

BA BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
Module: INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

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Executive summary

This report depicts the cultural barriers and communication mediums which are essential for the company to use. In the context of British business communication, Boots needs to maintain all the communicative mediums for future betterment as well. The report also explains the importance or benefits of intercultural communication in an organisation that can help them to thrive and gain success in the foreign market. These benefits explain how the selected organisation can use theories and models' principles in their business to improve organisation culture and behaviour.

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Introduction

Business communication is the key for any organisation to deliver vital insights and information to all the employees or those outside the company as well. As mentioned by Mayfield *et al.* (2020), with the help of business communication any organisation might build a solid foundation of the network which can be used for better sharing of knowledge and business insights. It is essential to understand that the overall mechanism of communication is from the internal to the external terminology. By doing so the companies might be able to convey strong and clear messages to the employee which might be able to help them to achieve both short and long-term goals as well. This report will focus on a short description of the selected company, Boots and also apply relevant theories of international communication. Apart from that the report will shed light on cultural sensitivity, and communication barriers and it will be concluded with suitable communication strategies.

An inclusive introduction to the context of British business communications

British business communication refers to the communication process of the British people among themselves. As mentioned by Rustamov and Mamaziyayev (2022), in terms of culture, British people like to be politer and indirect in their communication style. In the business context, the company managers are subtler in their approach and be essentiality triggered with precision in the work as well. By doing so the workplace culture is more sophisticated as well.

A brief introduction to the selected organisation of your choice

The organisation chosen to conduct this report is Boots which is a retailing company which is based in the UK. The company was established in the year 1849 and its headquarters is situated at Nottingham, UK (Gov. uk, 2023). Additionally, it was founded by John Booth by opening its first herbalist store that sells several different alternatives for traditional medicines (Boots, 2023). Moreover, the company is popular as British pharmacy healthcare offers products such as medicines and others. It also has a beauty chain that sells fragrance products for both men as well as women. They are 7th in the rank of beauty companies in the UK that have a manpower of total 52,000 employees working for them. Boots have around 4500 registered pharmacists that work for them. Furthermore, they have opened more than 2200 stores in the UK and other countries. Around 85% of the total population of the UK is drawn towards the company to buy their products (Boots, 2023). As per the annual reports of the company, It has been seen that they have experienced an increase of 16% in their sales as compared to the last year. An annual sale of \$10 billion was estimated by the company in the year 2020 (Statista, 2023).

Application of theories of international and intercultural communication in the selected context, in this case, the UK

According to Sharma *et al.* (2020), an International business can lead to failure as there are many consequences of cultural differences which make it difficult for an organisation to thrive in the foreign market. Intercultural communication describes communication among different cultures and states their process and issues that are based due to the different cultural backgrounds. Several theories and models can be used by organisations engaging in intercultural communication to gain a competitive advantage in the international market.

Hofstede's Cultural dimension theory is defined as a framework that describes the importance of cross-cultural communication in an organisation (Gerlach and Eriksson, 2021). It can be studied to understand the different cultural traits of a country that can allow an organisation to incorporate a better work culture in the workplace. The Power Distance Index of the UK is recorded to be 35 which means that the society and communities of the country believe that it is important to minimize inequality and promote diversity in all places (hofstede-insights, 2023). For instance, this belief among the employees of Boots can help the managers to promote diversity and equality in their workplace and also allow the employees to accept people from different backgrounds, castes, and others. They can effectively communicate and understand other people's opinions which can have a positive impact on the company. According to a report, it has been seen that the Individual Index of the country is 89 which shows that there is a individualistic society (hofstede-insights, 2023). This means that people look for ways in which they can fulfil their own goals rather than thinking of other people's needs. Therefore, in this context, the employees of Boots will only be working to satisfy their needs and achieve their personal goals. They will not think about the other employees and their betterment which cannot strengthen the culture of the company.

It can be said that the country is represented mostly by the success-oriented people living in the country. There is a greater number of masculinity dimensions in the country which can build a competitive culture in the company's workplace. Due to this, there can be conflicts and misunderstandings among employees who are from different backgrounds and cultures. The uncertainty avoidance index of the country has a score of 35 which means that the employee working in an organization feel happy and comfortable in the workplace and they can face difficult situations effectively and without any hassle (hofstede-insights, 2023). Due to the difference in the culture, the employee can also feel discomfort in working with people from another background which can lead to potential conflict in the workplace. Furthermore, the

Intelligent Factor of UK people is estimated to have a score of 69. This means that most of the skilled employees in the workplace of Boots may have impulsive behaviour which can affect their organisational culture. Since, the employee can act impulsively in difficult situations, due to miscommunication, it can create conflict among employees with different cultures.

Samovar and Richard Potter suggested a theory that states that intercultural communication includes interaction among people who have distinct cultural perceptions that can alter the communication event (Bili, 2020). In this context, it means that the employee working in Boots may have different perceptions about culture and symbol systems which can further change the communication dimensions. It also states that there is diverse multi-culture in an organisation which can have an impact on their workplace condition and causes several philosophical issues. According to a report, it has been seen that there is low-context culture in this country which can alter the form of communication among the employees of Boots and make them verbalised. The employees will not be able to share their ideas and opinions and will face many challenges as they come from different cultures, castes, and backgrounds. The way of communication in the UK is different as the country has different cultures. This can affect the behaviours of the employees in the workplace and create misunderstandings among them. Thus, it can be said that Boots should build an organisational culture by promoting diversity and equality and encouraging communication among the employees.

According to the **Jandt theory**, an organisation can use its principles to understand the concept and importance of intercultural communication. This theory describes elements of intercultural communication such as the style of communication, use of language expressions, values and beliefs, behavioural norms, and others. These elements are shared by people from generation to generation which can be referred to as culture (Telep *et al.*, 2021). This type of communication can be defined as the process of interaction among people having different cultures. Using this type of communication can create a big problem known as ethnocentrism. It means that people consider their culture superior as compared to the others which can create conflict among them. For instance, Boots's employees can feel superior to their colleagues which can be difficult for everyone to transfer their opinions to others.

Critical evaluation of cultural sensitivity when doing business in the UK supported by relevant examples, and considering aspects such as diversity of backgrounds within the workforce.

Cultural sensitivity has been one of the key factors for the better evaluation of the business situation which can be either degraded or enhanced through changes. As mentioned by Krys *et al.* (2020), with the help of cultural sensitivity any of the company might focus on both challenges and advantages which can be used. It is undeniable that the company need to focus on the brighter side and also eradicate some of the key issues as well. For that cultural awareness is the key for Boots and by doing that the company might be able to identify any of the sensitive areas of the UK culture and getting ahead in the market might not be an issue. According to Gustomo *et al.* (2019), understanding all the cultural diversions and findings of rational similarities might help the employees of any organisation to communicate more effectively and convey strong messages for the betterment of the company. For Boots, it is essential that the company embeds all these cultural doctrines into the workplace and gets a positive impact from a better culture. This change might be able to change the entire productive nature of employees and by doing so they can contribute to the success of Boots.

For example, Boots has launched their Racial Equity Charter for better development of the company and its employees with better inclusion of different cultures in the UK (Boots, 2021). With the help of this policy, any of the employees might be able to thrive in their personal and professional arena with training in the market. Growing an equitable, inclusive and diverse workplace is the main agenda of the company and only by implementation of suitable policies the organisation might be able to conduct it successfully. On the other hand, cultural sensitivity and ethical awareness also prevent anyone from being biased as well. Biasness refers to the disproportionate tendency to disapprove or approve of an individual on the base of their caste, religion or skin colour. According to Nordell (2021), the biases regarding the cultural dilemma have been one of the appalling doctrines for the companies to go forward as well. It cannot be denied that the company need to be careful regarding the overall cultural sensitivity which can be used for the conduction of better workplace culture.

On the other hand, a lack of cultural sensitivity might restrain any of the employees from communicating effectively with other subordinates of theirs. As mentioned by Rafay and Ozbutun (2023), working in different countries or sharing workspace with different cultures lacking sensitivity can lead to offensive comments from other subordinates and also customers as well. Facilitating cultural diversity has been one of the major parts of Boots and by doing so

they are opting for a better workplace so that the employees might work collaboratively and contribute more to the success equation of the organisation. Boots has cultivated the structural pay gap with “£1 of women for every £1 of men” which has lowered the gap from 2.7% to 0% (Jankovic, 2023). By doing so the company might have the upper hand in the market of the UK. Focusing on the cultural relevance of the company and boosting workplace integrity is the key to the betterment of the organisation and by doing so Boots might focus on the future attributes as well.

Discuss and analyse different communication barriers experienced by a diverse workforce in the UK context supported by different examples when relevant

Communication barriers are crucial for the companies to identify and eradicate if possible and by doing so the company might thrive in the right direction as well. As suggested by Lindsay *et al.* (2021), with the help of communication, conveying some of vital information can be easy and eradicating some founded barriers is crucial for the companies as well. There are three major aspects of the communication barriers which are language, culture and geography. Language has been one of the primary communication tools which is the key for the betterment of the employees. As mentioned by Rao (2019), with the language and precise use of that in the workplace for better communication, employees might feel connected through a common thread as well. However, Boots have been facing some language issues which are critical for the company in the long term. Because of the language barriers any of the employees might not be able to thrive in the right direction with their concerns, ideas and insights as well. That is the reason why the company need to be very careful regarding the overall language barrier and help any of the employees to communicate precisely. Lack of transparency in the language is a vital aspect for the company to eradicate and thrive in the market.

Apart from that, the cultural barriers in terms of communication can be very much essential for the company to learn and eradicate. Understanding all the cultural diversions and findings of rational similarities might help the employees of any organisation to communicate more effectively and convey strong messages for the betterment of the company. According to Israilidis *et al.* (2021), failure in knowledge sharing can be affected by the overall dichotomy of cultural biases as well. Lastly, the biases of the geographical barriers are significant for the company as well. The geographical barriers might be able to influence the communication transparency and speed in which the information can be moved digitally as well. It is more of a physical barrier rather than a personal barrier which can put the communicator off guard as

well. Slow internet connections and poor reception in any long-distance communication are the key issues that the company has to address as well.

Provide appropriate communication strategies and other relevant recommendations to enable the organisation to succeed in providing a positive environment for everyone to succeed

Here are some of the communication strategies as well as other recommendations for the betterment of Boots.

Focusing on both formal and informal communication

Boots need to be more clarified in their approach for the betterment of communication in the workplace. By doing so both formal and informal communications are there for the taking and the company needs to enhance the method intensity as well. Formal communication through precise etiquette and mediums might allow employees to respect each other's privacy and by doing so accept various cultures as well (Colomina *et al.*, 2021). On the other hand, with informal communication methods, the company might solidify the overall trends of workplace cultures and interact in a more natural manner as well. By doing so Boots might be able to increase the knowledge-sharing ability of employees and thus getting ahead in the market can be easy. With the help of robust communication in the workplace productivity can be boosted as well for a longer period of time.

Growth opportunities for employees

For any future endeavours Boots needs to encourage its employees and thus get ahead in the market for a longer period of time as well. Boots might have to focus on the growth opportunities provided for the employees which is essential for the betterment of the employees in the growth mentality as well. With the help of cultural sensitivity, the company might focus on both challenges and advantages which can be used (ElAlfy *et al.*, 2020). By doing that the company need to focus on the brighter side and also eradicate some of the key issues as well. By eradicating cultural barriers, the company might have a pathway to better development for the employees.

Conclusion

Thus it can be concluded that Boots has been thriving in the market for the betterment of cultural segmentation. Boots have around 4500 registered pharmacists that work for them. Furthermore, they have opened more than 2200 stores in the UK and other countries. Around

85% of the total population of the UK is drawn towards the company to buy their products. With the help of Hofstede, Samovar and Jandt theories all the aspects of the culture in the company have been evaluated. By doing so the company might have the upper hand in the market of the UK.

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