

Cross-Cultural Communication

What is Cross-Cultural Communication?

Cross-cultural communication is how people belonging to different cultures communicate with each other and refers to the differences in verbal and non-verbal communication between people from diverse backgrounds. Understanding and embracing differences in communication is vital in overcoming potential barriers within companies with multicultural environments. Cross cultural communication can take many forms:

- Distinct languages
- Varying cultural practices e.g. handshakes versus bows
- Differences between cities or neighborhoods
- Operational time zones
- Generational viewpoints
- Educational backgrounds
- Unique cultures and communication methods of individual businesses.

Why Cross-Cultural Communication?

Cross-cultural communication is essential in the resources sector, where operations can take place across diverse geographical and cultural landscapes meaning that understanding cross-cultural nuances becomes crucial for operational success and fostering an environment of inclusion.

Effective cross cultural communication can lead to:

- **Improved Productivity:** Smooth cross-cultural communication is vital for maintaining high productivity levels in teams dispersed across different states or countries. For example, a company with operations in Australia and project teams around the world must bridge the cultural and time zone differences to ensure cohesive project management and timely execution.

- **Greater Diversity and Inclusion:** Cultivating an environment that respects diverse cultural backgrounds is essential for fostering inclusion. For example, understanding, acknowledging and celebrating the specific cultural differences that exist within a team can create a more inclusive environment.
- **Customer and Community Relations:** Managing cultural differences is crucial for maintaining positive relations with local communities and stakeholders. For instance, understanding the cultural significance of land and heritage to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities can guide more respectful and inclusive practices in resourcing operations, enhancing community relations and project success.

In the resources sector, embracing cross-cultural communication not only supports operational efficiency but also underpins efforts to build more diverse and inclusive workplaces. It is also key to engaging effectively with global teams, local communities, and stakeholders, ensuring that diversity and inclusion are at the heart of business practices.