

INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

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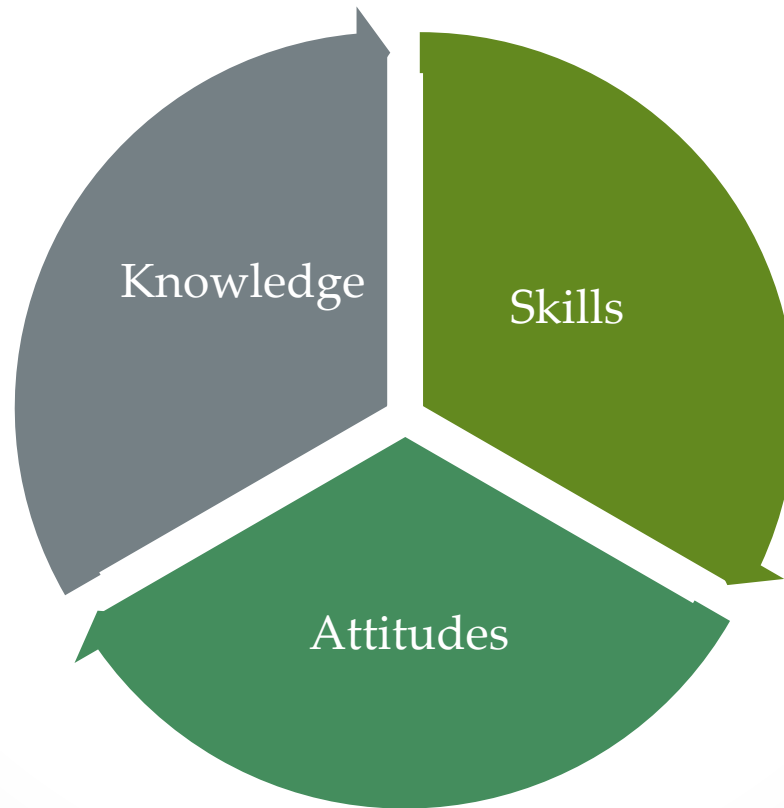


1. What is Intercultural Competence?
2. Interculturally Competent Person
3. Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity
4. Intercultural Competence in Solving conflicts

“Intercultural competence is the ability to develop targeted knowledge, skills and attitudes that lead to visible behavior and communication that are both effective and appropriate in intercultural interactions.”



Constituent elements of intercultural competence



Knowledge

- ◎ **Cultural self- awareness:** articulating how one's own culture has shaped one's identity and world view
- ◎ **Culture specific knowledge:** analyzing and explaining basic information about other cultures (history, values, politics, economics, communication styles, values, beliefs and practices)
- ◎ **Sociolinguistic awareness:** acquiring basic local language skills, articulating differences in verbal/ non-verbal communication and adjusting one's speech to accommodate nationals from other cultures
- ◎ **Grasp of global issues and trends:** explaining the meaning and implications of globalization and relating local issues to global forces

Skills

- ③ **Listening, observing, evaluating** : using patience and perseverance to identify and minimize ethnocentrism, seek out cultural clues and meaning
- ③ **Analyzing, interpreting and relating**: seeking out linkages, causality and relationships using comparative techniques of analysis
- ③ **Critical thinking**: viewing and interpreting the world from other cultures' point of view and identifying one's own

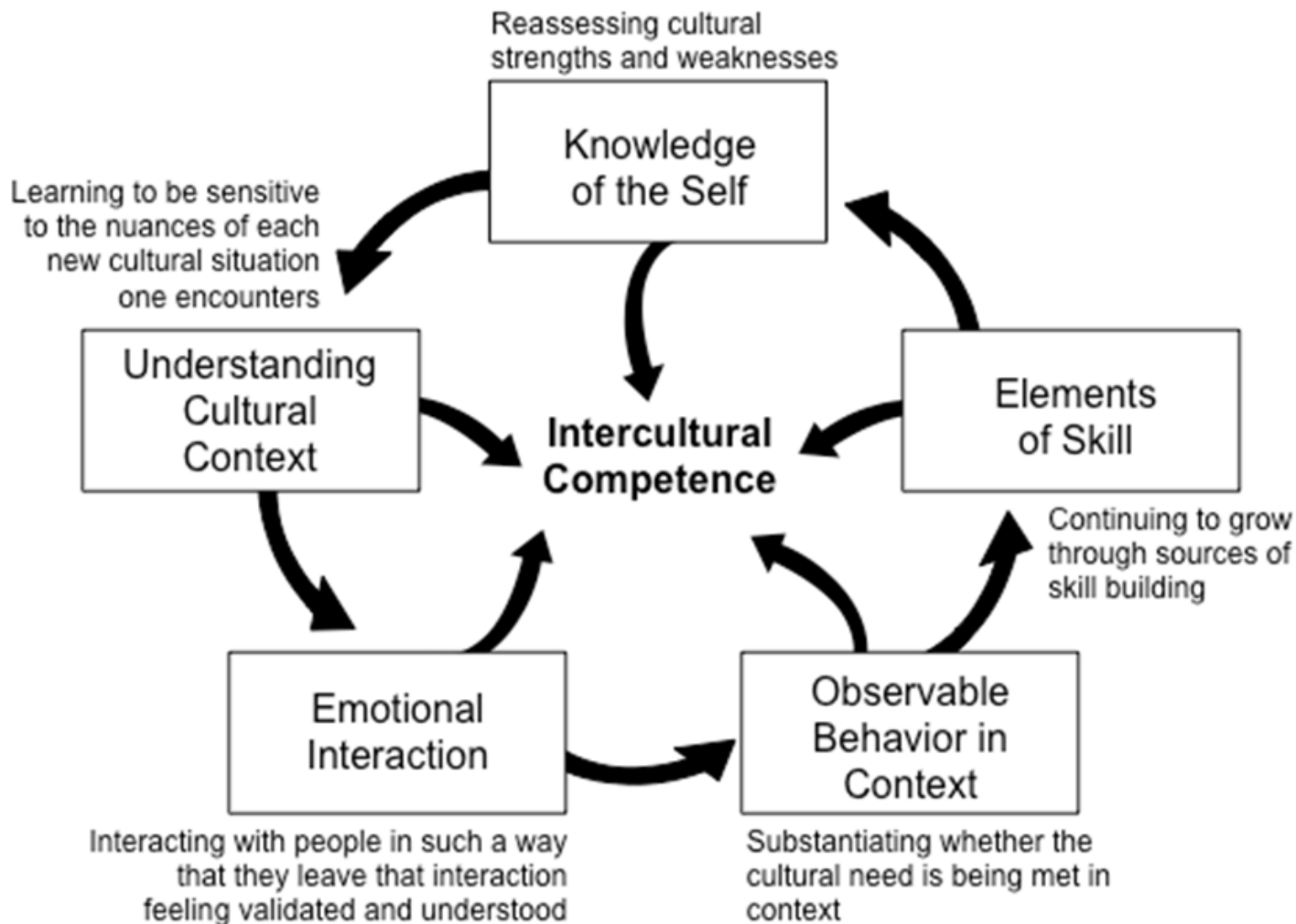
Attitudes

- ◎ **Respect:** seeking out other cultures' attributes; value cultural diversity; thinking comparatively and without prejudice about cultural differences
- ◎ **Openness:** suspending criticism of other cultures; investing in collecting 'evidence' of cultural difference; being disposed to be proven wrong;
- ◎ **Curiosity:** seeking out intercultural interactions, viewing difference as a learning opportunity, being aware of one's own ignorance
- ◎ **Discovery:** tolerating ambiguity and viewing it as a positive experience; willingness to move beyond one's comfort zone

Outcomes

The above knowledge, skills and attitudes lead to **internal outcomes** which refer to an individual who learns to be flexible, adaptable, empathetic and adopts an ethno-relative perspective.

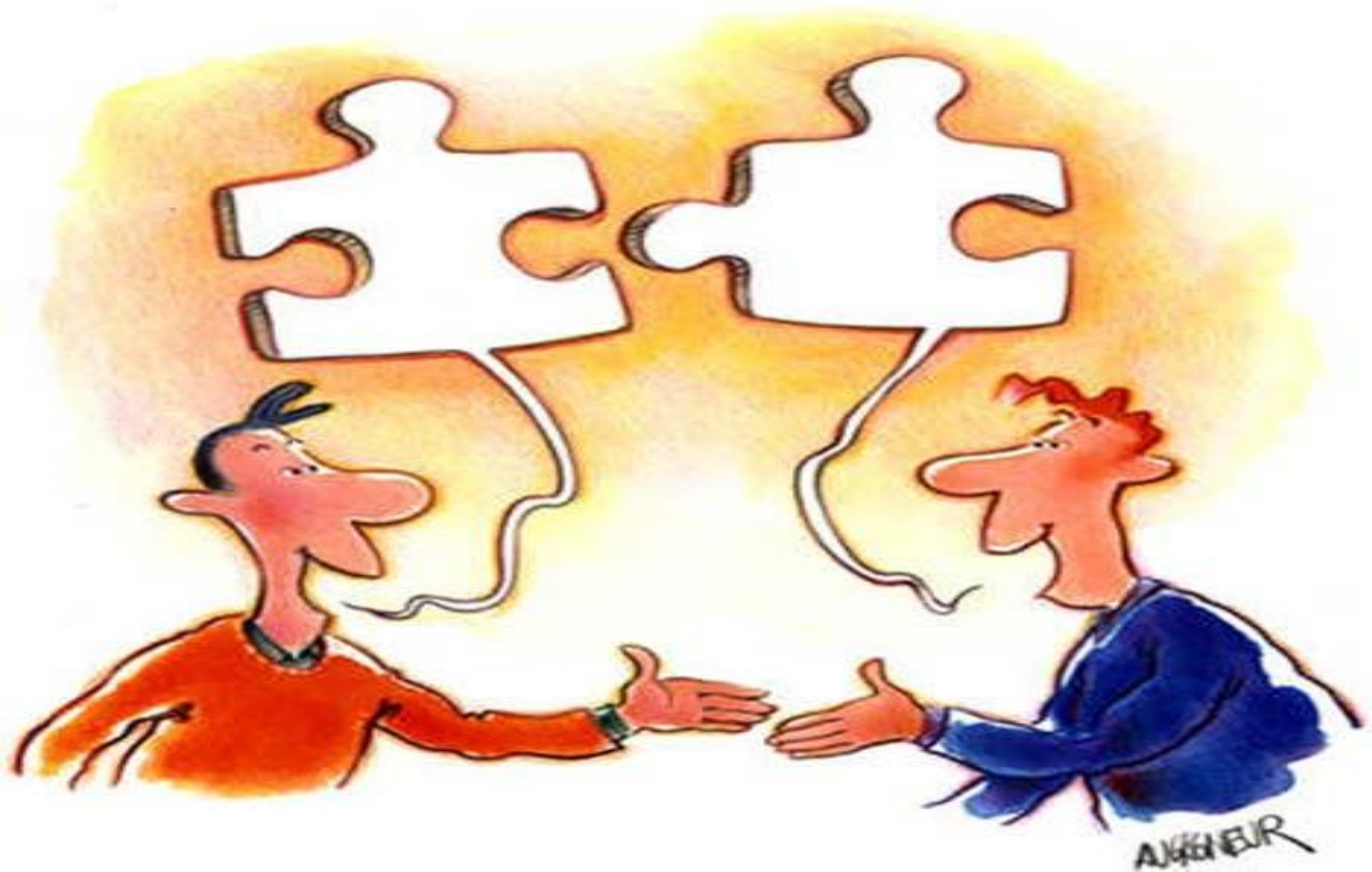
These qualities are reflected in **external outcomes** which refer to the observable behavior and communication styles of the individual. They are the visible evidence that the individual is, or is learning to be, interculturally competent.



The Intercultural Competence Model

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Interculturally Competent Person



"Profile of the Interculturally Effective Person" (IEP) produced by an international group of researchers for the Canadian Foreign Service Institute, Center for Intercultural Learning (2000).

According to the IEP definition, an **interculturally effective person** has three main attributes (2000:4):

- an ability to communicate with people in a way that earns their respect and trust, thereby encouraging a cooperative and productive workplace that is conducive to the achievements of professional or assignment goals;
- the capacity to adapt his/her professional skills (both technical and managerial) to fit local conditions and constraints; and
- the capacity to adjust personally so that s/he is content and generally at ease in the host culture.

The profile includes nine essential skills or qualities of interculturally effective persons:

- adaptation skills
- attitude of modesty and respect
- understanding of the concept of culture
- knowledge of the host country and culture
- relationship-building
- self-knowledge
- intercultural communication
- organizational skills
- personal and professional commitment.

Mind, competence

World, performance

Language

- communicative competence in the language used in the event
- intercultural awareness of the critical points between his/her native language and language of the event

extra-linguistic codes

intercultural awareness of the critical points in the use of gestures, interpersonal distance, value of objects, etc. when two or more cultures are present in the event

cultural values

intercultural awareness of the critical points in the communicative use of time and space, in the sense of belonging to a group, in the expression of hierarchy, respect, status, saving the face etc., in topics related to the person such as religion, dignity, freedom, body, health, sexuality, etc.

Language abilities,
knowing how to
“work” language

Behaviour abilities,
knowing how to
face intercultural
problems and
situations

communicative events

where two or more
cultures are present,
although a single
common language is
used

Mind, competence

World, performance

linguistic competence

extra-linguistic
competence

socio-cultural,
pragmatic, strategic
competence

mastery
of abilities,
knowing how to
'work' language

knowing how
to do things
with language
in communicative
events

The diagram is set against a light beige background with a vertical line separating the 'Mind, competence' side from the 'World, performance' side. On the left, three colored rounded rectangles represent different components of competence: a green one for 'linguistic competence', a pink one for 'extra-linguistic competence', and a blue one for 'socio-cultural, pragmatic, strategic competence'. Arrows from each of these three boxes point towards a central yellow rounded rectangle. This central box contains the text 'mastery of abilities, knowing how to 'work' language'. A double-headed arrow connects this central box to a large grey oval on the right side of the diagram. The oval contains the text 'knowing how to do things with language in communicative events'.



Cultural Sensitivity

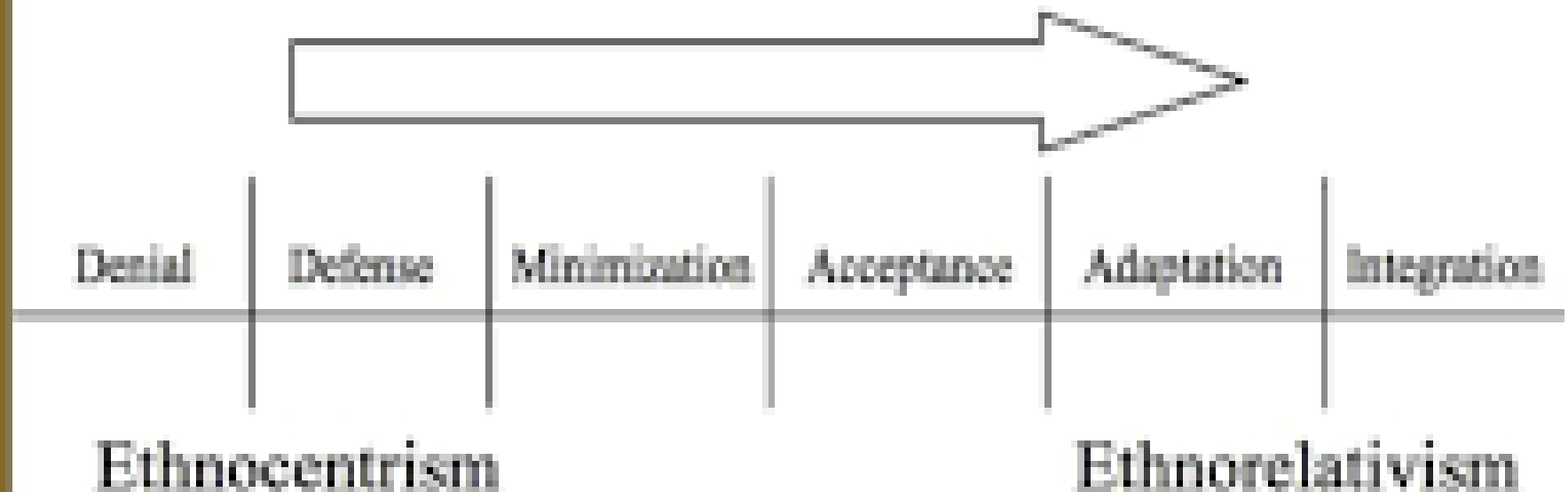
Knowing that cultural differences as well as similarities exist, without assigning values (i.e. better or worse, right or wrong) to those cultural differences.


What Is Cultural Sensitivity?

- Cultural sensitivity is an awareness that there are differences in between cultures. In order to communicate effectively it is a very important skill.
- A culturally sensitive person views all people as unique individuals and realizes that their values, experiences, beliefs and language affect their perceptions.

Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) Schematic

Experience of Difference



Development Stages			Orientation	
1	Denial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little idea about cultural differences • Own culture perceived as the only true reality • Foreign cultures are ignored 	Ethno-centric world: <i>Own culture seen as central reality</i>	Development of intercultural sensitivity Experience of difference 
2	Defence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural differences more clearly • Stereotyping of foreign cultures • Own culture perceived as superior 		
3	Minimalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Everyone is equal" • Levelling of differences • Elements of own culture experienced as universal 		
4	Acceptance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of own cultural identity • Acceptance of other cultural contexts • Curiosity about and respect for other cultures 	Ethno-relative worldview: <i>own culture seen in the context of other cultures</i>	
5	Adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of foreign cultures leads to appropriate behavior and sensitivity • Easier communication • Ability to see the world from the point of view of other cultures 		
6	Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Own experience broadened to include multicultural points of view • Perception of oneself as "meandering through cultures" • Integration not necessarily the better prerequisite for intercultural competence than adaptation • Typical of long-term expats, "global nomads", "citizens of the world" 		

Ethnocentric

Ethnorelative

Denial

Defense

Minimization

Acceptance

Adaptation

Integrat

My cultural experience is the only one that is real and valid. There is little to no thought of "other."

"We" are superior and "they" are inferior. One feels threatened and is highly critical. What is strange may be labeled as stupid.

Other cultures are trivialized or romanticized. One tends to deny differences (e.g., "color blind") and only seek similarities.

I accept but may not agree with other cultures. Generally, I am curious and respectful.

I "see" the world through different eyes and make intentional changes in my own behavior and values.

I easily move in and out of different cultural worldvie

Intercultural Competence in Solving conflicts



Characteristics of Intercultural Conflict

- Language Issues
- Ambiguity
- Contradictory Conflict Styles



Types of Conflict

- Affective conflict: people become aware that their feelings and emotions are incompatible
- Conflict of interest: people have incompatible preferences for a course of action or plan to pursue
- Value conflict: occur when people have different ideologies
- Cognitive conflict: two or more people become aware that their perceptions are in conflict
- Goal conflict: people have different outcomes

(Martin & Nakayama 2008)

Managing Intercultural Conflict

- Productive vs. Destructive Conflict

Productive Conflict	Destructive Conflict
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Identify the specific problem- Focus on the original issue- Cooperative problem solving- Value leadership that stresses mutually satisfactory outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Make sweeping generalizations- Escalate the issues- Seize power- Value leaders who polarize



Culture/ Country	Preferred resolution style	Cultural value	Preference for	Distrust of
African- American, Central and South American, Southern European, Russian, Israeli	Engagement	Verbal communicatio n with more intensity	High emotion with much discussion directly with conflicting parties	Low emotion considered insincere and uncommitted



Culture/ Country	Preferred resolution style	Cultural value	Preference for	Distrust of
Middle Eastern, Arabic and some African countries	Dynamic	Indirect but emotionally intense	Story, hyperbole, use of intermediaries who express conflict between two parties	Direct communication considered rude



Culture/ Country	Preferred resolution style	Cultural value	Preference for	Distrust of
Western: White North Americans, Northern Europeans, New Zealanders	Discussion	Directness Low context verbal communi- cation	Low emotion with discussion directly with conflicting parties	Emotional display considered dangerous or unhelpful



Culture/ Country	Preferred resolution style	Cultural value	Preference for	Distrust of
Asian: Chinese, Japanese, Thai, Indonesian, Malaysian, Native North American, Some Latin Countries: Mexico & Peru	Accommodation	Control of emotions, superficial harmony	Ambiguous speech	Emotional display considered inappropriate

10 Tips for Effective Cross Cultural Communication

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Be Honest

Be Flexible

Listen Actively

Respect Differences

Ask Questions

Build Self Awareness

Avoid Stereotyping

Distinguish Perspectives

Think Twice

Recognize the Complexity