

Big companies start as small companies, and as your company evolves, the demands on your employees change. As you grow from a startup focused on your founders' vision into a small enterprise that is shaping its own market, and ultimately into a larger company breaking into new markets, you need all the value your employees offer.

Open communication is important for getting all of an employee's best contributions, but getting that communication to happen is a challenge. Many Asian cultures have factors that negatively affect communication that are embedded in society, while other challenges are just human nature throughout the world. If you can overcome the common obstacles to communication, you can create more business value and pull ahead of your competitors. **A culture of communication can help you find new revenue opportunities; improve relationships with, and referrals from, existing customers; reduce talent costs by building a stronger employment brand; and, improve your team's skills through knowledge sharing and informal development.**

This seminar is primarily designed for in-house use by groups of up to 40 people, which may represent the entire workforce of a startup or small enterprise, or just one office in a large MNC. The 3-4 hour session – conducted with all the members of your team and not just your leadership – addresses the business value you can get from open communication, examines why it does not happen naturally, and explores business practices to create an environment where communication becomes a normal part of the culture. Rather than simply telling people “communication is good” or spending time in team-building exercises whose lessons may not translate into the real business world, this session focuses on your needs and the structural changes that will help an important cultural transformation to happen.

The three topics below form a basis for the session. While we will solicit ideas from everyone on how each of these main points relates to your company, we will at a minimum talk about:

### Examining the Need for Communication

*How can open communication be a value-adding element of a company's culture?*

- Small company size means everyone needs to stay informed to support each other
- Pace of technology and market change makes it hard to keep up on your own
- Customers' unique requirements need to be addressed quickly
- Future growth requires a synergistic team to look for opportunities

### Common Barriers to Communication

*Why is it so hard to get people to communicate openly in different Asian cultures?*

- Social culture
- Educational experiences
- Fear of failure

### Creating a Culture of Open Communication

*What business processes can help overcome the socio-cultural challenges to communication?*

- Recruiting: looking for candidates who fit into an open communication culture
- Onboarding: setting expectations early for new employees
- KPIs and performance reviews: making communication part of the job requirement
- Development opportunities: classes and coaching to improve communication skills

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