
Just to confirm, what you're saying ...		So are you saying ...

- a that if we work more as a global team, we'll achieve higher growth?
- b roles again? I thought that you were responsible for producing the project budget.
- c is we should have a web meeting every Monday at 9 a.m. to update the rest of the team on progress. Is that OK for everyone?
- d 'silos', do you mean different groups not really working well together, focusing on their own priorities?
- e you correctly, you didn't answer my e-mail because you prefer dealing with these questions by phone. Is that right?

6 Complete each of the sentences below with a phrase for establishing mutual understanding from the box.

Can we establish the purpose	Firstly, I think we should agree
We need to set down some rules	It must be clear who is responsible
We should explain the reason	

- a on how often we need to communicate – it should be regular, but we need time between meetings to prepare.
- b of each call in advance? I think it's important to have structured meetings, but also the occasional social call.
- c about e-mail. I don't think we should use e-mail for any sensitive issues or negative feedback, for example.
- d for not sharing information or answering questions – in cases, for example, where information is confidential or uncertain.
- e for organising and monitoring the communication process.

Let's talk 7 Work in groups of four. You have just started working in the same cross-functional team whose purpose is to share innovative ideas and solutions to problems. You each have to collect ideas from your markets and bring them to a weekly meeting, where the team will choose the strongest ideas to present to top management in order to build new projects.

Student A: See below.

Student B: Turn to page 90.

Student C: Turn to page 94.

Student D: Turn to page 95.

Agree and draw up a list of communication guidelines for your team, then present them to the rest of the group. Try to use some of the language from Exercises 5 and 6 during your discussions.

Student A

Catarina: Financial Controller

- You are based at the company's headquarters in Taipei.
- You are already part of another key cross-functional team looking at cost savings, productivity and efficiency.
- Due to the difficult financial climate, you are concerned about the short-term results of the company. You don't think now is the best time to focus on this kind of collaboration.
- You don't think you'll have time for brainstorming or discussions, but think you can input financial data, as long as you are given a request in writing with detailed information and asked well in advance.

