

# **Diversity Management and intercultural communication**

## **Module 3**

# Introduction to Module 3

In our globalized world, diversity is a matter of fact and its good management can constitute a competitive advantage for enterprises, providing the necessary creativity and innovation to deal with ever changing markets and conditions.

In the following pages, the concept of “diversity” will be introduced and its advantages for the business will be listed. Then, particular attention will be devoted to intercultural communication and other useful strategies.

Each activity included in the module follows the 4 steps: action step to awaken or draw attention to the topic to be discussed, reflection and sharing, completed and enriched with theory and closed with a conclusion (it does not have to be a fixed or closed conclusion, it will depend on the group and the facilitator, but it should try to encourage and promote group action towards inclusion, appreciation and respect for diversity).

**Time allocated:** 6-7 hours

## **General learning objectives:**

Raise awareness of the characteristics and integration challenges that migrant women face;

Development of practical tools for addressing diversity issues within the workplace;

Raise awareness about prejudices and stereotypes in relation to migrant women which are often seen as victims, low educated, threats for the economy of the host society;

Increase the capacity of employers to apply innovative solutions in their daily work for supporting the integration of TCN women;

Master the theory and practice the basics of “Intercultural communication”;

Understand what Diversity is and how it applies.

# Unit 1. Diversity basics and the advantages for enterprises

## ACTIVITY 1. TEAM BUILDING: THE BASICS ON DIVERSITY.

### 1. Intended learning outcomes:

- Know the basic concepts of cultural diversity management and the nuances that differentiate them.
- Encourage self-motivation and group commitment by realising that differences are natural to all human groups.

### 2. Time : 60 min

### 3. Materials needed : Small pieces of paper, pens, box or small bag to contain the papers.

### 4. Step by step implementation :

#### STEP 1. Action

1. Participants are given small pieces of paper (2 per person) and they are asked to write on one what they think have in common with most of the people from the group (ex. I like to travel) and on the other something that makes them unique in the group (ex. I have a tattoo). After they finish, they have to give the papers to the trainer.
2. Then the group is invited to make a circle. For each sentence, they are asked to make a step forward if they find themselves in the mentioned sentence or, if not, they stay in the same position. No comments are required, just to look around. After a few seconds they come back to the line and a new sentence is called out. The trainer can add sentences (e.g., I visited more than 10 countries, I love dogs, I speak more than 4 languages, I believe in fate...).

#### STEP 2. Reflection

Eventually, discussion is open: what are your observations and impressions from the activity? What surprised you? How can we become aware of differences and similarities among ourselves in everyday life? How do you feel about the group now?

#### STEP 3. Knowledge acquisition

Now the facilitator conducts a slightly different brainstorming activity.

First, the facilitator hands out pieces of paper with a blank column, only headed by one concept, for example "diversity". One of the pieces of paper is given to each person, so that each person has a piece of paper with a different concept. It would look like this:



The concepts:

- Otherness/alterity
- Diversity
- Discrimination
- Difference
- Ethnocentrism
- Culture
- Cultural relativism
- Multiculturalism
- Intersectionality

If the group is larger than the number of words, the group is split in two and concepts are repeated.

When the papers have been distributed, it is explained that the trainees will have to write on the paper everything that comes to mind in 30 seconds regarding that concept (as an

individual brainstorming). Once 30 seconds have elapsed, the paper is passed to the person on the right and the count to zero starts again. There are rounds of 30 seconds until everyone has written something on each of the pieces of paper.

At the end of the round, each participant who is left with a piece of paper at the end reads aloud and the facilitator facilitates the sharing of all these concepts writing the main ideas on the blackboard/whiteboard. In addition, if any of the concepts are unfamiliar, the facilitator completes the meaning. A presentation can be used to explain concretely what each of them means, which of them are similar and what their differences are.

The contents that could be included and adapted for this presentation can be found in the Annex I. The facilitator can read and explain them or include the contents as a PowerPoint/Prezi presentation.

#### **STEP 4. Closure**

Discussion can be promoted through questions such as: Which types of diversity exist? Do you think that we could live without diversity? Which advantages can diversity bring to a company? (\*Visualize the brainstorming, for example on a blackboard)

The end result that the facilitator should achieve in this first session of the module is that all participants understand and manage common concepts. The common lesson should be that in human groups such as the one they are now involved as trainees, there are differences and that the value of inclusion and diversity can only come from the proactivity and commitment of all participants in the group.

#### **5. Links to objective**

#### **6. Activity source :**

[https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/toolbox\\_tool\\_download-file-1947/Final\\_Toolkit\\_compressed.pdf](https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/toolbox_tool_download-file-1947/Final_Toolkit_compressed.pdf)

### **ACTIVITY 2. DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE ORGANISATIONS - WHY PROMOTE THEM?**

#### **1. Intended learning outcomes**

- Understand the benefits of promoting diversity in organisations.
- Be able to implement and adapt the appropriate strategies and tools to promote diversity in the organisation.

#### **2. Time : 90 minutes**

3. **Materials needed** : Sheets of paper and pens.

4. **Step by step implementation** :

### STEP 1. Action: The circle of trust

First, the facilitator introduces the intended outcomes of the activity and guide by giving the following instructions:

1. Choose 5 of your "go-to "people at work/friends/family/another group - think of them as your inner circle - the people you consider trustworthy and whose counsel you seek in making decisions.
2. Once this is done, create 9 columns on a piece of paper. In the first column write your five trusted names. Then add the other columns: Gender, Sexual Orientation, Race/Ethnicity, Age, Education Level, Nationality, Ableness, and Native Language.

| Names  | Gender | Sexual orientation | Race/ Ethnicity | Age | Education level | Nationality | Ableness | Native language |
|--------|--------|--------------------|-----------------|-----|-----------------|-------------|----------|-----------------|
| Alison | x      |                    | x               | x   |                 | x           | x        |                 |
| Mike   |        | x                  | x               |     | x               | x           | x        |                 |

3. Now place a tick [x] in the first column: gender. Place a tick for everyone that defines themselves as the same gender as you. Continue with the same for all of the columns: e.g "if you are heterosexual and the people you trust also are then you should have an [x] in that whole column".
4. When having done the whole exercise ask the participants to reflect on their circle - **no one has to share any details** - the focus here is on what their results made them think about.

### STEP 2. Reflection

Examples of reflection questions to share among the group are:

- If you are male, are most of your trusted male too?
- If you are female, are the majority of your trusted females?

- Do those you trust look similar to you in age or race or education level?
- Are the majority of your same nationality?
- How diverse is your circle of trust? -How might you diversify your inner circle of confidants?
- In regard to a business strategy, how might embracing diverse perspectives have an impact on: customer empathy? worldview of markets? potential customers? opportunities? possibilities....? What else?

Our closest advisors and those we rely on most for sound insight are often an unconscious mirror of ourselves. For example: If religion is a value in life, we may tend to trust other people of the same religion because we feel we have a set of common 'underlying' values that mirror each other. It can be the same for gender, age, etc. but if we move our circle of trust wider to include people that don't mirror ourselves the patterns might change to be more inclusive.

Unconscious biases, also known as implicit biases, are the underlying attitudes and stereotypes that people unconsciously attribute to another person or group of people that affect how they understand and engage with a person or group. Affinity bias, also known as similarity bias, is the tendency people have to connect with others who share similar interests, experiences and backgrounds.

### STEP 3. Knowledge acquisition

Now the facilitator should highlight that:

It is important to be aware that it is very difficult to change our behaviour and attitudes overnight because these have been brewing all our lives. Our brains cannot be suddenly programmed or reprogrammed at will, but awareness and understanding of how we operate can help us to show greater empathy and understanding for difference.

In the book "Success Through Diversity: Why the Most Inclusive Companies Will Win" Carol Fulp (p.22) highlights that when it comes to addressing bias in training with companies, sometimes it can do more harm than good. The brains of human beings have been programmed the way they work for thousands of years, so changing them after a few hours' session seems unlikely.

Therefore, rather than trying to change individual workers' minds, it is recommended to try to work on structural unconscious biases:

*Unconscious bias initiatives focus on changing the inner workings of the individual worker's mind, whereas structural bias assessments address the policies, practices, codified behaviors, and other physical manifestations of unfairness at a workplace itself—such as portraits only of white men.*

Fulp, Carol. *Success Through Diversity* (p. 22). Beacon Press. Kindle.

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But before analysing structural biases within the organisation/company the facilitator (the following information can also be presented in a PowerPoint format in a visual way) should emphasise that these biases occur and happen not always with a clear or deliberate intention. Most of the time they happen without us realising it and without malicious intent because:

1. **Our brain does not seek the truth, it seeks to survive.** It tries to survive the 11 million bits of information it receives per second, of which it is only capable of processing 40. Faced with such a quantity of millions of bits of information that it is not capable of processing, our brain provides us with mental shortcuts to be able to make decisions quickly and efficiently. These shortcuts are created on the basis of our shared experience. Marketing is well aware of this and plays on common shared ideas such as the association of food with traditional values and the association of technology products with modern, new and trendy. We are not so different, otherwise advertising would not work. In psychology (e.g. Keith Stanovich, Richard West or Daniel Kahneman) there has been referred to two systems of mind, system 1 and system 2.
  - **System 1** operates automatically and quickly, with little or no effort and no sense of voluntary control.
  - **System 2** allocates attention to the effortful mental activities that demand it, including complex computations. The operations of System 2 are often associated with the subjective experience of agency, choice, and concentration.<sup>1</sup>

The fast system is responsible for detecting hostility in a person's voice, and the slow system is the one that is concentrating on reading a book or listening attentively to the facilitator.
2. **We are not aware of how unconscious we are.** The ideas that are shaped in our unconscious, in that fast, automatic, instinctive system, are the ones that drive most of our decisions. The slow system is normally in a comfortable minimum effort mode.
3. **And finally, we see the world as we are.** Most of the time, both systems of the mind work together perfectly, and both are necessary for survival; but there are situations in which biases occur, errors that cause erroneous impressions and intuitions. For example, it has happened to all of us when we meet a person from the same town or city as us and we automatically feel a sense of familiarity that has a positive impact on our impression of him or her. These biases also occur in the field of work, in recruitment, in the affinity to some colleagues and not to others, etc.

Research shows that we tend to have the same opinion in a group as we do; and we feel freer to have an opinion in a group different from our own. By encouraging diverse teams we will generate more enriching ideas!

**Some tips for analysing the composition of the company:** to analyse the diversity of the company, you can create images in teams like the one below. You can select according to attributes and colour in one attribute and another. For example, first of all, gender composition: you draw in one colour the percentage of women and men. You can add

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<sup>1</sup>To learn more about the two-system theory please visit:

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/kahneman-excerpt-thinking-fast-and-slow/>

the responsibility factor: women in positions of responsibility versus men. Then, according to the country of origin or ethnicity of the persons; according to age, etc.



Then discuss whether you think the company is diverse and what could be done to increase diversity.

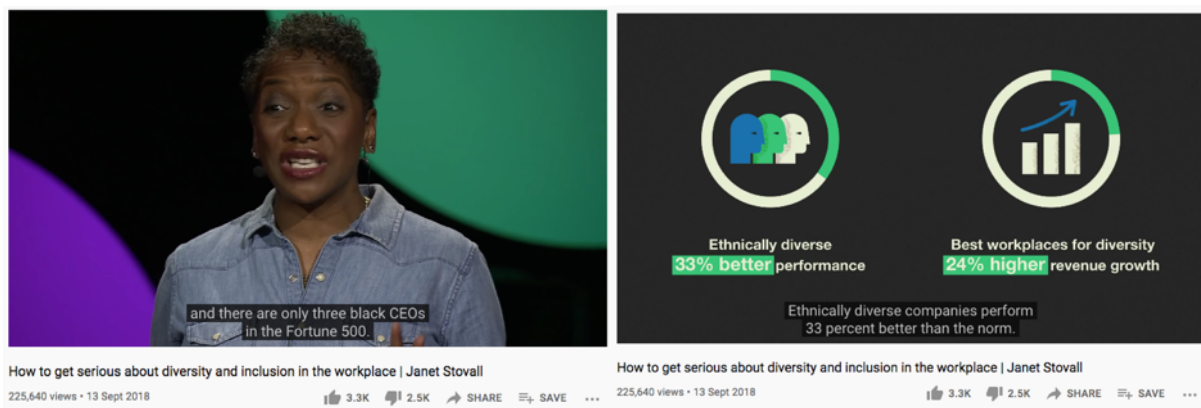
A roadmap can be drawn up based on measurable, concrete and achievable objectives. The objectives should be aimed at getting the team to answer the question: **How can biases be addressed?**

- **FIGHTING THE META-BIAS:** Our egomaniacal brain makes us think of our own view of the world as true. It is necessary to take off the blindfold, to be aware that we can fall into unconscious biases and to be alert to work on them.
- **ACTIVATE EMPATHY:** To talk about and work on diversity and life in general, we first need to activate empathy. Being aware that we all see the world in a different way.
- **TRAINING AT ALL LEVELS:** We must focus on training key managers and departments in the area of unconscious bias.
- **OBJECTIVITY:** Review processes in people management to detect the presence of systemic biases. For example, in selection processes using blind CVs. Sometimes, a good idea can be to integrate diverse people in the selection team to detect these biases and be aware of when they are being committed.
- **THE MORE OPINIONS, THE BETTER:** Favour decision-making by involving more decision-makers who contribute other points of view and giving more time to work with the most objective criteria possible. There is the curious figure of the "neutral observer". This figure can be introduced in decision-making processes (staff promotions, pay rises, selection of new staff, etc.). This person is not in

charge of making decisions in this process, but of observing what his or her colleagues say and noting down all the words with which they are describing other people and questioning them. Ultimately, he/she will be in charge of identifying the possible biases.

#### STEP 4. Closure. Why are diversity management policies necessary?

Identifying the biases of the organisation and what defines the company is the first step in promoting diversity. Before the group comes to a conclusion, the facilitator plays the following video of a TED talk:



How to get serious about diversity and inclusion in the workplace | Janet Stovall. Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kvdHqS3ryw0>

Now, to close this session on cognitive biases, the facilitator can promote a group discussion where the objective is to create ten points with benefits of achieving diversity for the company. A decalogue is proposed below in case the group's proposals need to be completed.

*Variant:* if the group is very large, it can be split into small working groups, each of which will draw up a decalogue on the benefits of promoting diversity in the company.

Only an integrated team of persons with different profiles can generate the innovation and creativity necessary for enterprises to endure in competitive and differentiated markets:

1. **Diverse profiles provide new points of view**, new options and solutions. In two words, they contribute to creativity and innovation.
2. Fresh ideas and perspectives are fundamental to **solve problems**.
3. A differentiated workforce can **foresee changing demands of consumers, providers and stakeholders** and can draw transformative processes and products in order to avoid obsolescence and to be updated and competitive.
4. Thanks to their diverse knowledge and **intercultural comprehension**, diverse employees can help in dealing with markets that are culturally and economically different. They can inform about the diverse situations and they can interact with providers from different regions.
5. Diversity management has a direct positive impact on **employees' satisfaction and wellbeing**, thus leading to a peaceful and safe environment that stimulates productivity and efficiency.
6. Employees have the opportunity to maximize their potential and enhance their self-development and their contribution to the organization.
7. In this way, corporate values and preferences coincide with the employees' ones, creating a **common culture and a positive environment**.
8. A good diversity management also enhances visibility and improves corporate image.
9. It is simply the "right thing to do", in order not to discriminate against anyone.
10. Eventually, it allows to reduce the possible costs that can derive from a bad diversity management, in particular:
  - a. the economic cost on the results: not managing diversity would lead to lack of skills, competencies, and interests in employees, which will ultimately increase employee turnover and reduce individuals' and organizations' performance to a great extent. Also, miscommunication and conflict invalidate productivity.
  - b. the cost of employees' moral loss.
  - c. the risk of trust loss by the actionists.
  - d. the risk of loyalty loss by clients and providers.
  - e. the general social cost towards the context agents.

## 5. Links to objective

### First link:

For the facilitator preparation: There are many reasons why employee diversity training can have the opposite effect to the desired one. But that should not stand in the way of these trainings taking place. The only thing that should be done is that the facilitator is well prepared and aware of his or her own unconscious biases in order not to transmit them.

Moreover, training should not be seen as a one-off event, but as a long-term plan of the company or organisation to promote diversity and inclusion within the company or organisation.

For further information: "Why ineffective diversity training won't go away". Article available:

[https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20210614-why-ineffective-diversity-training-wont-go-away?utm\\_medium=email&\\_hsmi=135826244&\\_hsenc=p2ANqtz-9-L1nWBrJeTGAA6Sp9FEvvUuntky3GAABuKaX3kphCqmsKmDIK-X0lvwenGYt-qRecL5GEUhF4fojT7VI9PSQvenlY3Q&utm\\_content=135702862&utm\\_source=hs\\_email](https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20210614-why-ineffective-diversity-training-wont-go-away?utm_medium=email&_hsmi=135826244&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-9-L1nWBrJeTGAA6Sp9FEvvUuntky3GAABuKaX3kphCqmsKmDIK-X0lvwenGYt-qRecL5GEUhF4fojT7VI9PSQvenlY3Q&utm_content=135702862&utm_source=hs_email)

**Second link:**

Video about the two systems of the mind: *Thinking, Fast and Slow* | Daniel Kahneman | Talks at Google <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CjVQJdlrDJ0>

### ACTIVITY 3. INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS AND EMPATHY

**1. Intended learning outcomes:**

- To become aware of tolerance as a means for interpersonal relations, meaning it as active and effective respect of the Other.
- To understand the importance of body language in intercultural communication and dealing with different cultures.
- To reflect on gender discrimination through lens of culture

**2. Time:** 60 min

**3. Materials needed:** laptop, internet connection, projector, speakers

**4. Step by step implementation:**

**STEP 1. Action**

First, the group's beliefs about displaying religious and cultural symbols through clothing or body adornment are discussed and shared. The debate is not straightforward and has been going on for years as to whether women freely decide to wear it or whether it is an imposition. No closed answers are given, they are allowed to flow, and their perceptions emerge.

An image can be projected with news screenshots from different newspapers where the headlines show different opinions or worldviews (in favour of regulating the hijab or not).

Now the trainer shows the short (8 minutes) film "Hiyab" by Xavi Sala (2005). The film is in Spanish, but it is available in English subtitles.

Link with English subtitles: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kE5h\\_FaYAjg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kE5h_FaYAjg)

After watching the movie, the participants are invited to discuss the following questions:

What is the film about? What does it mean Fatima? What is a hijab? (The facilitator can ask participants to search for information about Muslim veil, its types, its geographical area, its use etc.). Do you know about other similar facts that have happened in your country? What do you think about the use of hijab in public spaces, like the workplace?

Which is the problem that the film exposes? Imagine the same thing may happen in your company. The participants are divided into two subgroups, each representing a position - the boss/teacher and the Muslim women worker/student. Try to debate like in the film, holding your position.

At a point, the two subgroups will be inverted, so that participants can experience "empathy". Do you think that the protagonists were empathic in the film? Is it possible to be even if the other think differently from me? How could the protagonists communicate in order to solve the conflict?

## STEP 2. Reflection

Participants are invited to share their experiences and insights from the exercise/debate.

Furthermore, trainer invites to reflect on the following issues:

When Fatima enters the classroom, the whole class watches her and so does she:

What do they see of each other? What do you think they are thinking? Look at how the camera moves, what types of shots are presented, what variety of personal expressions do we encounter, and can we give a voice to each of the characters the camera passes through?

Can we give voice to each of the characters that the camera passes through? What is the background sound? What do you think the students perceive inside themselves?

What do we sense Fatima is thinking and feeling? You can ask participants to individually deduce their thoughts in writing and discuss them later in a large group.

What kind of music is played while they look at each other, and is it the same as at the beginning of the short film? In this case, what are the images like? Comment on them.

Why is the first impression we get of people so important? Does that first impression tell us the truth about a person, or are we mistaken?

We communicate with words and also with body language. What do you think is the most reliable source of knowledge we have? Sight, hearing, touch? What feelings can the gaze reflect? What range of gazes do we see in this short film? What types of shots predominate in this scene?

Optional: You can also ask participants to look for photos, pictures, images in which you can see different feelings of people in the way they look (joy, sadness, fear, compassion, affection, hatred, admiration...). Can you perceive them clearly?

Finally, you can end up the reflection with the following:

In previous lines we have analyzed what a hijab is and we have also reflected on the conflict generated by wearing this garment.

Why do you think that in our society Arab girls are not allowed to wear the hijab to school? What does the hijab represent for Western cultures such as ours?

Does gender discrimination exist in our culture, and in Arab cultures? Compare the situation of women in both cultures, using the internet, radio, television. List the different situations of sexist discrimination in both cultures.

Do you think that the hijab is a sign of discrimination against women in Islamic countries and that is why it is rejected in our culture? Or on the contrary, do you think that it is a feature of cultural identity or an individual decision of each woman?

Work first in small groups and then debate in two large groups with opposing positions.

### STEP 3. Knowledge acquisition

There are two basic pillars of any intercultural communication programme and these are self-reflection or self-awareness and empathy. The first has to do with becoming aware that we are part of larger cultural systems than ourselves as individuals and that, as integral parts of the society in which we live, we often reproduce learned patterns that can be discriminatory. Since societies tend to be diverse and this is a value that should be understood and promoted in order to have diverse and inclusive organisations, it is necessary for all members to take this first step. The second pillar is empathy.

(Now the facilitator asks the group if they know this concept and writes on the board related concepts that appear in relation to this concept).

The concept of empathy is then presented:

Empathy is: "Knowing how to put oneself in the other's place, possessing a feeling of affective participation in the reality that affects another person, knowing how to 'read' the other". This competence is key in the relationships between human beings, for their durability and development and also for the personal transcendence of the being.

The notion of empathy related to the concept of culture, i.e. "cultural empathy", refers to the ability to approach and understand a foreign culture. Understanding another culture often results in understanding one's own culture. Because it is not the language that often prevents understanding between people, but also their own conception of the world, a confrontational conception. Empathy implies respect for the culture that also implies trying to understand the history of the Other, trying to be flexible and open to listening to what is different from "our own" and being responsible for diversity and inclusion.

And that is why reflection and empathy go hand in hand. The first step in establishing intercultural dialogue is to start questioning things and not to assume anything for granted. Below we share some tips that people can use to improve their empathy and understanding towards the different:

1. **Pay attention to your words and actions.** It is only through your thoughtful communication with others that you become aware of your own thinking patterns, assumptions, perceptions, prejudices, and biases.

2. **Control your assumptions.** An assumption is a taking for granted or supposition that something is a fact. You can learn from generalizations about other cultures, but those generalizations turn sour when you use them to stereotype or oversimplify.
3. **Gain knowledge.** The greater your cultural and linguistic knowledge, the less likelihood for misunderstandings. You need to read, observe, ask questions, and visit places where there are people from different races and ethnic backgrounds.

As we know that breaking the ice and interaction is not always easy, let's look at some suggested questions that could be posed to colleagues. Keep in mind that these are suggested questions in the context of a training on intercultural competences and it should be understood that if taken out of context the person may not want to answer and it is their right to do so.

The facilitator now raises the questions and the group can discuss whether they think they are appropriate and if not, how they would improve them:

- ✓ How do you, or other members of your culture, cope with and adapt to unfamiliar culture?
- ✓ What factors can increase our effectiveness in communicating?
- ✓ If we had a conflict, what strategies would be successful for managing it?
- ✓ What important factors contribute to the development of interpersonal relationships with you or with members of your culture?
- ✓ What changes have you noticed in yourself as a consequence of your experiences in a new culture?
- ✓ How can I become more intercultural as a result of our contact and communication with members of your culture?
- ✓ Can we develop community with members of your culture?
- ✓ What are some of the worst offenses people outside your culture make in communicating with you or with members of your culture?

What do you feel are some of the worst offenses you have made as you have become acclimated into this culture?

#### STEP 4. Closure

In addition to verbal language, special attention must be paid to non-verbal or body language. Body language is the set of postures, gestures, signs, looks, positions through which people perceive or emit signals to others in order to communicate non-verbally with others. An example of this type of language is affirming or denying something with head movements; smiling as a sign of being happy; raising the eyebrows in admiration; moving the eyes in one way or another simulating that we are looking for something; shrugging our shoulders to say that we are not interested in something or that we don't care or don't know about it (Davis, 1998). Most of the information we receive and emit from people is through body language, and a very small part through words. The gaze reflects in a very deep way many things and is a very immediate way of contacting someone.

Body language is especially important in intercultural communication between people from diverse cultural backgrounds. There are many different areas to consider. In Japan, for instance, you should keep a much bigger distance to your counterpart. Specific areas of the body may be taboo in some cultures. In some countries, it is the left hand, in others

the feet or the head; in these countries, you should not even touch a child's head. Hand gestures are another potential source of trouble and can cause unintended offence.

The intensity of the gaze, the proportion of talking and silence, the differences between men and women, dress codes and many more are among the distinctions that can vary from culture to culture. Disregard and a lack of knowledge can easily lead to misunderstandings or failed business transactions.

**Intercultural awareness** can be regarded as the foundation of communication. It involves two qualities: one is the awareness of one's own culture; the other is the awareness of another culture. In other words, it involves the ability of standing back from our own point and becoming aware of not only our own cultural values, beliefs and perceptions, but also those of other cultures. Cultural awareness becomes essential when people communicate with people from other cultures. Because people see, interpret and evaluate things in different ways, what is considered as appropriate in one culture is likely to be inappropriate in another, and therefore, misunderstandings arise when people communicate. Misinterpretations occur primarily when we are not aware of our own behavioral rules and project them onto others. In absence of cultural awareness, we tend to misinterpret the verbal or the non-verbal behavior of the person with whom we interact.

However, the mere realization of cultural awareness is far from sufficient. Another key skill to develop a real understanding of the "other" is intercultural empathy.

Essentially, it consists of three dimensions:

- Cognitive empathy: the ability to put ourselves into the perspective of the other person and imagine how he or she perceives a particular situation
- Emotional empathy: the ability to imagine the feelings that the other is feeling in a particular situation while also being able to "feel" these emotions ourselves
- Behavioral empathy: the ability to act in a way that shows our understanding of the other person and give him or her the feeling that we care

## 5. Links to objective

## 6. Source of activity:

Buitrago, Ma J.; Carrera, Ma V. y Pereira, C. (2008). Hiyab y Proverbio chino. Una propuesta de intervención pedagógica para educar en la tolerancia y la diversidad. En Varios Autores. Cine, salud y nuevos entornos. Mira local, piensa global. Zaragoza. Dirección General de salud Pública. Artes Gráficas Lema, pp. 27-56. Extracted from: <http://consumoetico.webs.uvigo.es/textos/textos/hiyab.pdf>

# Unit 2. Intercultural communication and diversity management practices

Members or employees of a company need to develop intercultural competence as both in contact with clients and companies around the world and hiring workers who themselves are from different geographical regions. To avoid misunderstandings and breakdowns and to acquire and apply knowledge, it is important to be able to communicate efficiently with people from different backgrounds and cultures.

In the previous activity we have already briefly addressed the importance of intercultural awareness and empathy in intercultural communication. The following activities have been designed to put in practice certain models and concepts surrounding the intercultural communication to facilitate the understanding of value judgments and “weight” of culture.

## ACTIVITY 1. ICEBERG MODEL FOR CULTURE

### 1. Intended learning outcomes

- Understand and put the iceberg model into practice in the workplace.
- To become aware that many of the elements of other cultures or of one's own culture are not perceptible at first sight

### 2. Time: 40 minutes

### 3. Materials needed : Image of the iceberg on the board or projected. Photocopies of the iceberg (Annex 2). Markers

### 4. Step by step implementation :

#### STEP 1. Action

The participants are instructed to place the elements on the water or underwater in order according to whether they are visible or not, according to a list of elements (also in the annex).

Allow about 10 minutes for individual reflection.

Start a discussion in the group: What were the most difficult elements to place on the iceberg, and did you consider making some more visible than others, or some more submerged than others?

#### STEP 2. Reflection

Participants are asked to present their conclusions. The trainer writes down the different opinions that are formed on a flip chart or blackboard. opinions that are formed on a flip chart or flipchart.

### STEP 3. Knowledge acquisition

We can only observe 10% of the actual iceberg and the rest is hidden beneath the surface of the water. In the same way, when observing a culture, 90% of that culture is hidden from casual observation, and we can only see the basic characteristics of the culture. Furthermore, as the fate of the Titanic, the iceberg metaphor adds another dimension in illustrating what can happen when this is ignored.

The Iceberg Model breaks down all aspects of a culture into three categories, each one diving deeper into the cultural "iceberg." A combination of these three types of characteristics make up every culture around the world:

- 1) Surface Culture, which includes all the easily observable characteristics of a culture: language, art style, cooking, music, holidays, literature, sports, religion etc.
- 2) Unspoken Rules, that are hidden underneath the surface and, for this, take more time for an outsider to understand. These characteristics include: social and business etiquette, symbolism of objects, colors, and individuals.
- 3) Unconscious Rules. Because they're rooted so deeply within a culture, it's difficult even for those within a given culture to articulate or even notice these particular aspects, for example: verbal and non-verbal communication, sense of time, physical distances, gender, high context vs. low context, concept of death, thoughts of right or wrong, and good or bad...

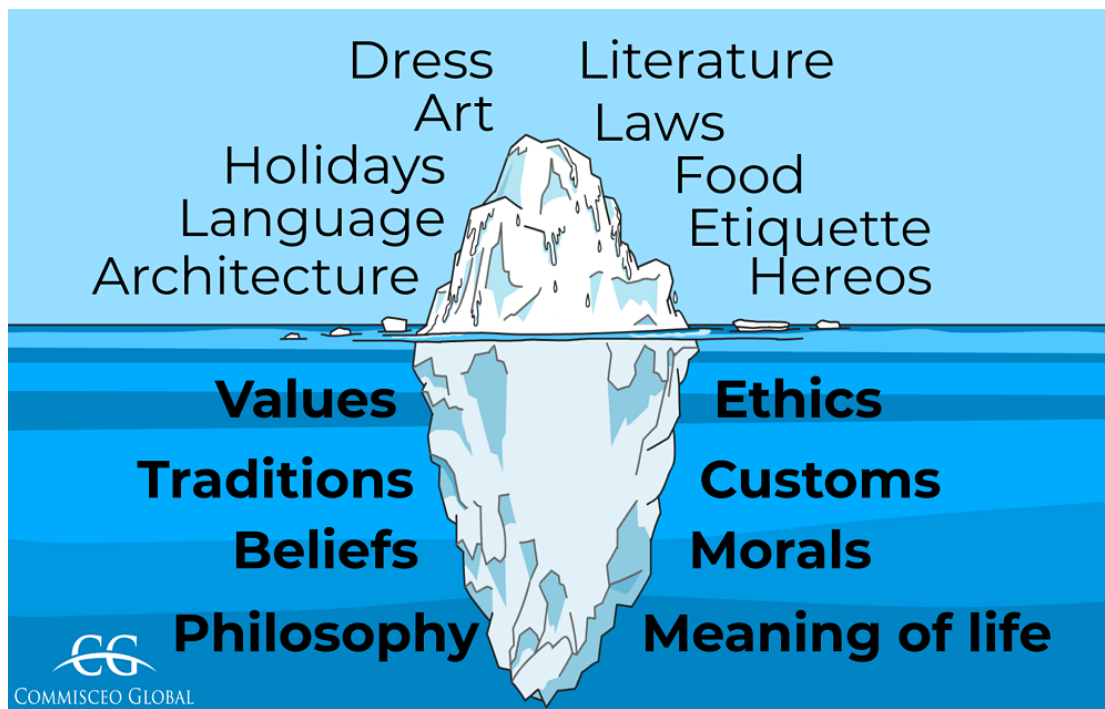
### STEP 4. Closure

Understanding why people behave in a certain way means learning about their values and beliefs. The behaviour of people from another culture may seem strange at first glance, but, as determined by this invisible part, it probably makes sense to them. To understand and learn the "inner culture" of the other we have to participate in it. Getting in contact and establishing dialogue with the other can help us to understand them without judgement. The reason for many misunderstandings is that when interpreting other people's behaviour we tend to apply our own frame of reference (our invisible part of the iceberg) which may be totally different from their frame. It is important to keep in mind that in order to understand the other person's behaviour it is important to know our own first.

Finally, brainstorming can be done to identify the very elements of one's own culture in this iceberg, especially those that lie beneath the surface and that others would find difficult to see or identify.

### 5. Links to objective

Image for the facilitator to understand the final result of the iceberg:



**Source of the activity :**

STORTI, C. (1998): *La cultura sí importa: Manual transcultural del cuerpo de paz*. Washington D.C.: Peace Corps ICE. Page.17.

## ACTIVITY 2. WHAT I SEE, WHAT I THINK, WHAT I FEEL

### 1. Intended learning outcomes

- Understand the concept of intercultural communication from the paradigm of complexity.
- Allowing participants to become familiar with the concept of description, interpretation and evaluation.
- Raising awareness of value judgements.
- Showing personal and cultural relativity of interpretations and evaluation.

### 2. Time : 60 minutes

### 3. Materials needed :

- Flipchart papers and markers or blackboard and chalk.
- "Description, Interpretation, Evaluation" participant handout
- Printed large pictures of "other-culture" scenes (one for each five participants)
- Two "ambiguous objects".

### 4. Step by step implementation :

#### STEP 1. Action

- 1° Select pictures of cultural scenes from cultures other than the culture of the participants. The best pictures are the most ambiguous ones, photographs which depict a form of interaction or a scene which is not familiar to participants. Captions to the pictures should be retained, since participants will be eager to know the "real" description after the exercise (See *Annex III* to access the proposed pictures and print them out. The facilitator may use these or others known to him/her.)
- 2° Then, select two "ambiguous objects" to use for the opening section of the exercise. Any object which is unknown to all participants can be used for this demonstration. Objects from unusual hobbies, objects from other cultures, or unusual hardware or kitchen utensils may be good choices. If the facilitator has nothing available, he/she can hand out pictures.
- 3° Ask participants to choose one of the ambiguous objects. Ask the group to tell you something about it. The phrasing of this question is very important, otherwise it skews the answers.

**Question to be asked: "Tell me something about this."**

Do not ask what they "see" or to describe it. Let the participants touch the object and keep it moving very quickly. Timing: 3 minutes.

- 4° Write the answers down on a board in three columns those statements that fit description, interpretation, and evaluation. Do not yet write these terms on the board; simply divide the responses into these three categories.
- 5° Explain the meaning of description, interpretation, and evaluation (what I see – what I think about what I see – what I feel about what I saw). Show how their statements are divided into the three columns.
- 6° Use now the second object and ask them to describe only what they see. Chart in the “description” column. Correct them if they make any interpretations or evaluations. Next, have them interpret, noting down their responses. Finally, ask them to evaluate it, both a positive and a negative evaluation for each interpretation. Spend about 10 minutes.
- 7° Now get trainees to work in smaller teams. Give each group a photograph and ask them to complete the form according to the three columns. Spend about ten minutes, but if they need more time, allow it.

## STEP 2. Reflection

It is very common that when we immerse ourselves in new cultures, talk to other people with different ethnic or cultural backgrounds, or simply start learning a new language (and take an interest in its culture), we come up against a strong barrier: the one of our mind, which is sometimes full of preconceived ideas, prejudices and even discriminates against part of reality in an unconscious way.

The facilitator can now ask some questions for discussion:

How do these columns relate to stereotypes?

Do you know the difference between stereotype and prejudice?

What is discrimination and do you think there is discrimination around you? What types of discrimination do you know about? Have you been in situations where someone has been discriminated against?

Have you been involved in discriminating against someone yourself?

How comfortable are you in dealing with these issues?

How do the ideas we have in our minds are revealed or translated in the form of the language we use? Do you think it is possible to learn inclusive communication skills?

## STEP 3. Knowledge acquisition

In this part the facilitator will explain the difference between stereotypes and prejudices and link it to discrimination. Then, we add the necessary content to work on it.

Stereotypes are cognitive mechanisms that our brains basically use to save time and order. They are formed as a result of our tendency to categorise ideas and order them so that they make sense. To simplify and visualise it, we could imagine that our brain is organised into different boxes or bins that match categories to store all the information we have received since even before we were born when we felt the first stimuli.

For example, if we are told to think of a grandfather, we will probably imagine physical features such as grey hair, wrinkles or a curved back. Usually when we are told to imagine a social, cultural or ethnic group a particular person or group comes to mind that may or may not adequately represent that group. That first image is the stereotype and as we say, it may or may not be shared by that group.

In reality, stereotypes are not good or bad per se! They are a process of our brain processing the huge amounts of information it receives and translating them into concrete words or concepts. The moment you add a judgement to the image your brain has created, you are interpreting. In other words, prejudice becomes stereotype.

If you presume that all people who are grandparents have that image then you are interpreting. There are young, healthy, strong grandparents who don't have to have grey hair or hold themselves with a club. THE PREJUDGEMENT you make can be positive or negative, the main idea is the value that is associated with it and that can distort the quality of the categories you have in your head, i.e. impoverish and oversimplify them. This often happens with people from other cultures.

**What if we go back and do the image exercise again? What value would you give them now that you know what they really mean - good, bad, neutral?**

#### **STEP 4. Closure**

Einstein's famous quote "it is easier to disintegrate an atom than a prejudice" is widely known. It is true that dismantling and deconstructing prejudices is very difficult, but it is not an impossible mission.

To begin with, it is necessary to know what discrimination is and to understand it as the highest degree of prejudice.

Discrimination has to do with:

Excluding people from recruitment processes, avoiding talking to team members in order not to hurt them, refusing to engage in new conversations, restricting others' freedoms or their rights because they belong to minorities, reproducing preconceived ideas verbally in groups of friends, keeping quiet in situations where others are being discriminated against or violated.

This is all related to language. In fact, intercultural dialogue can be a possible way to build new relationships and a diverse and healthy organisational culture.

#### **5. Sources of the activity :**

Based on an activity of the Intercultural Communication Institute:

<http://www.intercultural.org>

### **ACTIVITY 3. CROSS-CULTURAL SENSITIVITY**

**1. Intended learning outcomes:**

- Introduce the model of Cultural Sensitivity by Milton J. Bennet and The Cross Model of Intercultural Competence
- Understand the concept of cultural sensitivity
- Identify the knowledge and skills necessary to work effectively in a diverse workplace.

**2. Time:** 90 min**3. Materials needed :** Post its, printed annex IV and V.**4. Step by step implementation :****STEP 1. Action**

When we are dealing with diverse cultures it is essential for to reflect on our own cultural background. Only if we are aware of our own identity and the values and behaviours that are connected to our own cultural background we can understand what is irritating about other cultures in our view. (Connect to the activity on iceberg).

Self-reflection is a fundamental competence both in intra- and intercultural interactions, in order not to remain in an ethnocentric worldview. Every person feels that his or her own worldview is what is “normal”, “true” or “real”. Experiencing that there is no objective worldview, but that the way we see the world depends on the cultural background is a fundamental step in becoming more interculturally aware.

In a first step, we must therefore perceive our own world and our own experiences precisely in a self-reflexive process, make ourselves aware of and question the unconscious and the self-evident, and deal with our own values and backgrounds (as we did in the previous activities).

**What is intercultural sensitivity?**

Ask the participants to write down their definitions and share them with a group. Then, ask them to describe a person in your environment that you feel is highly sensitive to intercultural issues and describe another person you have met who acted insensitive to intercultural issues.

The truth<sup>2</sup> is that it can be difficult to see how biases affect us and it is almost impossible to be consciously aware of our unconscious reactions in the moment as we are interacting with other people. As individuals we hold many unconscious biases about other people. Since these are often hidden to us and also sometimes work against our own intentions and self-perception as fair, bias plays out in micro-behaviours that result

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<sup>2</sup> Source of the next part of the activity:

Kepinski, Lisa; Nielsen Tinna C. (2020) *Inclusion nudges. Guidebook. 100 How-To Behavioral Designs to De-bias and Make Inclusive Behavior, Culture, and Systems the Default and Norm*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Page 486

in a waste of human resources and inequality. The challenge is how to avoid that our biases negatively influence the way we perceive, judge, evaluate, listen, talk, and behave.

In the book referenced in the footnote, a "flip questions" activity is proposed. Clearly, our biases are not going to disappear just because we know a lot about biases theoretically. So, this is how we will start working:

As this activity is set out it can be done individually or in a team. If done individually, each participant can take the cards and silently reflect on the moment when they find themselves in a situation with other people.

An example of an individual reflection question would be:

*If the person in front of me had been of the opposite sex, would I have responded differently to what she/he had just done?*

The purpose of this part of the activity is to draw out a reflection question and then to notice the reaction (of biases, stereotypes or preconceptions) at the moment of the interaction.

We now recall what we learned in step 3 of activity 2. It is more useful in the deconstruction work done within the organisation to try to work against structural biases rather than individual biases.

So now we are going to look at a series of flip questions that might help us to deconstruct what we have assumed to be true, or valid in the organisation where we work. Some of the questions add a bit of fun and playfulness to the seriousness of the subject matter that proves effective in reminding us how absurd situations can make us more aware of situations of preconceptions:

*"Are tall people better at executing on strategy because they have long legs and are taller than the others?"*

Now some inspiration to design the Flip Questions:

*If she was a man and not a woman, would I interpret her as frustrated instead of hysterical as I just did?*

*If she was smiling more, would I find her more likable?*

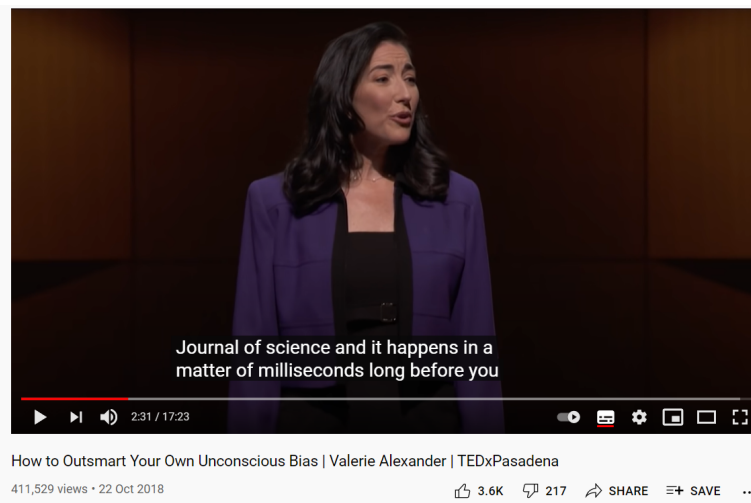
*If he did not have a different skin colour than mine, would I feel less skeptical?*

*If she was less introvert in her communication style, would I listen more interested and passionate?*

*If this person spoke my language, would I feel less incompetent?*

In teams they can now create other flip questions to shuffle in their day-to-day work. To finish this part of the session we are going to watch a Ted Talk where they talk about all this:

Link to the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GP-cqFLS8Q4>



## STEP 2. Reflection

Introduce the participants with Bennett's model of intercultural sensitivity and The Cross Model of Intercultural Competence (see Annex IV and V) in order to broaden the understanding about what "intercultural sensitivity" means.

As follows, a discussion should focus on the following questions:  
How can we master our cross-cultural sensitivity?

How can you promote a culturally sensitive environment within your workplace?

What are the possible positive and negative impacts of a culturally diverse workplace?

How would you describe a good company culture?

Then, divide the group into small groups and ask them to identify the knowledge and skills necessary to work effectively in a diverse workplace. Discuss and list the participants' responses.

## STEP 3. Knowledge Acquisition

Culture will always be involved when discussing and understanding the human being; to lack knowledge of others' customs, values, and habits leads to poor communication and a lack of sensitivity. This causes negative reactions, and even worse, negative consequences.

The crux of intercultural adaptation is the ability to have an alternative cultural experience. Individuals who have received largely monocultural socialization normally have access only to their own cultural worldview, so they are unable to experience the difference between their own perception and that of people who are culturally different.

The development of intercultural sensitivity describes how we gain the ability to create an alternative experience that more or less matches that of people in another culture. People who can do this have an intercultural worldview.

On the other hand, when it comes to company culture, a strong, positive, clearly defined and well-communicated culture attracts talent that fits. It drives engagement and

retention. Culture impacts how employees interact with their work and your organization. It impacts happiness and satisfaction (this topic will be explored further in the following Unit and activity).

#### **STEP 4. Closure**

These are ten fundamental aspects for successful development of intercultural competence that will serve as the foundation for the imaginary journey individuals and organizations pursue to become culturally competent in diverse communities and the workplace:

- Detection of an individual's own ethnocentrism;
- Being aware of and working at controlling own biases and how these may affect interactions with others;
- Knowledge of institutional barriers that prevent some cultural groups from accessing resources;
- Accepting and valuing differences;
- Stressing things in common;
- Encouraging solidarity;
- Training of reasonable conflict-techniques – dealing with cultural conflicts and cultural relativism;
- Awareness of the possibility to learn from each other and to enrich lives through contact; and
- Remove frontiers by understanding the global responsibility of everyone.
- Effective communication skills

#### **5. Source of the activity :**

Kepinski, Lisa; Nielsen Tina C. (2020) Inclusion nudges. Guidebook. 100 How-To Behavioral Designs to De-bias and Make Inclusive Behavior, Culture, and Systems the Default and Norm. 3rd edition. Page 486

# REFERENCES

Bennett, M. J. (1993). Towards Ethnorelativism: A developmental model of intercultural sensitivity. In R. M. Paige (Ed.). Education for the intercultural experience. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

Buitrago, Ma J.; Carrera, Ma V. y Pereira, C. (2008). Hiyab y Proverbio chino. Una propuesta de intervención pedagógica para educar en la tolerancia y la diversidad. En Varios Autores. Cine, salud y nuevos entornos. Mira local, piensa global. Zaragoza. Dirección General de salud Pública. Artes Gráficas Lema, pp. 27-56. Extracted from: <http://consumoetico.webs.uvigo.es/textos/textos/hiyab.pdf>

Cross, T. (1988, Fall). Services to minority populations: Cultural competence continuum. Focal Point, 3.

Kepinski, Lisa; Nielsen Tinna C. (2020) Inclusion nudges. Guidebook. 100 How-To Behavioral Designs to De-bias and Make Inclusive Behavior, Culture, and Systems the Default and Norm. 3rd edition. Page 486

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# Annexes

## ANNEX I. PPT presentation



Project Number: 957673

  
**ENGAGE**  
DEVELOPMENT OF INCLUSIVE **E**INTEGRATION PATHS 4 MIGRANT WOMEN

# Capacity Building Material for LMS

MODULE 3 (C)



 Co-funded by the  
European Union

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## ANNEXII. The iceberg model.



Iceberg illustration concept Free Vector. Attribution: [Water vector created by pikisuperstar - www.freepik.com](https://www.freepik.com/vectors/water)

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Facial expressions</li> <li>2. Religious beliefs</li> <li>3. Religious rituals</li> <li>4. Importance of time</li> <li>5. Art</li> <li>6. Values</li> <li>7. Literature</li> <li>8. Beliefs about parenting</li> <li>9. Concept of leadership</li> <li>10. Gestures</li> <li>11. Celebration of holidays.</li> <li>12. Concept of justice</li> <li>13. Friendship</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14. Modesty</li> <li>15. Meals</li> <li>16. Eating habits</li> <li>17. Understanding the natural world</li> <li>18. Concept of self</li> <li>19. Work ethics</li> <li>20. Concept of beauty</li> <li>21. Music</li> <li>22. Ways of dressing</li> <li>23. General view of the world</li> <li>24. Personal space</li> </ol> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**ANNEX III.**

*Image 1.*

**Example 1**

**Description:** A kid is holding an elderly lady's hand close to his forehead.

**Interpretation:** He seems to be greeting an elderly person as a sign of respect.

**Evaluation:** I think it is important to maintain the customs of respect for older people because they have been lost in my country.

**The real situation:** In Turkey, when a person greets a grandparent or an elderly person, it is customary to kiss their right hand and then place it on their forehead as a sign of respect.

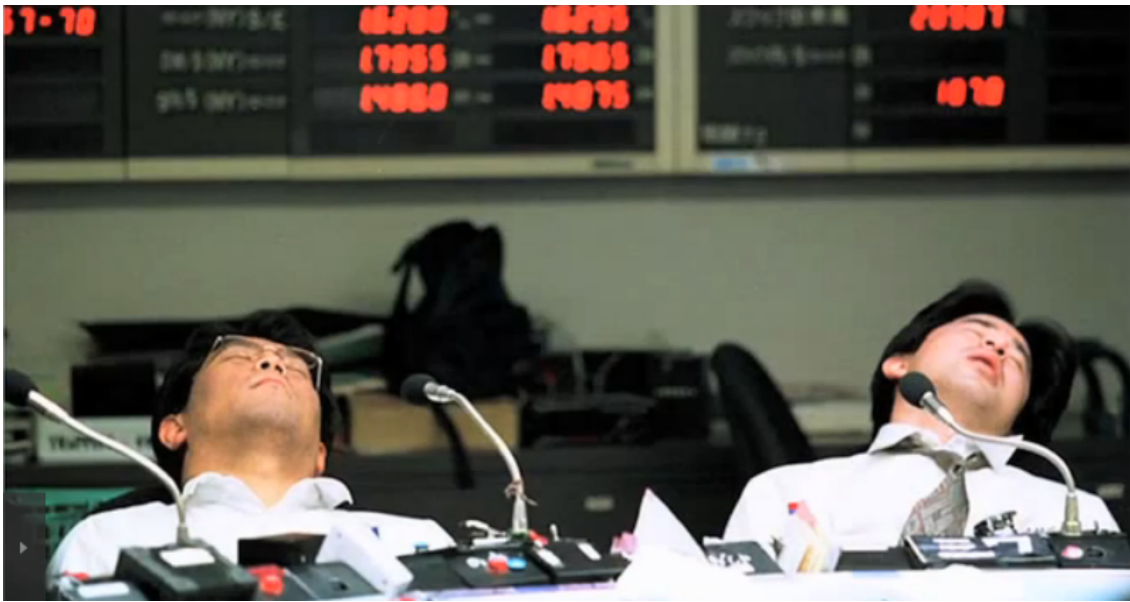


*Image 2.*

### Example 2

**Description:** Two boys sleeping in a public place/office

**Interpretation:** They have worked too hard and needed to get some sleep.

**Evaluation:** I don't think it's right for them to sleep during their working day.

**The real situation:** The image shows the widely accepted concept of 'inemuri' in Japan: these are naps on public transport and during work meetings, classes or lectures. In reality, they do not just fall asleep anywhere, but are short breaks. The key lies in the term itself, which is made up of two characters. "I", which means "being present" in a situation where one is alert, not asleep, and "nemuri", which means "sleep".

Although the person doing inemuri might be mentally detached, he or she has to be able to return to the social situation when required.

*Image 3*

**Description:**

**Interpretation:**

**Evaluation:**

**The real situation:** The Cooper's Hill Cheese-Rolling and Wake is an annual event held in the Gloucester district of Gloucester (England, UK) every last Monday in May. It is a race where competitors must catch a Gloucester cheese thrown from a sloping hill, which results in falls due to the speed it can reach.

*Image 4*

**Description:**

**Interpretation:**

**Evaluation:**

**The real situation:** In India it is common for two men to walk hand in hand. It is not a sign of sexual orientation.



*Image 5*

**Description:**

**Interpretation:**

**Evaluation:**

**The real situation:** Although it is not the most common thing to see in Tibet, it is also not uncommon to see a person stick out their tongue in greeting. This custom dates back to the 9th century. At that time there was King Lang Dharma, a man of evil repute, to whom legend attributes a black tongue. Fearful of a possible reincarnation among them, the people began to stick out their tongues when greeting as a sign of peace.



*Image 6*

**Description:**

**Interpretation:**

**Evaluation:**

**The real situation:** The picture shows Bedouins wearing black in the desert. Black clothing absorbs heat from the sun, but it also absorbs heat from our body and frees us from it. If the black clothes we wear are also loose-fitting, an updraft is created between the clothes and the skin, which ventilates and makes us feel cooler. It is for this reason that in the desert you can see people dressed completely in black, but always in loose-fitting clothes. As a curiosity, the magazine Nature published on 24 January 1980 a study entitled "Why do Bedouins wear black clothes in hot deserts? It is so thorough that you can see how much radiation is gained and lost by wearing black, white, army fatigues or shorts.

## ANNEX IV. The Bennett Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

There are many developmental models of intercultural competence in the field. One commonly referenced model is the Bennett model which was developed by Dr. Milton Bennett. Dr. Bennett created this model as a framework to explain the experience of students he observed over the course of months and sometimes years in intercultural workshops, classes, exchanges and graduate programs. Employing concepts from cognitive psychology and constructivism, he organized these observations into a continuum of six stages of increasing sensitivity to cultural difference. The underlying assumption of the model is that as an individual experienced cultural differences then he/she would become more competent in intercultural relations. Bennett assumed that each stage was indicative of a particular cognitive structure and that certain kinds of attitudes and behavior would typically be associated with each configuration of a worldview. The six stages move from "ethnocentrism" meaning that an individual's own culture is experienced as central to reality in some way to "ethnorelativism" meaning that an individual's culture is experienced in the context of other cultures.

This model, as is the case with most models, is valuable in that it provides a springboard for discussion.

It is also important to note that individuals and organizations may be at different points on the continuum depending on the diversity dimension in reference. For example, individuals may be at the Acceptance stage with reference to race, and at the Defense stage with reference to sexual orientation.

The ethnocentric stages are Denial, Defense, and Minimization. The ethnorelative stages are Acceptance, Adaptation, and Integration.

**1. First stage. Denial**, an individual denies that cultural differences exist. This belief may reflect either physical or social isolation from people of different cultural backgrounds.

**2. Second stage. Defense**, an individual acknowledges the existence of certain cultural differences, but because those differences are threatening to his or her own reality and sense of self, the individual constructs defenses against those differences.

**3. The Third stage in Bennett's model is Minimization.** An individual in this stage acknowledges cultural differences, but trivializes them, believing that human similarities far outweigh any differences. The danger of this stage is that similarity is assumed rather than known. As Bennett writes, "In general, people who have experienced cultural oppression are wary of the 'liberal' assumption of common humanity. Too often, the assumption has meant 'be like me.'"

**4. In the fourth stage. Acceptance**, an individual recognizes and values cultural differences without evaluating those differences as positive or negative. This stage moves an individual from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism. First comes a respect for cultural differences in behavior, and then a deeper respect for cultural differences in values.

**5. In the fifth stage. Adaptation,** individuals develop and improve skills for interacting and communicating with people of other cultures. The key skill at this stage is perspective- shifting, the ability to look at the world “through different eyes.”

6. The final stage of Bennett’s model is Integration. Individuals in this stage not only value a variety of cultures, but are constantly defining their own identity and evaluating behavior and values in contrast to and in concert with a multitude of cultures. Rising above the limitations of living in one cultural context, these individuals integrate aspects of their own original cultural perspectives with those of other cultures.

References:

Bennett, M. J. (1993). Towards Ethnorelativism: A developmental model of intercultural sensitivity. In R. M. Paige (Ed.). Education for the intercultural experience. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

For further information, contact Dr. Milton Bennett. The Intercultural Communication Institute, 8835 S.W. Canyon Ln. Suite 238, Portland, OR. 97225. TEL: (503) 297-4622, FAX: (503) 297-4695, E-mail: [ici@intercultural.org](mailto:ici@intercultural.org). Web: <http://www.intercultural.org>.

## ANNEX V. The Cross Model of Intercultural Competence

Another model of intercultural competence was originally developed by Terry Cross to describe stages of competence at the organizational level, but it has since been adapted for use at the individual level. It is instructive to note the similarities and differences between the Cross and Bennett models.

1. While some of the labels used by Cross for the stages of intercultural competence are inappropriate (e.g., "blindness"), this is a useful model for looking at the process of working effectively in a diverse workplace.
2. The six stages of Terry Cross's intercultural competence model are

### 1. Cultural Destructiveness

This is the most negative end of the continuum represented by attitudes, policies, and practices that are destructive to cultures and consequently to the individuals with the cultures. Individuals and organizations in this phase:

- View culture as a problem.
- Believe that if culture can be suppressed or destroyed, people will be better off.
- Believe that people should be more like the "mainstream."
- Assume that one culture is superior and should eradicate "lesser" cultures.

At the societal level, this viewpoint taken to the extreme leads to such things as genocide. An example of this occurred when the Bureau of Indian Affairs mandated boarding schools that decimated the cultures of many Native American tribes.

### 2. Cultural Incapacity (corresponds with the Denial stage of the Bennett Model)

Individuals and organizations in this phase:

- Lack cultural awareness and skills.
- May have been brought up in a homogeneous society and been taught to behave in certain ways and have never questioned it.
- Believe in racial superiority of a dominant group and assume a paternalistic posture toward others.
- Maintain stereotypes.
- At the organizational level, this translates into supporting segregation or having lower expectations of persons from other cultures.

3. Cultural Blindness (corresponds with Bennett's Minimization stage) At the midpoint in the continuum, the system and its agencies provide services with the expressed intent of being unbiased. Individuals in this phase
  - See others in terms of their own culture and claim that all people are exactly alike.
  - Believe that culture makes no difference. "We are all the same."

- Believe that all people should be treated in the same way regardless of race, etc.

At the organizational level, services are so ethnocentric that they are virtually useless to all but the most assimilated.

#### 4. Cultural Pre -Competence (corresponds with Bennett's Acceptance stage)

Individuals and organizations in this phase:

- Recognize that there are cultural differences and start to educate themselves and others concerning these differences.
- Realize their shortcomings in interacting within a diverse environment.
- May become complacent in their efforts.

At the organizational level, an attempt is made to address diversity issues by, for instance, hiring a diverse staff, offering cultural sensitivity training, promoting diverse staff to upper management, etc.

#### 5. Basic Cultural Competence (corresponds with Bennett's Adaptation stage)

Individuals and organizations in this phase:

- Accept, appreciate, and accommodate cultural difference.
- Value diversity and accept and respect differences.
- Accept the influence of their own culture in relation to other cultures.
- Understand and manage the dynamics of difference when cultures intersect.
- Are willing to examine components of cross-cultural interactions (communication, problem solving, etc.).

At the organizational level, an effort is made to hire unbiased employees, to seek advice from communities of color, and to assess what can be provided to diverse clients.

#### 6. Advanced Cultural Competence

Individuals at this phase:

- Move beyond accepting, appreciating, and accommodating cultural difference and actively educate less informed individuals about cultural differences.
- Seek out knowledge, develop skills to interact in diverse environments, become allies with and are comfortable interacting with others in multicultural settings.

At the organizational level, this translates into conducting research, hiring staff who are specialists in intercultural competence practices, and acting as an advocate.

Reference:

Cross, T. (1988, Fall). Services to minority populations: Cultural competence continuum. Focal Point, 3.

DEVELOPMENT OF INCLUSIVE INTEGRATION PATHS 4 MIGRANT WOMEN



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