Community Building: Cultural Diversity and Navigating Differences

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This training is designed to assist ANR employees begin to understand and develop the skills necessary to work with diverse audiences.

Our focus is not to discuss culture in the context of how each cultural group behaves, but to become more aware of how we behave around cultures different from our own, in order to be more competent in our interactions with diverse audiences.
Community Building: Cultural Diversity and Navigating Differences

What you will learn

• How to recognize and manage difference
• The need to reflect and understand our own bias
• The value of diversity in a community setting
• How to manage conflict in a diverse environment
Agenda

I. Managing Cultural Differences
II. The Diversity Continuum
III. Who Are You?
IV. Privilege
V. Responding to Difference without Defensiveness
VI. Reflection
VII. Resources
Managing Cultural Differences

Instead of focusing on diversity in a context of race, or religion, we want to focus on diversity using the descriptor “difference”, especially when we are focusing on building relationships within our community.

Why difference rather than diversity?
The Diversity Continuum: The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

Experience of Difference

Development of Intercultural Sensitivity

Denial | Defense/Reversal | Minimization | Acceptance | Adaptation | Integration

Ethnocentric Stages | Ethnorelative Stages

Adapted from M.J. Bennett 1886, in M.R. Hammer and M.J. Bennett 1998, 2001
The Diversity Continuum: Tips

• The continuum is a self reflection guide, to assess where we think we are with community and cultural development.

• You can be on many places in the continuum at the same time depending on who you are interacting with.
The Diversity Continuum & Community

- Each family has their own micro-culture, as does each workplace location or unit.
- Try not to assign a value to a difference (better or worse) or to where we might be on the continuum.
We are not always aware of our own lack of cultural knowledge
All too often we focus on the negative, we focus on the pieces of cultural differences that are the sources of our anxiety or our frustration, but we find that beginning the conversation from a more positive and a more personal place is what allows us to develop our community building skills.
WHO ARE YOU?

In six words, describe who you are.
Privilege

• An unearned advantage
• It is systemic, not personal
• We can be privileged and oppressed at the same time.
• Privilege doesn’t necessarily mean happiness
In the article written by Peggy McIntosh “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack” she discusses all of the ways that individuals may be privileged where others may experience oppression.
Privilege

1. I can, if I wish, arrange to be in the company of people of my race most of the time.

2. I can be late to a meeting without having the lateness reflect on my race.
Privilege

3. I can criticize our government and talk about how much I fear its policies and behavior without being seen as a cultural outsider.

4. I can have a bad day without my behavior or attitude reflecting poorly on my cultural group.
Privilege
Why is it Important?

• Allow self reflection. It is easier to understand how your are viewed through the eyes of others when you self reflect.

• Gain the full story. You become more aware of others on a personal and emotional level.

• Assume less about others. We all know what happens when we assume!
Changing the Focus

Too often we are asked how to deal with other cultural groups, but before we can begin to deal with cultures outside of our own, we need to better understand ourselves.

- Who are we?
- What privileges are we afforded?
- How do we manage difference?
Once we recognize that we have discomfort, or a lack of understanding of another culture we can take steps towards developing understanding, and managing difference.

Becoming more self-aware is the first piece of the puzzle to building better relationships, and the next is managing our discomfort.
How Do You Manage Differences?

Avoid
Fight
Flight
Compromise
Collaborate
How Do You Manage Differences?

1. How do you feel when you are confronted with a person whose ideals are different from yours?

2. What about when you are asked to spend time in a part of town you have never visited? Eaten something you’ve never had?
Responding to Differences without Defensiveness
Easy to hear without listening
We seek the support of others who tend to agree with us and have a similar cultural perspective.
They see it from our perspective

We feel justified
Where we stand depends on ...
Lack of negotiation skills...

Disagreement →
(if) Lack of negotiation skills → Contention
How others react to us says more about them than about us; how we react to others says more about us than about them.
There are untold ways that people show disapproval
Have ever been hurt by what someone has said or done?
Transforming personal attacks into something constructive.
Feelings of defensiveness:

- We care about a person
- We care about an issue
- We may lose face
Moving Away from Defensiveness

**STEP 1**: Recognize we are experiencing negative emotions.
CHOOSE not to be defensive

“People are disturbed not by things but by the view which they take of them.”

—Albert Ellis
Moving Away from Defensiveness

**Step 2: Remember:**
How others react to us says more *about them* than about us.

**Choose not** to make this about us.
Have your intentions ever been misunderstood?

Have you ever misunderstood someone?
STOP burdening ourselves with other people’s imperfect communication
Moving Away from Defensiveness

**Step 3:** “Listen to what people are needing rather than what they are thinking about you”

–Marshall Rosenberg, *Non-violent communication*, p. 95
hearing criticism (even if it’s intended)
Choose not to wallow in self-pity or resentment
Hearing unmet needs is *not* about *making excuses* for the other person, it is about understanding.
**STEP 4: Reflect back person’s feelings and needs**


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When do I get to talk about my needs?

“Seek first to understand, then to be understood.”

—Steven Covey
At least for the moment—we will want to put aside our own needs
**REMEMBER** that our emotions show / leak
**Delivery**: Speak softly and slowly and tentatively.

This helps with language barriers and miscommunications.
Avoid putting yourself into equation.
—Marshall Rosenberg, *Non-violent communication*, p. 96-97
AVOID using your own values to judge another person's actions or attitude.
**REMEMBER** it may take multiple attempts

Connecting to others, especially those from a cultural group dissimilar from our own takes time.
**TRANSFORM**: Speak about what someone **wants** (rather than what they don’t).

Focus on the positive and areas where you share common ground, rather than the negative.
Reflection
Additional Resources

Webpages:
ANR Affirmative Action
http://ucanr.org/sites/anrstaff/Diversity/Affirmative_Action/

ANR Staff Personnel
http://ucanr.org/sites/anrstaff/Administration/Business_Operations/Staff_Personnel/

ANR Training Coordination
http://ucanr.org/sites/anrtraining/

Publications:
Party-Directed Mediation - Gregorio Billikopf
Navigating Difference – Washington State University, Mary Katherine Deen, Melynda Huskey, Louise Parker
Becoming Interculturally Competent – Milton J Bennet