



EU Aid VolunteersWe Care, We Act

INTERCULTURAL COLLABORATION IN INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERING

Resource Pack for Hosting Organisations and Local Communities



DISCLAMER

This resource was a jointly prepared by **Comhlámh** and **FOCSIV** as part of the '**Volunteering** in **Humanitarian Aid**' (**VolinHA**) capacity building project.

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BACKGROUND

Why has this resource been developed?

This resource has been brought together by partner organisations from nine countries from the European Union and five countries in the global south, who are involved in a joint consortia working together on sharing best practices and standards of volunteer management as part of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative (EUAVI). The two-year project was called "Volunteering in Humanitarian Aid", and began in 2015. Funded by the European Commission under the technical assistance and capacity building strands of the EUAVI, it brought together volunteer sending and hosting organisations. All partners have shared their diverse knowledge and experience of sending and hosting volunteers to contribute to a resource that focuses on the cultural aspects of hosting international volunteers.

Who is this resource for?

This guide has been developed to support anyone who is involved with hosting international volunteers, including project coordinators, supervisors, mentors, community workers, and others.

Aim of the resource

This resource aims to create positive working placements for international volunteers, host organisations and communities alike, focusing on activities that work to address possible cultural differences that might arise from working with a diverse group of people from various backgrounds. The activities proposed can be useful to support a group of people in experiencing the daily challenges and opportunities of intercultural collaboration in international volunteering work.

The resource aims to encourage people who are working cross-culturally to foster the idea of a common space where everybody has the possibility to interact and build positive relationships. It is in this shared space that volunteers, sending organisations, hosting organisations and host communities can work together to foster and embrace mutual learning, shared experiences and values whilst working toward a common goal.

Finding a shared space:



HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

This resource is designed so that users can start at any chapter that relates to the theme they want to cover. It is not a full training resource, nor does it have to be read in a linear way. Each chapter deals with a different theme. Facilitators and users of the manual are encouraged to read through the themes, explore and contemplate the different topics at their own pace. Facilitators have the flexibility to choose which chapters they wish to cover and within those chapters, there are various colour-coded exercises that explore the topic using a variety of methodologies.

Guide to colour coded activity system:

Green

A basic activity that introduces the topic and gives participants an overview of the theme.

Orange

An activity that follows on from the basic activity and provides opportunity for deeper exploration of the theme.

Purple

An advanced activity that explores the theme in greater depth and is more complex to facilitate.

The beginning of each chapter will present an overview of the theory behind each theme, providing users with further background reading and viewing as well as links to multimedia resources, if they are particularly interested in the topic and would like to find out more.

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

This resource brings together a variety of participatory and experiential activities, all of which are underpinned by a development education/participative learning approach. As a result, it focuses not only on content but on the process of how we learn. Please feel free to adapt and tailor the activities to your context and the needs of your group.

The following methodologies are:

Energisers

They can be used before, during or after one of the main activities. They are typically used to introduce participants to a topic in a novel way, make people feel at ease before starting into a session or simply wake people up and get them alert, attentive, and enthusiastic before a session.

Role Play

Participants take on different roles and work through an issue from that perspective, which considers various points-of-view.

Simulation Games

Games allow participants to experience the feelings of people involved in a certain situation. This method provides participants to practice new behaviours and attitudes in a non-threatening, non-judgemental setting.

Individual Exercises

Individuals undertake these exercises on their own. They help participants discover their own thoughts and feelings toward a certain issue or topic. They encourage critical self-reflection.

Discussion and Debate

This traditional methodology allows us to be open to various viewpoints and perspectives.

THE FACILITATOR'S ROLE

The facilitator's role is to guide participants through the topics and activities. All participants and groups are unique with their own needs and interests. So feel free to use your own creativity and imagination to rework the activities as appropriate for your context and aims.

Here are some tips to play the facilitator's role:

- Familiarise yourself with the activity before you try it out;
- See if there are any specific materials or handouts needed for the activity and if so prepare them beforehand;
- Each group will work at their own pace so do not worry if you go over or under the suggested time;
- Some of the themes may be sensitive in nature so let the group know that it is completely OK not to partake in any of the activities they do not feel comfortable with;
- Most of all, don't forget to be open to learning and having fun in the process. Happy facilitation!



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CHAPTERS

1. BEING GREAT IN THE GET TO KNOW PROCESS

What this section will cover

The intercultural meeting between international volunteers and the hosting organisation and community is a long time process that needs to be guided and facilitated to be successful. This section will give a few pointers to the host organisation on how to make that process as great as it can be!

Why it's important

Positive relationships benefit everyone. Considering the sensitive topics involved and how time is essential in order to enable fruitful collaboration between international volunteers and hosting organisations in a project, it's important to take time and care when getting to know one another.

Learning outcomes

Hosting organisations will learn some tips to more easily engage in the "get to know" process with international volunteers.

Get to Know

Ensure that effort is made to build some rapport with the arriving volunteer. Time should be allowed for the volunteer to get to know the organisation and the staff working for and within the organisation and vice versa.

Tip: Volunteers can be encouraged to give a small overview of what their country is like, and where they are coming from, as an opportunity for them to have a more informal introduction to the team they will be working with.

• Role clarification

Re-clarify and explain the volunteer's role and mission. It is helpful also to notify all the team of what their role is so that there are no false expectations for what the volunteer is going to be doing. Likewise it is important for the volunteer to familiarise themselves with other people's roles in the organisation. A simple organigram of the organisation helps to orientate or plot who is who in the organisation. A suggested brief meeting with each of the other staff would be useful for the volunteer to see in more depth what each person does and help them find their place within the organisation.



• Encourage commitment

Encourage the volunteer to bring their fresh perspectives and ideas so that they can be regarded as a valued member of the team.

It is helpful for the international volunteer to be integrated into the project and organisation from both a work and social perspective. It should not solely be the role of mentor to ensure that this is happening but to gain a more inclusive working dynamic, all staff, local volunteers and communities should be sensitized and made aware about the volunteer's role and engagement.



Allow time to adjust

The situation and ways of working might be very new for the volunteer. There might be a language barrier or other initial difficult situations that the volunteer will encounter. It is important that these are recognised and that there is an allowance and understanding for the volunteer to go through some adjustments during this settling in period.

• Training needs

It is important to give the volunteer some training and orientation when arriving in the country. Topics to cover could be: cultural norms/etiquette of the host country, security situation, job specific training (if needed).

It is also important for the host organisation to familiarize themselves with the training that the volunteer received in pre-departure. The host organisation could request the sending organisation to share the content and format of the training the volunteer receives so that they are not duplicating anything. This might also help the host organisation get an understanding of what training the volunteer has undergone so far and get them up to speed.



2. CULTURE

What this section will cover?

This chapter will introduce the participants to culture, the different ways of thinking, seeing and understanding culture and how it shapes our values and our way of being. Participants will explore the surface and deeper aspects of culture and experience aspects of working in an intercultural setting through a mix of participative and reflective methodologies.



Why it's important?

It is important to understand that we are all part of culture which can influence the way we live our lives. There are many different cultures across the world, as well as within countries, and in order for people to be accepting and understanding of these cultural differences we must first look at the culture with which we identify, and see how this shapes us.

Learning outcomes?

At the end of this module, participants will gain a clearer understanding of the complexity of culture. They will explore aspects of their own culture. They will gain some tips for working with volunteers in an intercultural setting and be aware of possible warning signs that a volunteer might be experiencing culture shock.

What is Culture?



Culture refers to the ways of life of the members of a society, or of groups within a society. It includes how they dress, their marriage customs and family life, their patterns of work, religious ceremonies and leisure pursuits.

(Giddens 2001:22)

Culture is a fuzzy set of attitudes, beliefs, behavoral norms and basic assumptions and values that are shared by a group of people, and that influence each members' behaviour and his/her interpretations of the "meaning" of other people's behaviour"

(Spencer-Oatey 2000)

The above are two of many definitions of culture. The way in which people behave or act is often determined by the culture they live in. In short, culture can be described as the basic values, norms and assumptions that people hold.

Culture can be both external and internal in nature:

External (or surface) culture as the name suggests are easily detected practices norms of behaviour.

Internal (or deep) culture are the values and beliefs internalised in a culture. It is often subconscious and people may not directly be aware of it but accept it as normal.

Culture is sometimes connected to nationality. Often when people attempt to define their own culture they do so by comparing it to other cultures - which can be damaging and lead to focusing solely on differences. In order to work in and among other cultures we need to look at the **bridges** rather than the **barriers** that a mixture of cultures can bring.

The degree of contact with a given culture influences how we feel about the culture. This can include both direct contact (having visited the country) and indirect contact (understanding through media/television/ someone you know from that country).



It takes a long time to deeply understand a new culture. Exploring a new culture is a continual process, which requires patience, openness, understanding and a non-judgmental attitude.

According to a quote from the book *Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace, One School at a Time,*"The first time you share tea with a Balti, you are a stranger. The second time you take tea, you are an honored guest. The third time you share a cup of tea, you become family". So take your time to have three cups of tea with other people.



The notion of time and adaptation is very important and must be realised in order to give the volunteer a chance to adjust to the new environment. However, it is important to be aware of certain signs and symptoms that a volunteer might display if struggling to adapt to their new surroundings.

Some signs a person might be experiencing culture shock:

- Extreme homesickness;
- Feelings of helplessness/dependency;
- Disorientation and isolation:
- Depression and sadness;
- Hyper-irritability, may include inappropriate anger and hostility;
- Sleep and eating disturbances (too little or too much);

- Excessive critical reactions to host culture/stereotyping;
- Excessive drinking;
- Recreational drug dependency;
- Extreme concerns over sanitation, safety;
- Being paranoid;
- Loss of focus and ability to complete tasks.

Multiculturalism vs Interculturalism:

Multicultural refers to a society that contains several cultural or ethnic groups. People live alongside one another, but each cultural group does not necessarily have engaging interactions with each other.





Intercultural describes communities in which there is a deep understanding and respect for all cultures.

Interculturalism promotes open, critical dialogue around identified differences whilst celebrating shared values. It rejects the idea that individuals can be completely "representative" of a particular cultural community but focuses more on cultural fluidity. Someone can be part of or identify with many cultures and sub-cultures, but is not all-compassed by one.

Activity 2.1: WHERE AM I IN THE WORLD?

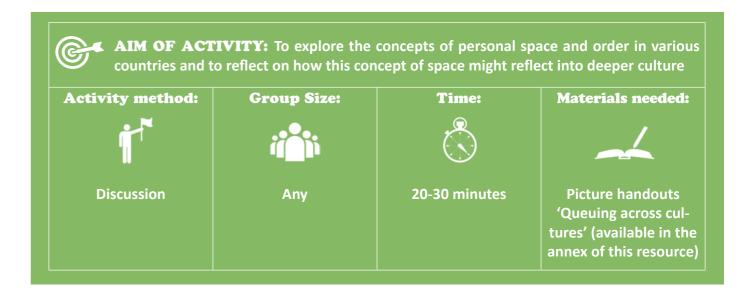


Instructions for facilitator:

- 1. Ask participants to write down the name of a place they are from on a piece of paper.
- 2. Tell participants which side of the room is north, south, east and west.
- 3. Ask each participant to bring their piece of paper and move where they think they should be in relation to other people.
- 4. After everyone moves to their spot, ask each person to talk a little about where their location is.
- 5. After everyone has spoken, ask them to place their piece of paper on the ground and stand back so that everyone can see the different pieces of paper marking out where they are on the 'map'.



Activity 2.2: QUEUING ACROSS CULTURES



Instructions for facilitator:

- 1. Hand out the four pictures (available in the Annex of this resource) and ask the participants to guess which countries the pictures are from.
- 2. Break the group up in small groups of twos or threes.
- 3. Ask the participants to discuss the suggested questions below.

Suggested discussion questions:

- a) What are the differences and similarities between the photos?
- b) What cultural rules or norms do you see in these pictures?
- c) Why do you think people are doing what they are doing?
- d) Is this similar or different to norms and rules in your culture?
- e) Do you have any other questions about the pictures?



Activity 2.3: THE ICEBERG



Instructions for facilitator:

- 1. Ask participants if they know how much of an iceberg is above the water, and how much is below?
- 2. Explain that some people have described "culture" as an iceberg in that 10% of the iceberg is visible and that 90% of the iceberg is below the surface of the water. The aspects of culture we can visibly see might only be a small fraction of the whole picture.
- 3. Draw out an iceberg on a big blank sheet of paper, a blackboard or whiteboard.
- 4. Ask people to name the things that might be on the surface, or visible, and give an example to start the group, such as "clothes".
- 5. Write the word "clothes" on the top part of the iceberg. Then ask the participants to add other words to the top and the bottom of the iceberg.
- 6. If the group are stuck for suggestions, you can prompt the group using the examples below:
- 1. Facial expression
- 2. Religious beliefs
- 3. Religious rituals
- 4. Concepts of time
- 5. Paintings
- 6. Values
- 7. Literature
- 8. Child raising beliefs
- 9. Concepts of leadership
- 10.Gestures
- 11.Dance

- 12. Concept of fairness
- 13. Nature of friendship
- 14. Notions of modesty
- 15. Foods
- 16. Games
- 17. Understanding the natural world
- 18. Work ethic
- 19. Concept of beauty
- 20. Music
- 21. Styles of dress
- 22. Crafts
- 23. Concepts of personal space
- 24. Rules of social etiquette

If the group is from diverse cultural backgrounds...

- 1. Hand out a piece of paper and a pen or marker to each participant.
- 2. Ask participants to draw out their own blank iceberg on the piece of paper.
- 3. Ask them to think about their own culture.
- 4. On their iceberg, ask them to list both the 'surface' and 'deep' sides to their culture.
- 5. Once they have completed their individual cultural iceberg, ask participants to break into groups of two and discuss their iceberg with one another.

For a more complete list of 'surface' and 'deep' culture examples please see the picture 'list of visible and deep culture' in Annex.



Suggested discussion questions:

- a) What characteristics have you identified in your culture that are evident in other cultures?
- b) Are there any particular values that you identify as very important in your culture?
- c) How does the deep culture relate to surface level culture?
- d) Do you think the surface level of culture can give an indication of the deeper values within a society?

Alternative ideas for this session:



For some groups it might be helpful to use a different symbol for culture such as an island, a plant (with deep roots) or a boat, depending on their climate and familiarity with the concept of the iceberg.



Activity 2.4: BARNGA





- Let the participants play a few rounds with their rules.
- Then remove the rule sheets from the tables. From now, talking is prohibited.
- After 10 minutes participants must switch tables. The person who won the most games moves clockwise to the next table, the person who loses the most tricks moves counter-clockwise to the next table.
- 11. Play for 30 minutes or so to allow for a number of table changes.

Debriefing: participants should be aware that they were playing by different rules, and the following questions should be discussed. Participants can stay in the last group they were in, or return to their home groups at the facilitator's discretion.

Instructions for facilitator:

- 1. Familiarise yourself with the overview of the game first.
- 2. Overview of the game: Participants play a simple card game in small groups. Participants are not allowed speak during the game and can only communicate through gestures. Each group is given different rules but they are unaware the rules differ for each group. After 10 minutes of playing in one group, the loser and the winner of each group must change clockwise to the group beside them and this group change continues every 10 minutes. Conflicts begin to occur as participants move from group to group. This simulates real crosscultural encounters, where people initially believe they share the same understanding of the basic rules. In discovering that the rules are different for each table, players undergo a mini culture shock similar to actual experience when entering a different culture. They then must reconcile these differences in order to play the game effectively in their "crosscultural" groups. In struggling to understand why other players don't seem to be playing correctly, they gain insight into the dynamics of cross-cultural encounters.
- Explain to the participants that they are going to play a simple card game in small groups and the object of the game is to win.
- 4. There should be a minimum of three people per table. Set up as many tables for participants i.e. if there are 12 participants, set up 4 tables.
- 5. Number the tables.
- 6. Give one deck of cards per table.
- 7. Hand out a copy of the rules to each table, ensuring that the specific rule for that table is added. A copy of the rules can be found in the annex of this resource.





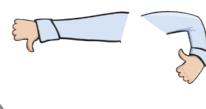
Suggested discussion questions:

- If you could describe the game in one word, what would it be?
- What did you expect at the beginning of the game?
- When did you realize that something was wrong?
- How did you deal with it?
- How did not being able to speak contribute to what you were feeling?











Further Resources:

- Further reading on interculturalism vs multiculturalism: Interculturalism: a Handbook for Critical Integration (The Baring Foundation, 2012)
- A development model of intercultural sensitivity (Bennett, M, 2011) http://www.idrinstitute.org/allegati/IDRI t Pubblicazioni/47/FILE Documento Bennett DMIS 12pp quotes rev 2011.pdf



3. PERCEPTIONS, PREJUDICES & STEREOTYPES

What this section will cover

This chapter on perceptions, prejudices and stereotypes is a basic overview of what each of the terms mean, and how they play out in our daily lives and interactions with people.

Why it's important

It is important to be aware of the perceptions, prejudices and stereotypes we hold as they can be potentially damaging to positive interactions and building strong relationships with people.

Learning outcomes

Participants will gain a strong awareness of the way they view the world and how their life and experience to date have shaped their world view. Participants will be encouraged to be open to understanding and accepting differences and discussing them in a safe environment.



What are perceptions?

Perception is the way in which something is regarded, understood, or interpreted.

(Pearsall et al 2005, p.1306)

Understanding that your assumptions may not be the assumptions of others is essential to create a positive working environment and rewarding relationships with others.

What is a prejudice?

Prejudice comes from "Pre-Judge". This means to have a judgement or assumption about a person or culture before actually knowing that person or having experienced that culture first-hand. Prejudices can be dangerous as they are a second-hand account of the person or situation. They can be propagated from media or somebody else's opinion and do not make up the full picture.



What is a stereotype?

A stereotype is a widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing.

(Oxford Dictionary)

Stereotypes are universal. When engaging with different cultures, stereotypes can easily be made whether intentionally or unintentionally. The degree of contact we have with a given culture influences the judgements or stereotypes we might have about the culture. Stereotypes become negative when one group make assumptions about another group of people without real evidence.



"The single story creates stereotypes and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue but that they are incomplete, they make one story become the only story...the single story robs people of dignity, it makes recognition of our equal humanity difficult rather than how we are similar"

- Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Ted Talk

Activity 3.1: 60 SECONDS=1 MINUTE, OR DOES IT?



Instructions for facilitator:

- 1. Ask participant to take off their watches, stand up in front of their chair and close their eyes.
- 2. On the command "Go", each person has to count up to 60 seconds in their head and sit down when they have finished.
- 3. They can only open their eyes when they have sat down and must stay silent until all participants have taken a seat.

Debrief

Once everyone has sat down, tell the group who sat first, and who sat last. Ask the group how long they thought they had been standing or sitting? Ask the group if this reflected their own concept of time.



Activity 3.2: WHAT DO YOU SEE?



Instructions for facilitator:

- 1. Divide your group up into small groups and give them copies of the pictures.
- 2. Ask the participants to discuss questions 1-5 below.

Suggested discussion questions:

- a) What comes to mind when you look at the picture?
- b) Explain what you see and why.
- c) How does it link to differing perceptions we may have and why?
- d) What problems can arise from having different viewpoints?
- e) How can different perceptions or viewpoints benefit the way in which we work together?



Activity 3.3: RECOGNISING POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES



Instructions for facilitator:

- 1. Ask participants to list down one positive and one negative stereotype about your own culture
- 2. Tell participants to partner with another person and discuss their answers
- 3. Ask participants to stay in the same groups and answer the suggested discussion questions listed below. The facilitator can read the questions out or write them up somewhere for all participants to read.

Example from the Irish context:

Positive example - Irish people are very friendly and helpful Negative example - Irish people are alcoholics

Suggested discussion questions:

- a) Can you list other positive or negative stereotypes you are aware of?
- b) When was the first time you realised or heard of these stereotypes?
- c) Why do you think these stereotypes exist?
- d) Is there anything you can do to offset negative stereotypes other people use?



Activity 3.4: TOPICAL THEMES



Instructions for facilitator:

- 1. Get the participants to break up into groups of two or more and ask them to pick a scenario from the list below.
- 2. In their groups, ask participants to discuss how they would deal with the issue they have chosen.
- 3. Ask them to think of the repercussions their decision may have on the workplace/ organisation/community/ international volunteer.
- 4. Encourage the group to think of other scenarios that could be problematic within an intercultural workplace and how they would deal with it.



Clothing

One of your international volunteers is consistently coming to work in inappropriate clothes. i.e- A female volunteer not properly covering her shoulders when on a visit to a remote community where covering up is the norm and not to do so is seen as disrespectful. What will you do to raise this issue with the volunteer?

LGBT (Gay Lesbian Bisexual and Trans)

One of your male international volunteers who you have been working with for the last three months has come to you to let you know that he is gay and that his boyfriend will be visiting for two weeks. It is illegal to be openly gay in the country in which he is now volunteering. What advice will you give him?

Role of women

SCENARIO EXAMPLES

A European female volunteer involved in an environment protection project complains about the fact that the fishermen don't want to speak with her during the capacity building training. How do you respond to this?

Consumption of alcohol/smoking

International volunteers are used to smoking in public places or in the streets, but it's not in the habit of the community to do so. What will you do to raise this issue with the volunteer?

Diet: Vegetarian/Vegan/No pork

A volunteer coming from Europe is hard to please about food. He doesn't eat meat or fish in a country where meat is the main dish. In a meeting with the Community leader he refused to taste any food. How will you react to the volunteer's choice?

Religious beliefs

The international volunteer hosted in the community doesn't participate in religious celebrations and identifies as an atheist (does not believe in any god). Some of the community are asking you why he is not participating in their celebrations. What will be your response to this? Do you think you need to discuss this with the volunteer?

Further Resources:

- TedTalk: The Single Story-Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger-of-a-single-story
- The Common Cause foundation: http://valuesandframes.org/learn/
- "The Wave" Experiment in 1967: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICng-KRxXJ8

4. WORKING TOGETHER



What this section will cover?

This chapter will help participants to understand the challenges of working and collaborating together, in particular when the team is made up of local and international volunteers.

Why it's important?

Good teamwork and a positive working atmosphere are essential to produce successful results in any project or workplace.

Learning outcomes?

Participants will learn to work and cooperate together by exploring the richness that a diverse team can bring, recognizing power dynamics and finding ways to accomplish a common goal.

What does working together mean?

The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team.

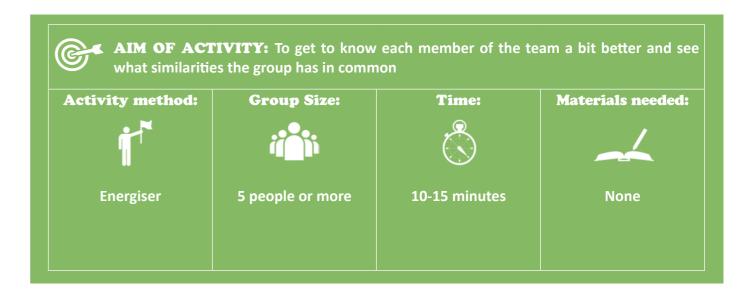
(Phil Jackson)

Building a team involves effort! Good teamwork begins by building trust, giving value to personal abilities and competences whilst creating a harmonious atmosphere for all.

Applying the team work idea to a multicultural context is even more challenging, because working together is about embracing diversity, managing cross cultural differences, achieving balance and promoting understanding, openness and acceptance.



Activity 4.1: HAVE YOU EVER?



Instructions for facilitator:

- 1. Ask participants to stand in a circle facing each other.
- 2. Using the list below, the instructor will call out each 'have you ever' statement. (The instructor can tailor the questions to suit the group or make up new statements).

List of Possible "Have You Ever?" Items:

- Have you ever lived overseas for more than 1 year?
- Have you ever sung karaoke?
- Have you ever been on a horse?
- Have you broken any bones in your body?
- Have you done volunteer work sometime in the last month?
- Have you ever cooked a meal by yourself for more than 20 people?
- Have you ever been parachuting or done a bungee jump?
- 3. Explain to the participants that if the statement applies to them, they must run into the middle, jump in the air, and do a high five with anyone else who runs in.



Activity 4.2: WORKING TOGETHER AGREEMENT



Instructions for facilitator:

- 1. Tell participants that they are going to make a 'working together agreement'. Explain to the group that it is a list of things suggested by group members that must be agreed upon by all of the group. For example, 'we agree to respect the opinions of others'.
- 2. Ask participants to break into groups of two or more people.
- 3. Pass out paper and pens to each group and ask them to list down what they would like to have in the agreement.

WORKING TOGETHER TODAY, WE AGREE TO:

<u>CONFIDENTIALITY</u>: (making it 'safe' and comfortable for us all to share what we think without being compromised later. What's said in the room, stays in the room)

PARTICIPATE: (taking part in the discussion and asking questions if uncertain)

ACTIVELY LISTEN: (listening to understand, rather than to respond!)

<u>LEARN</u>: (reviewing and reflecting, rather than immediately defending what we think, do or say)

CHALLENGE: (challenging each other's opinion and ideas constructively and welcome having our own views questioned, without feeling personally attacked)

HELP EACH OTHER LEARN: (this is a space for asking 'stupid' questions, one where people won't be judged on what they know, don't know, or what they currently understand)

- 4. If participants are finding it difficult to think of things, the facilitator may prompt them with the following suggestions:
- 5. When participants have listed the wishes for their working together agreement, ask each group, one by one, to read out what they have listed.
- 6. The facilitator should list all the new points each group have mentioned onto a flip chart paper, blackboard or white board where everyone can see.
- 7. After everything has been listed, check with the entire group and see that they are all in agreement with the joint working together group list.
- 8. Once the list has been finalised, it should be kept somewhere to remind people of what they have agreed to commit to within the group.



TEAMWORK



Activity 4.3: GROWING TOGETHER AS A TEAM



Instructions for facilitator:

- 1. Divide participants into small groups of 3-5 people.
- 2. Ensure that there is a mix of people in each group (mix by ages, gender, interests).
- 3. Give the 'growing together as a team unfinished sentences' handout to each person.
- 4. Ask participants to individually complete the unfinished sentences, expressing their own feeling and thoughts.
- 5. Ask participants to discuss their answers within their small group.
- 6. Each group makes a list of what they discussed on a sheet of paper.
- 7. The facilitator collects all the results of the groups work under the headline **HOW WE CAN FORM A GROUP.**
- 8. Once the collective list is finished, the facilitator explains that the activity should have encouraged the group to express what each participant feels and thinks, developing confidence within the group.



Suggested discussion questions:

- How did you feel during this exercise?
- Did you learn anything new?
- What experiences have you had so far within the team?
- In what ways can you can facilitate the positive team work process?

Activity 4.4: THE MARSHMALLOW CHALLENGE



Instructions for facilitator:

- 1. The facilitator should divide the group up into three teams.
- 2. Hand out the materials to each group. Each group will receive: 5 pieces of uncooked spaghetti, straws or thin sticks, a marshmallow or some soft piece of food, some scotch tape and some string.
- 3. The facilitator should explain the aim of the activity which is to create a self-supporting structure to support the marshmallow or piece of bread. The winning team is the one that has positioned the highest marshmallow (or piece of bread) on the structure.
- 4. The facilitator invites each group to identify 1 observer and 1 manager in the team, to better organise the work.
- 5. The observers in particular need to observe the way in which the group work together, guiding the debriefing activity.
- 6. The groups have 20 minutes to do the exercise.
- 7. After 15 minutes, the facilitator gives 5 additional spaghetti to each group and allows them an extra 15 minutes to continue building the structure higher.
- 8. At the end of the exercise, the facilitator invites the observers to describe how each group dealt with the challenge.
- 9. Now give all the team members an opportunity to share their thoughts about the exercise.

Suggested discussion questions:

- a) Do you think the challenge was difficult? Why?
- b) How were the roles assigned in your group?
- c) What strategy did you identify to reach the goal? Was it successful? Why or why not?
- d) Is there anything you would have done differently if you had to do the challenge again? How would you organise your team?



WHAT ARE POWER IMBALANCES?

As individuals uncover their own powerlessness and collusion with the existing powers structures they can subvert these dynamics.

(Jaap Boonstra & Killian Bennebroek Gravenhorst)

An awareness of certain power imbalances is necessary for understanding and working together as a team.

Decisions and behaviours in a relationship can sometimes be attributed to an unspoken power dynamic, which may be influenced by different factors such as the following:

- Age sometimes being older can give power. An older man talking about his experiences to a younger person and sharing his knowledge can give greater power to the older person. However, a younger person coming into a new job may have more up to date knowledge and more modern, useful skills than an older person, creating a power imbalance and giving more power to the younger person.
- **Gender** This depends on how patriarchal the society is in relation to the value placed on women. The nature (physically labour intensive vs more traditional caring roles) of the job can also dictate to whom holds the power.
- **Qualifications** a person's qualifications can sometimes give them more power. "Well, yes you have a degree, but I have a post-graduate degree" etc.
- Knowledge of a particular topic can create power, as one person may know more than another.
- Experience the experience of the world, in a job, or in a particular area of life can give power over another.
- **Financial disparities** Some people might view international volunteers as being wealthy in comparison to them and as a result of their 'wealth' perceive them as influential. In some cases it can be considered as a well-paid salary compared to local standards of living).
- **Geographical background** a person coming from an urban area may be considered smarter or richer than somebody coming from a rural area or similarly if s/he is coming from an industrialised/less industrialised areas of the world.
- **Ethnicity** a person having a specific ethnical background can feel stereotyped as less qualified or less powerful compared to other groups.

These factors might influence the nature of a relationship, and can lead to some difficulties and tensions among people who need to work together as a team.



Activity 4.5: MINORIA AND MAJORIA INHABITANTS



Instructions for facilitator:

NOTE: There should be at least two facilitators to ensure this activity is carried out properly: one facilitator to guide and join each group.

- 1. Divide participants into two groups and get them to make arm bands for themselves. The **Minorians** will wear one colour arm bands; **Majorians** will wear another colour arm band.
- 2. Separate the two groups into two different rooms or spaces where they cannot hear or see each other's scenarios.
- 3. Give the Minorian group the newspaper, string, and blu-tack.
- 4. Provide the Majorian group with the more luxurious material such as scissors, coloured paper, sticky tape, pens and paper.
- 5. Give each group their scenario handout. (See the annex of this resource for the Minoria/Majoria handouts).
- 6. Don't let the groups hear each other's scenario until the debriefing following the exercise.
- 7. Let the scenarios play out according to the instructions on each of the group's handouts.
- 8. After the exercise, debrief the participants while they are still in their roles and still wearing their arm bands so they can discuss the experience from their viewpoint.

Suggested discussion questions:

- a) How easy was it for you to take on your role in the exercise?
- b) What were your reactions when you entered the other culture?
- c) What did you think when the 'experts' arrived in your culture, especially since they came earlier than expected?
- d) Didtheparticipantsintheothergroupreactasyouhadanticipated they would?
- e) What were your expectations for yourself and your culture?
- f) What were your expectations of the other culture?
- g) How did you feel at different stages during the exercise?



Continued instructions for facilitators

- 9. Conduct a 'de-robing ceremony': ask all participants to take off their arm bands and throw them away (Moving participants out of the roles they have played is essential to end any resentment or hostility which may have developed from the simulation).
- 10. After the de-robing ceremony, ask the participants how it feels to step out of their roles and view the exercise from another perspective.

Note for facilitator: Some points that need to be emphasised are: it is often difficult to receive help gracefully if that help is given on someone else's terms. Even though they may have needed technical assistance, the Minorian group probably wanted to maintain pride in their accomplishments; on the other hand, the Majorians may have felt rejected and not appreciated since they came with a genuine interest in helping. They may also have felt they had a right to see the material they brought was properly used and not wasted. In the end, each side needs to develop an understanding of how the other feels about the project. Essentially, this exercise is aimed at showing people the importance of seeing an issue from a totally different point of view. This exercise is also about power. For example, it can be used to develop an understanding of resource distribution and equity within our society. It's also a good exercise to use if people do not have a direct understanding of what it means to be part of a minority group.



5. communication

What this section will cover

This section will outline the many ways in which people can communicate within a group or a team. It shows the diversity of ways in which people chose to communicate.

Why it's important

The way in which people communicate can be heavily rooted in their culture: respecting the various ways in which people interact and communicate is part of respecting that culture.

Learning outcomes

Participants will be able to reflect and learn about their particular communication preference. In addition, the exercises will help participants explore and understand in greater depth, other methods and styles of communication and in turn brainstorm ideas and tips to ensure harmony and respect to give space and merit to the many ways in which people communicate.



Between
what I think
what I want to say
what I think I am saying
what I say
what you want to hear
what you think you hear
what you think you near
what you think you understand
what you want to understand
and what you understand
there are at least 10 chances
that we will not understand each other
But let's try anyway...

(L'Encyclopédie du Savoir Relatif et Absolu)

Good communication through being honest, open and understanding can pave the way for healthy working relationships.

Culture can sometimes be the root of communication challenges: exploring historical experiences and the way in which different cultural groups have related to one another is key to opening channels to cross cultural communication.

Language as a barrier

Identifying a common working language is necessary to manage intercultural collaboration. The best case scenario would be that all the members of the group are familiar with that language at the same level, but what can often happen is that people will have different levels of expertise in the same language. Some may be more comfortable communicating than others.

Problems may arise even when everyone speaks the same language: this may be due to varied dialect or accents i.e British English vs. American English. Some terminology or phrases might be colloquial and not understood universally.

Greetings

Even the most basic gesture of human interaction (a greeting, a simple hello) can be misconstrued and often cause offence from the outset. For instance, kissing a colleague is not considered an appropriate practice in the U.S., but in France, one peck on each cheek is an acceptable greeting, in Spain three kisses is common. In Ecuador you greet by starting with a kiss on the left cheek whereas in Italy it is on the right check. A firm handshake is widely accepted in many European countries but may not a recognized practise in other cultures. In India friends, especially men, walk embraced or hand in hand. In Europe this behaviour is reserved for romantic relationships.



Ask yourself

Can you list the common greetings that you use on a daily basis? Do these vary depending on the setting?

Every day we carry out basic greetings which change depending on the setting we are in. Perhaps we would not greet our boss the way we might greet a sibling or friend. Some greetings are more formal and we become aware which ones to use in the right situation. As such, we also must be aware what the appropriate greetings to use in an intercultural setting are. Being aware of cultural differences as well as exploring cultural similarities can help you communicate with others more effectively.

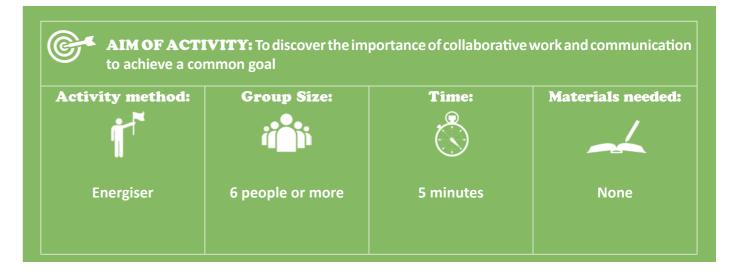
Humour

Humour is notoriously culture-specific: many things that pass for humour in one culture can be offensive in another. Sometimes taking a light-hearted approach when discussing some topics might be less threatening than a more serious approach.

Just like the concept of culture (see chapter 2) communication can be both explicit (direct) and implicit (indirect). Some people might be inclined to use a more direct form of communication whereas others may use indirect methods. The clash of direct and indirect forms of communication, if not understood and addressed, may lead to misunderstandings. It is important to be aware and evaluate which style of communication you are used to and which style you use in your daily interactions, in the office, at home, in the street. We generally alter our level of communication style depending on the person we are communicating with.



Activity 5.1: BACK TO BACK



Instructions for facilitator:

- 1. Instruct the participants to find another person of similar size and weight.
- 2. Ask everyone to sit on the floor, back to back with their pair.
- 3. Ask the pairs to hold their arms while keeping their backs together.
- 4. Tell everyone their goal is to stand up, while keeping the arms and backs together.
- 5. The first couple to stand up, win.

Note: Please consider not running this activity if you feel some participants are not able bodied or have mobility issues.



Activity 5.2: HAND, EYE, EAR



Instructions for facilitator:

- 1. Participants are divided into small groups of at least 5 people per group.
- 2. There should be at least two groups.
- 3. Each group is asked to stand in single file and form a line, one standing behind the
- 4. As they are doing this, the facilitator prepares a series of words that are objects on small pieces of paper, for example, football, light bulb, table, bus etc.
- 5. The facilitator hands a piece of paper and a pen to the first two people in the line.
- 6. The facilitator must hand the same word they have written on a piece of paper to the person at the front of each line.
- 7. The 1st person in the line must read the word without the rest of the group seeing it and write down a description on their blank piece of paper without using the word itself. For example, if the word given to them is light bulb they may write " electricity... you can switch it on, it can be screwed into a lamp" etc.
- 8. The next person (2nd in the line) is given the description on the piece of paper and must attempt to draw what they think the word is and show it to the person behind them.
- 9. The 3rd person in the line must look at the drawing and mime what they think it is to the next person.
- 10. The next person (4th in line) must whisper it to the last person who must then say what they think the word is
- 11. If it is the correct word the facilitator gives a new word to that group and they must follow the same instructions as the previous round, if they do not get it, they must start from the beginning with the same word.
- 12. The first team to complete all the words that the facilitator has given, wins.

Suggested discussion questions:

- a) Was it enjoyable? Why yes/no?
- b) What was the most difficult stage?
- c) What was the most frustrating point?
- d) What was the purpose of this exercise?
- e) Were communication channels largely different from each other? How? Why?
- Was it equally easy/difficult to use various channels of communication?
- g) Which of these channels do we use more/less often? Why?



AIM OF ACTIVITY: To enable learners to reflect on some of the typical communication

Activity 5.3: COMMUNICATION TYPES

styles commonly encountered in their own and other cultures and to explore some of the potential misunderstandings that may occur when individuals with different communication styles interact **Activity method:** Time: Materials needed: **Group Size: Copies of the table Discussion and Debate** 9 people or more 60 minutes 'Exploring communication approaches' handout (available in the annex of this resource) for each participant and a flipchart/white board or black board and markers

Instructions for facilitator:

- 1. Divide participants in small groups (3-4 people). Provide each participant of the small group with a copy of the 'Exploring Communication Approaches' handout.
- 2. Work through each element, comparing and contrasting column A to column B.

Suggested discussion questions

- 1. Read each of the following pairs of descriptions.
- 2. Decide which descriptions is more similar to the way you communicate in your workplace, description A or B.
- 3. Think of your own country or culture and see for each statement, is it is closer to type A or type B?
- 4. Choose one or two statement pairs that interest you. Can you think of any misunderstandings that might arise when people from cultures more like A, communicate with people from cultures more like B?

Further Resources:

• Intercultural Communication Resource Pack (SALTO 2008) https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-1789/ Booklet%20Intercultural%20Communication%20Resource%20Pack.pdf



Country Answers: 1. Finland, 2 Bangladesh, 3 Paris, 4 Vietnam.

ANNEXES

QUEUING ACROSS CULTURES HANDOUT

Picture 1



Picture 2



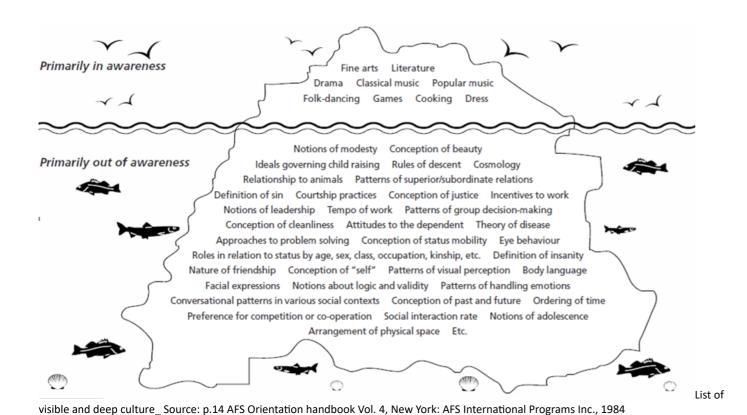
Picture 3



Picture 4



LIST OF VISIBLE AND DEEP CULTURE HANDOUT



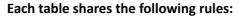
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BARNGA GAME RULES HANDOUT

The rules: Rule sheets can be altered or discarded for the number of tables being used. Some samples of rules are as follows:

- Table 1: Ace is the highest card wins
- Table 2: Ace is the lowest card looses
- Table 3: Ace low, diamonds win
- Table 4: Ace low, clubs win
- Table 5: Ace high, hearts win

In all cases, other cards will be worth face value e.g. 10 high, 2 low.

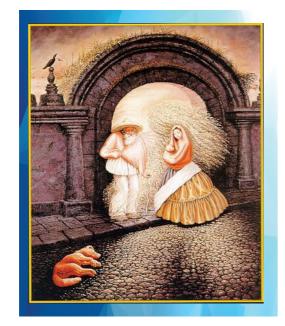


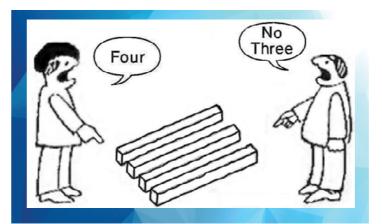
- Players are dealt 5 cards each
- Whoever wins the most games within the 10 minutes will move clockwise to the next table
- Whoever loses the most games will move counter clockwise to the next table
- Everyone else stays at the same table
- Each round will be about 10 minutes long and each round will consist of any number of games that the time allows.
- After the initial round, players will not be allowed to see the rules or speak to each other. Gestures are allowed, but players are not allowed to use words.
- The winner will be the person who has won the most games in total. (of course, once game play starts, winning will likely take a back seat to trying to figure out what everyone else is doing, as they are playing by different rules).
- Players can keep track of scores with lollipop sticks or matches (one stick per game won).
- The dealer can be anyone at the table, the person who plays first will be to the right of the dealer.
- The first player for each trick may play ANY suit. All other players must follow suit (play a card of the same suit). For each round, each player plays one card.
- If a player does not have that suit, a card of any suit must be played. The trick is won by the person with the HIGHEST card of the ORIGINAL suit (players will begin to become confused when some players believe their card is trump, and others disagree or contradict this).



WHAT DO YOU SEE? HANDOUT

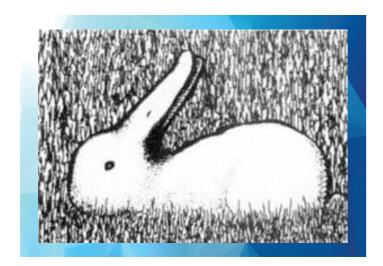
1.

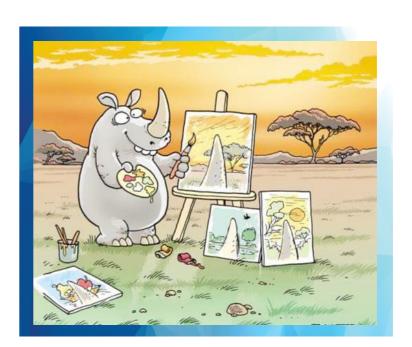






2.





GROWING TOGETHER AS A TEAM UNFINISHED QUESTION HANDOUT

When I enter in a group, I feel... My best professional skill is... I try to impress people so that they believe that I am ... I trust people that ... In this group I feel nearer to; I feel greater distance with (Please, silently choose to which person in the group the phrases adapt the most-DON'T say the name - and discuss on what facilitates this feeling of closeness and distance). At the moment in this group I feel ... At the moment, from the group, I would like ... In my opinion, a good leader is a person that...

MINORIA, MAJORIA HANDOUT

MINORIANS: what you have to do... You are residents of the country of Minoria. Minoria is not a new country, but a very old one with a noble history and a rich culture. Unfortunately, your country has been dominated by other nations for so long that you are just now beginning to regain a sense of independence and pride. You have finally been able to shake yourself free of the nations which have dominated and exploited you for so long, and you are very proud of your hard-won freedom and your right to run your country the way you want to. One of the problems that besets you is the fact that you have few natural resources and, because you have been dominated by others for so long, you have not been able to develop the resources you have or the technology to make use of them. Poverty is a problem in your country, but it is one you have learned to live with and even to accept as the normal way of life. This is the anniversary of your independence, and you are searching for some appropriate monument, symbol, or other manifestation around which the new national pride can form and develop. Your task is to begin discussing what kind of monument will best symbolise that pride and then to construct it with the materials and resources you have at hand. You want to use native materials to the extent possible, partly out of the very pride you are celebrating. Additionally, you do not have the money to import materials, and you do not want to become indebted to outsiders. You are especially wary of gifts with political strings attached. You have just received word from the ministry that in the next twenty minutes a team of people will be arriving from a country called Majoria. Although you have never had an opportunity to meet any Majorians, Majoria is well known to you since it is one of the leading countries in the world. Its resources seem to be endless. While you would welcome suggestions and appreciate any help the Majorians might offer, you are ready to resist any type of patronising or threat to your independence of choice or action. After twenty minutes of planning with the Majorians, you will have no more than thirty minutes working together to execute the plans you have jointly made. On with your monument! Long live Minoria!

MAJORIANS: You are the fortunate citizens of Majoria. Majoria's technology, natural resources, and wealth make it one of the richest in the modern world. Your people have solved the scourges of earlier centuries: epidemics, hunger, limited production, illiteracy, etc. People in your country worry little about survival and more about exploiting their opportunities in a land of abundance. Unfortunately, there are other far less fortunate countries. Many people in your country are concerned about their plight: some feel guilt for having so much while others have so little; others realise that the world will not be safe if the imbalance of technology, resources and materials continues. Because of your idealism and your genuine concern for less fortunate people, you have volunteered to go to an obscure little country named Minoria and offer aid. Minoria is a poor, underdeveloped nation, but within it, side by side, there are dramatic contrasts: affluence and need, healthy leaders and starving beggars, modern buildings and shacks without sanitation, educated urbanites and the illiterate country people. Behind Minoria's plush front, the statistics of hunger, disease, and unemployment tell the real story. Minoria is new among the world's nations and its leaders, policymakers and technicians do not seem experienced in what they do. Subsequently, things are done on the merest whim and have no relation to the country's basic needs or long-term interests. Minoria needs many things. It is struggling to survive in the modern world. The most important thing for Minoria is to order its priorities to place the few resources it has where the greatest needs lie. Next, it must acquire resources from outside to supplement its own. Finally, technical help is needed to make sure what they construct endures and what they have or are provided with is used well. You have ten minutes to discuss what you will do to assist Minoria before arriving in the country. After your arrival, you will be expected to help them plan a major, top priority project that will benefit their country and to help execute that plan using the materials you have at hand.

Remember, you will be evaluated on your ability to:

- a) help them reset priorities which match their needs
- b) help them use the materials you have bought wisely
- c) provide technical assistance and helpful suggestions about the construction of the selected project.

EXPLORING COMMUNICATION APPROACHES HANDOUT

Column A	Column B
In some countries, people tend to talk quite quickly, frequently interrupting others in order to get their ideas across.	In other countries, people tend to talk in a slow and considered way, rarely interrupting other people when they are talking.
In some countries, people tend to talk quite loudly and are not particularly concerned if people they do not know overhear their conversations.	In other countries, people tend to be more soft - spoken, and take care to ensure that they do not talk so loudly that other people can hear their conversations.
In some countries, demonstrating interest in what other people have to say means maintaining good eye contact with them when they are talking.	In other countries, demonstrating respect for other people means trying to avoid too much direct or close eye contact while they are speaking.
4. In some countries, even people who do not know each other very well will hold hands, embrace, place their arms around each other's shoulders, or touch each other on the arms.	In other countries, people are taught not to touch other people they do not know, and will try to avoid physical contact with strangers wherever possible.
5. In some countries, people are direct and frank in the way they speak. They will give their personal opinions freely, regardless of whom they are talking to, and will often criticize other people directly if necessary.	In other countries, people are less direct in the way they speak. They will often avoid giving their personal opinions unless they know the people they are talking to well, and will try to avoid saying things that might come across as too critical of others.
6. In some countries, people write e-mails that are as short, direct and factual as possible. They pose questions directly and ask for information in an explicit and unambiguous way.	In other countries, people sometimes write e-mails in a less direct and wordier way. They often don't feel the need to spell out precisely and unambiguously the information they require.
7. In some countries, people are happy to talk about their personal and family life with their colleagues at work. They are also inclined to ask other people questions about their private and family life, even if they do not know them very well.	In other countries, people prefer to keep their private life and their work life separate. They do not tend to ask questions or talk about personal and family life at work, unless it is with close colleagues who they know well.
8. In some countries, people are happy to talk about their accomplishments without embarrassment or shame. They think it is polite and honest to describe what they have achieved in their lives.	In other countries, people feel uncomfortable talking about what they have accomplished. They think it is polite and courteous to keep quiet about their attainments.
9. In some countries, people will try to remain as reasonable, rational and dispassionate as possible during business discussions and conversations. They believe that the best way to remain objective is to argue based on facts and talk from the head, not from the heart.	In other countries, people feel comfortable following their feelings and intuition during business discussions and conversations. They believe that the best way to get their message across is to talk with passion and conviction, even if this sometimes comes across as being emotional.
10. In some countries, people are happy cracking jokes and telling funny stories at work or in business situations, even with people they do not know very well.	In other countries, people think work is a serious place to be and try to avoid making jokes or telling funny stories unless they know the other person very well.

AINE, regarding your GUIDE, this will be designed as well with the needed materials+stuffs ect...



NOTES NOTES

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