

MASTER'S THESIS

Communications rivalry: a case study on communication issues between HK Chinese and American co-workers

Tam, Oi Yin

Date of Award:
2005

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**Communications Rivalry:
A Case Study on Communication Issues between
HK Chinese and American co-workers**

Tam Oi Yin

A Dissertation

Submitted

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Arts in Communication

Supervisor: Dr Chen Ling

School of Communication

Hong Kong Baptist University

Hong Kong

August 2005

Abstract

Objective of this dissertation is to identify the intercultural communication problems between the American and Chinese co-workers of an American Company with regional office located in Hong Kong. This regional office would be called as HK-American Company Ltd throughout the entire dissertation.

There will be two parts of research involve in this dissertation. The first part is the questionnaire survey which will look into the communication problems at interpersonal level. Instead of language proficiency, which is the most common problem people can think of when discussing communication problems between two or more ethnic groups, it is found that communication style and attitudes being the most problematic to the Chinese and American co-workers respectively. In the second part of the research, we will look into details on how culture shape and affect the communication patterns at the structural level of HK-American Company Ltd. It is found that management structure, operations style, management style, power struggle, peer group structure and business rationale are the factors being influenced by intercultural difference, and the changes to these corporate structure in turn affect the communication patterns within employees, between business teams and also between other companies such as vendors and suppliers.

The result also reveals that HK-American Company Ltd has adopted the ~~corporate culture of open and direct discussions~~ from the mother company in the States which shows quite a bit of contradiction to the in-group and hierarchical culture of the Chinese.

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