

Handout 6: Cross-cultural Dialogues*

Communication Styles: Direct vs indirect communicators, 45 min.

- (1) Get together into small groups, read the dialogues and reflect on cultural assumptions of each side concerning the situation. Share the insights inside your group.
- (2) What direct and indirect communicators might think of each other as personalities (use adjectives to describe them)? Fill in the table, p.18 in Worksheets.

The Flu

SARAH: I was hoping we could have that meeting of the sales team tomorrow morning.

FELICE: Actually, my daughter has some kind of flu and I was going to take her to the doctor tomorrow morning.

SARAH: I see. Well, let me check with Bob and see if he can sit in for you. Shouldn't be any45 problem. I'll let you know.

FELICE: Thank you.

SARAH: Don't mention it.

A Nuisance

BILL: How did it go with Nigel?

MARY: Much better than I expected. These English are hard to figure.

BILL: What happened? Did you explain everything to him?

MARY: Yes, completely. I said we were very sorry but we simply weren't going to be able to meet the deadline.

BILL: And?

MARY: He said, "That's a bit of a nuisance," and changed the subject.

BILL: That's great!

A Good Price

MS. YOUNG: We will charge you \$5 per unit if you order 10,000 units.

MR. KAWABATA: That's a good price, Ms. Young.

MS. YOUNG: So you accept that price?

MR. KAWABATA: It's very good.

MS. YOUNG: Great! Let's talk about the delivery schedule then.

Thumbs Down

JENNY: How did the meeting go last night?

TOMOKO: It was a very useful discussion.

JENNY: How so?

TOMOKO: We all talked. And Mr. Takeda explained his reservations about the proposal.

JENNY: Did anyone else agree with him?

TOMOKO: No. He was the only one who has some doubts.

JENNY: Then we won the vote.

TOMOKO: Oh, there was no vote of course. We postponed it.

Making a Recommendation

- MS. REYNOLDS: Have you had a chance to look at our suggestions for repairing a dam?
- MR. ZHANG: Yes. We've read them all with great interest.
- MS. REYNOLDS: So which one have you chosen?
- MR. ZHANG: My colleagues and I like #5 the best. The others are very good too, but only #5 will do what we want.
- MS. REYNOLDS: So when can we start hiring contractors?
- MR. ZHANG: We must first get the approval of our superior, Mr. Hu.
- MS. REYNOLDS: I see. So you will recommend #5 to him?
- MR. ZHANG: We will explain the situation to him and ask if he has any advice.
- MS. REYNOLDS: Does he have any background in this area?
- MR. ZHANG: Oh no. My colleagues and I are the technical experts.
- MS. REYNOLDS: Then Mr. Hu will accept your recommendation.
- MR. ZHANG: Oh, we won't be making a recommendation.

Dinner on Wednesday

- MR. SOGO: Mr. Collins! Good to hear your voice again! What brings you to Osaka?
- MR. COLLINS: Good to hear you too, Sogo-san. I am here on business with my new company. I'd like to invite you and Ozawa-san to dinner on Wednesday.
- MR. SOGO: Thank you very much. I'll tell Ozawa-san. Did you hear his good news?
- MR. COLLINS: No.
- MR. SOGO: He's been made president of the company.
- MR. COLLINS: That's wonderful. Please give him my congratulations. I look forward to seeing you both on Wednesday.
- MR. SOGO: I'm sure Ozawa-san will be very pleased to see you again. Where shall I tell him to meet you?

* **Storti, Craig (2017):** *Cross-Cultural Dialogues. 74 brief encounters with cultural differences.* Intercultural Press.