Chapter 2
Communication, Culture, and Work

Chapter Outline
- Cultural Diversity and Communication
- Organizational Culture and Communication

The Nature of Culture

Culture – A learned set of shared interpretations about beliefs, values, and norms, which affect the behaviors of a relatively large group of people.

The Nature of Culture
- Learned, not innate
- Shapes our view of the world
- Determines how we interact
- Formed of many dimensions
- Is usually invisible to its inhabitants
Fundamental Dimensions of Cultural Diversity

- High-versus Low-Context
- Individualism versus Collectivism
- Power Distance
- Uncertainty Avoidance
- Task versus Social Orientation
- Short-Term versus Long-Term Orientation

Cultural Differences in Doing Business

- Differences in Custom and Behavior
  - Formality
  - Social Customs
  - Styles of Dress
  - Time
    - Monochronic
    - Polychronic
  - Conflict Styles
  - Gender Roles

Diversity and Ethical Issues

- Caux Round Table Principles for Business
- A variety of responses includes:
  - Avoiding
  - Accommodating
  - Forcing
  - Educating-Persuading
  - Negotiating-Compromising
  - Collaboration-Problem Solving
Communicating Across Diversity

- Become culturally literate
- View diversity as an opportunity
- Avoid ethnocentrism
  - The inclination to see all events from the perspective of one's own culture as superior and other cultures as inferior.
- Don't condescend
- Create dialogue

Organizational Culture and Communication

Organizational culture is a relatively stable, shared set of rules about how to behave and a set of values about what is important.

Dimensions of Organizational Culture

- Sociability
- Job autonomy
- Achievement
- Risk tolerance
- Conflict tolerance
- Power distribution
- Degree of structure
- Growth opportunities
- Change tolerance
- Emotional support
Creating and Maintaining Organizational Cultures

- Set tone early
- Reflect company culture
- Reinforced by daily activities
- Positive traditions: pranks, rewards
- Negative traditions: complaints, coercion

Organizational Culture and Career Planning

- Study the physical setting
- Read what the company says about itself
- Test how the company greets strangers
- Interview company people
- Learn how people spend their time