Observe, State, Explain, and Explore (OSEE): Effective Tool for Developing Intercultural Communication Skills

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Identify four (4) basic cultural dimensions.

2. Explain an effective tool for improving intercultural communication skills.

3. Describe a technique for engaging in intercultural discussions.
COMMUNITY DISCUSSION GUIDELINES

- Keep it confidential.
- Use "I" statements.
- Everyone is encouraged to participate, but always OK to "pass" when you are asked to share a comment.
- Step Up, Step Back.
- Listen to and respect other points of view.
- Seek first to understand, not to be understood.
- Challenge the idea and not the person.
THE GIFT

What is it?
THE GIFT: Furoshiki (Japanese fabric wrap)
THE GIFT: CONSIDERATIONS

- Avoid making generalizations.
- No assumptions — except for best intentions.
- Recognize that we are all still learning.
- Do your best to understand the pros and cons of every option, not just those you prefer.
- Understand that there are different approaches to solving problems.
CULTURAL DIMENSIONS

Geert Hofstede's Definition of Culture

► "The collective programming of the mind distinguishing the members of one group or category of people from others".

► Different "cultural dimensions," each with a continuum from low to high.

POWER DISTANCE

- **HIGH POWER DISTANCE INDEX**
  People accept hierarchical order in which everyone has a place, and no further justification of a person's place is needed

- **LOW POWER DISTANCE INDEX**
  People strive to equalize the distribution of power and demand justification for inequalities of power
TIME

**MONOCHRONIC**
- Like to do one thing at a time
- Do not appreciate interruptions
- Common expressions: “Get to the point” or “Say what you mean,”

**POLYCHRONIC**
- Like to do multiple things at a time
- Willingness to change plans often and easily
- People tend to be main concern
- Concept of time is free-flowing and changes depending on situation
INDIVIDUALISM VS. COLLECTIVISM

► INDIVIDUALISM
High value placed on people’s time and their need for privacy and freedom; An enjoyment of challenges, and an expectation of individual rewards for hard work; Respect for privacy.

► COLLECTIVISM
Emphasis on building skills and becoming master of something; People work for intrinsic rewards; Maintaining harmony among group members overrides other moral issues.
INDULGENCE VS. RERAINT

- **INDULGENCE**
  Optimistic; Importance of freedom of speech; Focus on personal happiness. More direct in communication style where focus on exact words of what someone said.

- **RERAINT**
  Pessimistic. More controlled and rigid behavior. More indirect in communication style where focus on meaning of what someone said, but not exact words.
MOVING BEYOND ASSUMPTIONS: THE O.S.E.E. TOOL

Observe: Observe and listen to what is happening

State: State objectively what is happening

Explore: Explore different explanations for what is happening

Evaluate: Evaluate which explanation(s) are the most likely one(s)

ROLE PLAY

Use the OSEE tool:

Observe  State  Explore  Evaluate

Determine the cultural dimension(s) in play:

Power Distance  Time  Individualism vs Collectivism  Indulgence vs Restraint
"To effectively communicate, we must realize that we are all different in the way that we perceive the world and use this understanding as a guide to our communication with others"—Anthony Robbins
TYING IT ALL TOGETHER

1. Identify four (4) cultural dimensions.

2. Explain the OSEE Tool for improving intercultural communication skills.

3. Describe a technique for engaging in intercultural discussions.
WHAT'S NEXT?

- Look for additional trainings—intermediate and advanced coming next year
- Intercultural doesn't mean "international"
- These concepts can be applied in all realms of your life
- Resources:
  - Geert Hofstede's webpage (listing of research, simulation games, cultural dimension indices by country, etc.)
  - [https://geerthofstede.com/landing-page/](https://geerthofstede.com/landing-page/)
QUESTIONS

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