

Module 2 – Understanding Different Cultures

Hands-on activity 3 - Strategies to understand different cultures

Instructions

Read each of the following strategies and techniques for effective cultural understanding (the left column).

On the right hand column, write down some specific behaviours that describe how you can put each strategy or technique into practice. Some examples are already inserted.

Aim for dialogue, not debate. Be structured and clear. Be open and friendly. Invite feedback, do not just expect it. Use questions effectively and often. Keep positive. Grade your language to suit your counterpart. Make sure that your verbal and non-verbal communication agrees. Know yourself to know others.

Strategies and techniques	How you can put this in practice - examples
Cultural self-awareness	I know that this is my belief/my value , not the truth
Awareness of subjectivity	I know that this is my opinion in the matter, not a fact, neither the truth
Show interest in the other one view (“truth”)	What is your opinion / view/belief in the matter? Why?
I exchange the information needed in a intercultural interactions	I talk about myself and I am curious about others
I am ready for new cultural experiences	

I contemplate and discuss my intercultural experiences	
Identify the issues	Ask the right questions, as ...
Clarify frequently	<p>Paraphrase what you think you have heard</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You say that ... - ... <p>Emphasize the feelings expressed, as well as the substance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I see you feel ... because you think that ... - ... <p>Confirm that you accurately understand and acknowledge the message, even if you do not agree with it</p>
Use active listening	<p>Demonstrate interest. Ask questions:</p> <p>Acknowledge comments with your head or voice.</p>
Summarise frequently	
Make sure you have a dialogue, not a debate	
Keep it on the the topic, not on the persons	
Be precise and clear	
Be open and friendly.	
Invite feedback	

