

LESSON NUMBER: 3-D

TASK: Communications Process

CONDITION: Classroom environment

STANDARD:

1. Definition of Effective Communication.
2. Elements of the Communication Process.
3. Communication Barriers.
4. Cross-Cultural Misunderstandings.
5. Barriers to Cross-Cultural Communications
6. Accents.

TYPE OF INSTRUCTION: Conference

TIME OF INSTRUCTION: 1 Hour

MEDIA: Viewgraph #3-D-1 through Viewgraph #3-D-13 and Practical Exercise #3-D-1

NOTE: Instructions for the PE are contained in the Practical Exercise.

LEAD IN: One of the most important skills you need to be an effective leader is the ability to communicate effectively. Not only must you understand what you think you hear, but understand what was actually said and what is not said. During this block of instruction, you will learn the importance of effective communication, and how it relates to you as a leader.

PART I. DEFINITION OF COMMUNICATION

QUESTION: How do you define effective communications? Answers should reflect the following.

SHOW VIEWGRAPH #3-D-1

<p>DEFINITION OF COMMUNICATION</p> <p>The successful exchange of information between individuals.</p>

1. **Definition.** Effective communications is defined as the successful exchange of information between individuals.

SHOW VIEWGRAPH #3-D-2

GUIDELINES TO SUCCESSFUL COMMUNICATION

- **Prepare yourself**
- **Check partner**
- **Be positive**
- **Use “I” message**
- **Be specific**
- **Active listening**
- **Stay focused**

2. **Guidelines.** An effective communicator is successful in establishing an active two-way link with another individual or group.

a. **Prepare yourself.** Be ready to listen. If you are not focused on receiving the message, you may not fully receive or understand.

b. **Check partner.** Verify what is said by the individual communicating the message. This ensures there is no misunderstanding.

c. **Be positive.** Tell the person how their behavior will affect you or the organization, but do not tell them it may affect him/her, in other words, do not threaten the person.

d. **Use “I” message.** I messages are means by which you can tell another person what their behavior is and how the behavior is affecting you with the express intent of getting them to change their behavior.

e. **Be specific.** Tell the person exactly what you see, and hear, but do not judge and/or evaluate their behavior.

f. **Active listening.** Active listening is hearing a person’s words and understanding a person’s feelings. I messages must always be followed by active listening to work through any defensiveness caused by the I message.

g. **Stay focused.** If you want to understand another person, you must focus intently upon his/her behavior and communication. Listen closely to the words, voice, and non-verbal behavior of the other person and the feelings arising in yourself.

SHOW VIEWGRAPH #3-D-3

FACTORS OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

- **Self-concept**
- **Poor self-concept**
- **Coping with angry feelings**
- **Admit your emotions**
- **Self-disclosure**

3. The following are some factors of interpersonal communication:

a. **Self-concept.** Self concept is the most important factor. It reflects how we see ourselves.

b. **Poor self-concept.** Poor self-concept equals poor communication. Negative feedback will also produce poor self-concept.

c. **Coping with angry feelings.** Rising anxiety can block accurate hearing. When this occurs, accurate hearing is blocked, and the communication process is hindered. Therefore, if you receive any negative feedback, stay in touch with your anxiety level.

d. **Admit your emotions.** Let the other person know what behavior is troublesome to you, so he/she knows what to change; it also avoids the heightened defensiveness that blame produces. An example may be: “PVT Smith, I see that you knocked over the bookcase as you walked by, and left it that way.”

NOTE: “PVT Smith, you deliberately (judging) knocked over that bookcase because you are angry at me (evaluating his reason).” Express how you “feel” about it (not think). Tell the person how you feel about their behavior, your gut-level reaction, e.g., frightened, angry, nervous, frustrated, proud, happy, glad, or excited.

e. **Self-disclosure.** Self-disclosure is a technique used to discover who we really are. Disclosure encourages disclosure; it involves speaking for self. The rewards for self-disclosure are:

- (1) Increased self knowledge.
- (2) Closer intimate relationship.
- (3) Improve communication.
- (4) Lightens guilt feelings.

(5) You can look at the situation objectively.

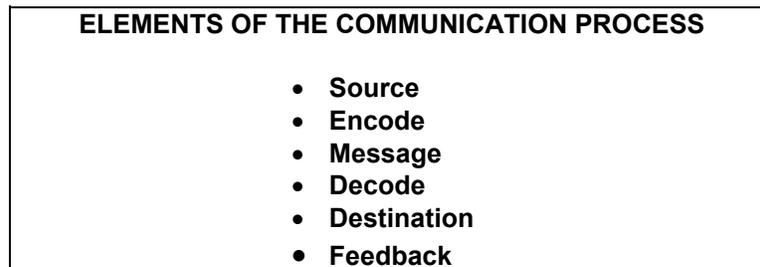
4. **Congruent Behavior.** Is the state of being consistent in character. It means that the behavior matches the word (talking the talk, walking the walk). Stated plainly, doing what you say you do.

5. **Incongruent Behavior.** Behavior opposite of the word congruent behavior. In other words, (talking the talk and not walking the walk).

EXAMPLE: If I tell you that the Army's Policy prohibits senior noncommissioned officers from dating subordinates in the same command, but I as a noncommissioned officer date my subordinates, my behavior is incongruent.

PART II. ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS

SHOW VIEWGRAPH #3-D-4



1. The elements of communications process are:

- a. **Source.** Individual with an idea.
- b. **Encode.** This source decides upon the symbol.
- c. **Message.** A signal.
- d. **Decode.** The message translates the message into information that is meaningful.
- e. **Destination.** Receiver.
- f. **Feedback.** Is the verbal/nonverbal communication to a person or group providing information as to how their behavior is affecting or influencing you.

SHOW VIEWGRAPH #3-D-5

STYLES OF COMMUNICATION

- **Friendly, sociable, or playful**
- **Directive, persuasive, demanding, evaluative, blaming, or praising**
- **Speculative, tentative, uncertain, searching, reflecting, exploring or intellectual**
- **Disclosing, revealing, explicit, responsive, accepting, and aware**

2. **Styles of communication.** Styles are how you talk about something. Different styles result from different intentions. However, the different ways we communicate truth and meaning are not universal and can cause a number of problems in a diverse organization. It is obvious that the Army consists of people who speak different languages from around the world, but even those who speak the same language may use that language in different ways. What leaders and their soldiers must understand is that being different does not mean being inferior.

3. There are four different styles of communication. These styles have dramatic changes in the message when styles are shifted. Effective communication involves matching your intention with your style.

NOTE: Use two of the below styles as examples.

4. **Style I.** Is friendly, sociable, or playful.

a. Used to keep things on an “even keel.”

b. Passes time and fills social voids.

c. Not intended to change anything. Characterized by:

(1) “It” is statements (speaking for no one).

(2) “I like” statements -- preferences.

(3) Almost always omits direct disclosure of immediate, intimate feelings, and intentions.

(4) Meets everyday social expectations.

NOTE: Use two of the below styles as examples.

5. **Style II.** Is directive, persuasive, demanding, evaluative, blaming, or praising. Usually involves tension, or dissatisfaction.

- a. Often involves an attempt to force change, shutting off exploration of issues.
- b. Often leads to misunderstanding.
- c. Based on closed assumptions and interpretations the speaker holds about persons or situations; attacks partner's sense of self-worth.
- d. Power is valued over clarification, understanding, cooperation, and accuracy.
- e. Win/lose outcome orientation. Characterized by:
 - (1) Directing, ordering, advising, recommending, and praising.
 - (2) Labeling, name calling, judging, and fault finding.
 - (3) Blaming, accusing, and complaining.
 - (4) Self-depreciation.
 - (5) Speaking for others or no one.
 - (6) Superlatives and imperatives.
 - (7) Right-wrong; good-bad; should-ought.
 - (8) Closed indirect questions and "why" questions.

NOTE: Style II is usually ineffective for resolving issues. It deals with issues indirectly, and buries real issues. It reduces resistance, hence the need to increase pressure. Not all style II is negative. Selling, bargaining, promoting, advocating, preaching, and lecturing often use Style II communication. Style II can help you move toward consideration of an issue. It often is a signal that an issue is present.

6. **Style III.** Is speculative, tentative, uncertain, searching, reflecting, exploring, or intellectual.

- a. Demonstrates willingness to examine, explore and understand self/other awareness.
- b. Includes general spirit for inquiry.

c. Focuses on past causes of behavior, or future possibilities.

d. Begins to identify and clarify issues, examines relevant background information and generates alternative courses of action (a choice between two or more possibilities). Characterized by:

(1) Questions that focus on partner and liberal use of checking out.

(2) Ask for feedback, but does not volunteer feedback.

(3) Information is intellectualized.

(4) Lacks feeling and intention statements.

NOTE: Style III is a limited style. Creates a climate for further exploration, but does little to encourage significant change in relationships. Does not move to core issues, and no commitment to action.

7. **Style IV.** Is disclosing, revealing, explicit, responsive, accepting, and aware.

a. Intentions and behaviors demonstrate a commitment to deal completely and congruent with an issue.

b. Expresses an intention to pursue an issue openly and directly.

c. Requires contact with own awareness, accepting it and trusting it.

d. Identify incongruent dimensions of self-awareness.

e. Primary focus is on self.

f. Demonstrates spirit of caring and mutual support. Characterized by:

(1) Statement, not questions.

(2) Heightened awareness.

(3) Disclosure of intentions.

(4) Discovery and creation of congruent solutions.

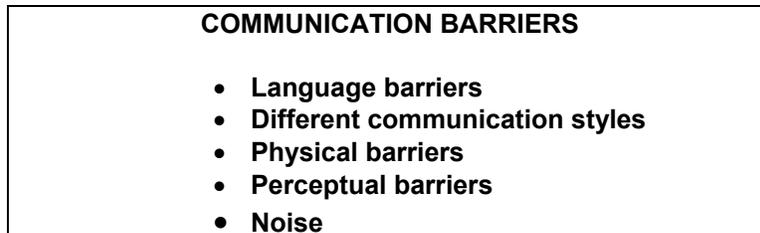
(6) Clear speaking for self, "I" statements.

NOTE: Style IV seeks to share a complete picture of self-awareness, fully and honestly with partner.

NOTE: Conduct Practical Exercise #3-D-1, Communications Process.

PART IV. COMMUNICATION BARRIERS

SHOW VIEWGRAPH #3-D-6



1. **Communication Barriers.** The need to communicate is universal within all organizations, but more significant in the Army between soldiers preparing for combat. However, the different ways we communicate truth and meaning are not universal and can cause problems in a diverse organization. Misunderstanding is often a problem between soldiers who are very much alike, but it poses an even greater barrier between those who are ethnically or culturally different.

2. **Language Barriers.** It is easy to see how misunderstandings can occur between people who speak different languages. Even with the use of a skilled translator important parts of a message may be lost. A language also functions more effectively when used in its cultural context. Mistakes in translation or interpretation between soldiers can be very costly. They can do a great deal of harm in creating misunderstandings within a unit.

3. **Different Communication Styles.** Even soldiers who speak the same language will have different ways of structuring information, presenting arguments, using different “styles” for social and professional exchanges, and making cultural distinctions and assumptions about how we interpret what others say. What we all must understand is that being different does not mean being inferior. Communication is more than just an exchange of information. It is more than words and consists of four specific ingredients:

- a. The information being transmitted.
- b. The feeling and emotion that is appropriate.
- c. The nonverbal message.

d. The request or implied expectation of a response.

4. Physical Barriers.

- a. Distance.
- b. Heat and cold.
- c. Individual's physical health.
- d. Speech pattern and articulation.
- e. Pronunciation.

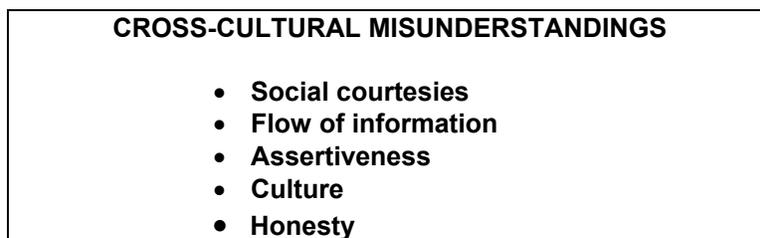
5. Perceptual Barriers.

- a. Past experience.
- b. Hidden agendas (you are good, I am not).
- c. Stereotypes.

6. Noise. Any factor that disrupts or confuses communication.

PART IV. CROSS-CULTURAL MISUNDERSTANDINGS

SHOW VIEWGRAPH #3-D-7



1. Cross-Cultural Misunderstandings. Most misunderstandings among soldiers result from cross-cultural experiences do not necessarily occur from only one episode of misunderstanding. It is usually a commutative process. One misunderstanding leads to

another misunderstanding which can lead to an unsuccessful encounter. Each side begins to blame the other for lacking awareness, understanding, or both. Sometimes soldiers involved in a cross-cultural exchange will become emotionally hooked on one or two components and miss the meaning or purpose of the message.

QUESTION: How many of you can remember your last misunderstanding with another person? Was it just one incident?

NOTE: We will now examine some of the common causes of cross-cultural misunderstandings. Use the following points for discussion:

2. **Social Courtesies.** Within our English language there are hidden codes and cues that control our conversations during business, social gatherings or in meetings. Some of the most frequently heard complaints about those who speak English as a second language includes the following:

QUESTION: What have you heard said about people from the city, country, north, south, east or west?

NOTE: If you have not learned the social courtesies of a given culture you may feel rejected and frustrated in your efforts to communicate and get along with others. Because of this lack of understanding, you may not be evaluated fairly.

3. **Flow of Information.** How soldiers arrange information depends on their cultural experiences. Many European cultures arrange information in a linear fashion, going directly from a starting point to a specific objective or conclusion. People from Arab, Latin, and Asian cultures may tend to communicate in a less linear fashion. They are more likely to branch off in a series of directions or go full circle before getting to what the listener may perceive as the point of the message.

4. **Culture also affects how and when business is discussed.** A special problem experienced during cross-culture communication is not knowing how information should flow or when it is appropriate to engage in certain kinds of discussions. For instance, some believe that in the northern United States, people waste little time on social niceties when conducting business. However, some others believe that in the South, social courtesies are a way of life, and being sociable is a requirement to establish trust and to “grease the skids” for business. This difference in protocol might also exist between different industries and institutions.

5. **Assertiveness.** People from different cultures will have different distinctions about assertive behavior. Unlike many cultures, Americans perceive being assertive as a good management or strong leadership trait. However, unless properly trained, some individuals may have difficulty in distinguishing where assertiveness ends and

aggressive behavior begins. For example, when majority members try to be friendly, some minorities may see their behavior as aggressive, prying, or even being confrontational. In addition, some women who are unaware of cultural differences may view assertiveness as a violation of personal space, while others may see the same behavior as an attempt to make sexual advances.

NOTE: Have students give some examples.

6. **Honesty.** Americans believe that telling the truth is essential for real communications. “Honesty is the best policy,” “tell it like it is,” or “being up-front” is the message of straight talk. As you continue your Army career, truth and candor will be an integral part of your training and the Army ethic. However, you must understand that other cultures make different distinctions about how they define the truth or communicate real meaning. The need, or desire for honesty is not as valued as other traits such as courtesy, loyalty to family, sensitivity to a friend’s feeling, or the need to “save face.”

SHOW VIEWGRAPH #3-D-8

BARRIERS TO CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Songs, symbols, and gestures• Accents• Jive and jargon• Lack of trust

NOTE: Have the students give some examples of the above, and discuss how they may present some misunderstandings. If the class is diverse, have students share with the class some examples of their experiences.

7. **Barriers to Communication.** Communication in the Army is the method by which soldiers exchange and disseminate information. It is also the foundation for all professional and personal relationships regardless of circumstances. Therefore, a breakdown or barrier in communications can be very costly or even destructive for everyone involved. For the next few minutes we will examine some of the more common barriers of cross-cultural communications. Use the following points for discussion:

a. **Symbols.** Webster defines a symbol as “something that stands for or suggests something else by reason of relationship, association, convention, or accidental resemblance; a visible sign of something invisible (the lion is a symbol of courage).” Ethnic, racial, or cultural symbolism may take the form of actions, sounds, or objects which are not important in themselves, but which direct attention to something that is

considered important by the group. Most groups use symbols to show belonging and membership. Just as social organizations, religions, businesses, and political parties have their own sets of symbols, so do various ethnic, racial, and cultural groups.

QUESTION: How important are trademarks for businesses and consumers? Which trademarks have made a strong impression on you? Example: Nike check mark that has become a universal symbol since Tiger Woods endorsed Nike and won the Masters.

To understand group symbolism, you must be aware of the self-concepts which are involved within the groups. These concepts have often developed as a reaction to isolation from or rejection by the power establishment. They are expressed through a strong identity and solidarity and result in an increase in personal pride and public identity.

A cultural symbol is an item or way of behaving which carries a special meaning for an ethnic or racial group. It is important for you to know about cultural symbols and their importance to individuals and group identity. This knowledge helps to create and maintain effective human relations and enhances unit cohesion. Some examples of cultural symbols are clothing, flags, special handshakes, and inscriptions on hats and shirts. These symbols can help develop a healthy morale and esprit-de-corps among soldiers, but they must be understood to be effective.

NOTE: Ensure students recognize that signs and symbols can also be antagonizing toward other groups. Use the following for group discussion.

SHOW VIEWGRAPH #3-D-9

SIGNS AND GESTURES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Malcolm "X"• Confederate flag• Handshakes• Peace sign• Political caricatures• National flags• Clenched fist

b. **Signs and Gestures.** Certain physical gestures or "body language" may be used by different cultural groups to show pride or solidarity. The symbols used by some groups are often viewed by others as a lack of professionalism, display of resentment, or outward hostility rather than as gestures of unity and cultural expression. Some examples are:

- (1) Malcolm "X" (Black Power/Militancy/Separatism).

- (2) Confederate Flag (Southern Culture/Traditions/Slavery).
- (3) Handshakes (Fraternities, Clubs, Black Unity).
- (4) Peace Sign (National Movement/Passive/Weakness).
- (5) Political Caricatures (Elephant/Donkey/Left/Right).
- (6) National Flags (Ethnic Unity/Patriotism/Anti-American)
- (7) Clenched Fist (Black Power/Solidarity/Violence).

c. **Clothing and Appearance.** On special occasions, many ethnic groups express a pride in their self-concept by wearing clothing that symbolizes their heritage, ethnic or cultural group. Examples are:

- (1) Irish-Americans wear green on St., Patrick's Day.
- (2) German-Americans wear lederhosen (leather trousers) for German festivals.
- (3) Hip-Hop (baggy pants, tennis shoes, plaid shirt, baseball cap turned backwards).
- (4) African traditional clothing, head-dress or jewelry.

SHOW VIEWGRAPH #3-D-10

ACCENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Americans often react negatively when listening to people with strong foreign accents • Indifferent when someone is struggling with the English language • Can lead to other assumptions and biases

d. **Accents.** Unlike Europeans, some Americans often react negatively when listening to people with strong foreign accents. Some become frustrated and sometimes indifferent when someone is struggling with the English language. People who only speak English often act as though only others have accents. This kind of thinking can lead to other assumptions and biases about the education and intelligence of those holding the accent. A common mistake made by some individuals is to assume that people who speak English well are more intelligent, more competent, or even more

trustworthy. Judging another soldier based only on an accent can cause you to make a big mistake about a fellow soldier's true ability and character.

e. **Jive and Jargon.** People who are culturally different from each other may make judgments based on the kind of expressions that each uses. These expressions can be derived from a soldier's culture or regional background. Minority soldiers who use terms such as; "ain't," "y'all," "shownuff," "you know" or "wif" are marked as being poorly educated. Yet when it comes to using what is termed improper English, there appears to be a double standard. When some individuals use slang or improper English, it is assumed they are using it on purpose to emphasize a point or to communicate humor. When a minority uses the same slang, he or she may be perceived as not knowing any better. Use of certain terms by minority soldiers is called "jive," while terms used by majority soldiers are jargon. The problem and ultimate barrier to communication is that one is seen as illiterate while the other is thought to be colorful.

f. **Lack of Trust.** Many people believe that trust is an essential ingredient to any communication process. Some minorities, including women, because of past negative experiences, are suspicious and have a great deal of anxiety toward those who are culturally different and have the power to control and shape their destiny. Their past experiences can make minorities feel they must confront and demand respect and fair treatment. Their different perceptions about how they will be treated can detract from real issues because of their reaction to the process.

CLOSING: During this block of instructions you learned the importance of communication, both verbal and non-verbal. As an leader, effective communication cannot be over stated, what you say, and how well you say it, will be a major factor in assisting your commander in resolving complaints and conducting EO training within your unit. Summarize lesson objectives.

**PRACTICAL EXERCISE #3-D-1
COMMUNICATION PROCESS
INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE**

Objective:

1. To demonstrate that the directions given to others may be ambiguous and therefore need greater clarity.
2. To demonstrate the need to listen carefully and seek clarification of an unclear message.

Guidance:

1. Select five students and designate them as one of the following characters: SDNCO, OIC, Company Commander, Battalion Commander, and Brigade Commander. Have the SDNCO wait outside the classroom while the other four wait inside the classroom.

NOTE: You may want to do this exercise with more than one group.

2. Read the SDNCO the following scenario:

“There was an accident on Route Arizona in which five soldiers were involved. The Bradley Armored Fighting Vehicle over-turned on to a group of ten civilians. Two of the soldiers sustained serious injuries, two are in serious, but stable condition, and the other soldier sustained minor injuries. Of the ten civilians injured, six sustained serious injuries, and four were treated and released. The cause of the accident was not alcohol related, but was a result of a steering mechanism malfunction, and traveling too fast for existing conditions. Are there any questions?”

3. The OIC will then report to the SDNCO outside the classroom and the SDNCO recites the scenario to the OIC from memory. The SDNCO then returns to the classroom and instructs the Company Commander to report to the OIC outside the classroom.

NOTE: The SDNCO remains in the classroom.

4. The Company Commander will then report to the OIC outside the classroom and the OIC recites the scenario to the Company Commander from memory. The OIC then returns to the classroom and instructs the Battalion Commander to report to the Company Commander outside the classroom.

NOTE: The OIC remains in the classroom.

5. The Battalion Commander will then report to the Company Commander outside the classroom and the Company Commander recites the scenario to the Battalion Commander from memory. The Company Commander then returns to the classroom and instructs the Brigade Commander to report to the Battalion Commander.

NOTE: The Company Commander remains in the classroom.

6. The Brigade Commander will then report to the Battalion Commander outside the classroom and the Battalion Commander recites the scenario to the Brigade Commander from memory.

7. All participants return to the classroom and the Brigade Commander reports to the entire class the scenario from memory.

8. The instructor then reads then original scenario to the class

Discussion Questions:

1. They all heard the story, yet few could remember very much about it. Why?
2. Why didn't they listen? Is this typical?
3. If they were told initially that they could win some money for communicating the message correctly to all of the individuals would they have listened more attentively? Why?

NOTE: Relate the exercise to the lesson objectives.

Materials Required:

Scenario

Approximate Time Required:

15 minutes



COMMUNICATIONS

THE SUCCESSFUL EXCHANGE OF
INFORMATION BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS.



GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

- **PREPARE YOURSELF**
- **CHECK PARTNER**
- **BE POSITIVE**
- **USE “I” MESSAGES**
- **BE SPECIFIC**
- **ACTIVE LISTENER**
- **STAY FOCUSED**



FACTORS OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS

- **SELF-CONCEPT**
- **POOR SELF-CONCEPT**
- **COPING WITH ANGRY FEELINGS**
- **ADMIT YOUR EMOTIONS**
- **SELF-DISCLOSURE**



ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS

- SOURCE
- ENCODE
- MESSAGE
- DECODE
- DESTINATION
- FEEDBACK



STYLES OF COMMUNICATION

- **FRIENDLY, SOCIABLE OR PLAYFUL**
- **DIRECTIVE, PERSUASIVE, DEMANDING, EVALUATIVE, BLAMING, OR PRAISING**
- **SPECULATIVE, TENTATIVE, UNCERTAIN, SEARCHING, REFLECTING, EXPLORING OR INTELLECTUAL**
- **DISCLOSING, REVEALING, EXPLICIT, RESPONSIVE, ACCEPTING, AND AWARE**



COMMUNICATION BARRIERS

- **LANGUAGE BARRIERS**
- **DIFFERENT COMMUNICATION STYLES**
- **PHYSICAL BARRIERS**
- **PERCEPTUAL BARRIERS**
- **NOISE**



CROSS-CULTURAL MISUNDERSTANDINGS

- **SOCIAL COURTESIES**
- **FLOW OF INFORMATION**
- **ASSERTIVENESS**
- **CULTURE**
- **HONESTY**



BARRIERS TO CROSS-CULTURAL MISUNDERSTANDINGS

- **SONGS, SYMBOLS, AND GESTURES**
- **ACCENTS**
- **JIVE AND JARGON**
- **LACK OF TRUST**



SIGNS AND GESTURES

- MALCOLM "X"
- CONFEDERATE FLAG
- HANDSHAKES
- PEACE SIGN
- POLITICAL CARICATURES
- NATIONAL FLAGS
- CLENCHED FIST



ACCENTS

- **AMERICANS OFTEN REACT NEGATIVELY WHEN LISTENING TO PEOPLE WITH STRONG FOREIGN ACCENTS**
- **INDIFFERENT WHEN SOMEONE IS STRUGGLING WITH THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE**
- **CAN LEAD TO OTHER ASSUMPTIONS AND BIASES**