

## **Exercise 6: A Self-Assessment of Multicultural Awareness, Knowledge, and Skills**

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### OBJECTIVE

To audit your own abilities to demonstrate multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skill

### DESCRIPTION

This inventory of questions allows the participant to self-assess the extent to which multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skill have been achieved. Some participants will overestimate their degree of competence and others will underestimate their competence. This list of questions is similar to a test; participants, however, grade their own answers. Individual participants will assign themselves a grade based on their own self-assessment.

*Time required:* About an hour

*Risk/expertise level:* Low

*Participants needed:* Any number of participants plus one facilitator

### PROCEDURE

1. The facilitator will ask each participant to “read the following items and indicate how well you think you would be able to answer the item (using your own criteria) if you were to write out an answer.”

2. The facilitator will then say, “If you think you would provide an excellent answer, give yourself an A, if you think your answer would be generally good give yourself a B, if you think your answer would be acceptable but not as good as you would like give yourself a C, and if you feel unable to answer the question give yourself an F.”

3. At the end of this self-assessment, participants will be encouraged to compute their grade point average (GPA), with an A counting for 3 points, a B for 2 points, a C for 1 point, and an F for 0 points.

4. Participants will divide the number of points they have awarded themselves by the number of items to find their GPA.

### DEBRIEFING

After the participants have given themselves a “grade” on their self-assessment of their own multicultural competencies, the facilitator will lead a general group discussion. Discussion questions might include the following:

1. Is it possible to earn an A grade in the multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skill competencies?
2. Did you underestimate your level of competence before taking this test?
3. Did you overestimate your level of competence before taking this test?
4. What are the consequences of not having multicultural competence?
5. How do you plan to increase your level of multicultural competence?

## INSIGHT

We have a long way to go in developing multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skill competencies.

## EXHIBIT

### A. AWARENESS

1. Can you construct a genogram of your family for the last three generations on your mother's and father's sides?
2. What is your "cultural heritage"?
3. How well do you value and respect and model cultural differences in your life?
4. Who are the significant people in your lifetime who have influenced your attitudes, values, and biases?
5. What cultures do you least understand and why?
6. What do you do to recruit employees who are different from you in race, ethnicity, culture, and beliefs?
7. What culturally learned assumptions do you have that are different from those of other leaders?
8. In what ways do issues of oppression, racism, discrimination, and stereotyping influence how you lead or manage?
9. To what extent would you consider yourself as having "racist attitudes, beliefs and feelings"?
10. Have you had any social impact during your career as a leader?
11. Can you lead or manage with a variety of different communication styles?
12. Do you know how your culturally different subordinates feel about your natural communication style?
13. In what specific ways have you trained yourself to work with culturally different subordinates?

14. In what specific ways do you evaluate your leadership skills with culturally different subordinates?
15. When have you sought consultation from more qualified resource persons when working with culturally different subordinates?
16. How well do you understand yourself and your own cultural identity?
17. How well are you able to present a nonracist identity as a leader of culturally different subordinates?
18. Do you have a plan for increasing your multicultural awareness in the future?
19. Do you consider yourself to have achieved multicultural awareness?

**B. KNOWLEDGE**

1. Can you describe the social, political, and economic history of negative emotional reactions toward specific racial and ethnic groups?
2. How well can you lead and manage those whose beliefs and attitudes are profoundly different from your own?
3. Can you be nonjudgmental toward those whose beliefs are profoundly different from your own?
4. Are you aware of stereotypes and preconceived notions in your thoughts or practices?
5. Do you lead and manage individuals without knowing about their cultural attitudes, values, and backgrounds?
6. Are you aware of the life experiences, cultural heritages, and historical backgrounds of your culturally different subordinates?
7. Are you aware of the similarities and differences between yourself and your employees?
8. Are you able to explain how your subordinates' cultural backgrounds affects
  - a. personality formation?
  - b. vocational choices?
  - c. team behavior?
  - d. help-seeking behavior?
  - e. appropriate leadership styles?
9. Can you intelligently discuss sociopolitical issues that influence the quality of life of your subordinates or peers?
10. Can you discuss immigration issues that influence the quality of life of your subordinates or peers?
  - a. poverty?
  - b. racism?
  - c. stereotyping?
  - d. powerlessness?

11. In the past month have you read books and/or articles regarding culture and organizational issues of individuals within your organization?
12. In the past month have you participated in training to increase your knowledge and understanding of cultural contexts where leading occurs?
13. In the past month have you been actively involved with cultural minority groups outside your role as a leader?
  - a. community events?
  - b. social functions?
  - c. political functions?
  - d. celebrations?
  - e. friendships?
  - f. neighborhood gatherings?

C. SKILLS

1. Do you understand how your beliefs and attitudes affect the functioning of your employees?
2. Can you talk with your employees about their indigenous helping practices and respect indigenous help-giving networks?
3. Are you able to defend the positive values of bilingualism or multilingualism?
4. Do you understand the culture-bound features of your leadership style?
  - a. class-bound features?
  - b. linguistic features?
5. Can you explain why employees from a minority group might be reluctant to seek feedback from you?
6. Can you identify ways that your own cultural background might cause conflict with your minority employees from a different background?
7. Do you compensate for the cultural bias in tests developed in and for one cultural context when those tests are used with a culturally different population?
8. Do you interpret your developmental assessment data differently to culturally different employees who come from significantly different backgrounds?
9. Do you incorporate information about your employees' hierarchies when rating or assessing your relationship?
  - a. values?
  - b. beliefs?
10. Are you able to change relevant discriminatory practices in the community that affect the psychological welfare of your employees?
11. Do you have a large repertoire of verbal and nonverbal skills to match the cultural contexts of your different employees?

12. Is the verbal message your employee receives the same as the message sent and intended?
13. Is the nonverbal message your employee receives the same as the message sent and intended?
14. Are you skilled in a variety of different helping roles, methods, or approaches?
15. When your helping style is limited or inappropriate, will you realize it and have the skills to change?
16. Are you able to intervene with and change the social institutions in your employees' cultural contexts?
17. Are you able to tell when an employee's problem relates to cultural bias by others from when the problem might be personal to the employee?
18. Are you fluent in the first language of your employees?
19. Do you use a translator when working with employees whose language you do not understand?
20. Do you work actively to eliminate biases, prejudices, and discriminatory practices in your community?
21. Do you take responsibility for educating your employees about your own culturally learned orientation to leadership, outcome goals, and expectations?

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SOURCES: Developed from Sue, D. W., Bernier, Y., Durran, A., Feinberg, L., Pedersen, P., Smith E. J., & Vasquez-Nuttal, E. (1982). Position paper: Cross-cultural counseling competencies. *Counseling Psychologist, 19*(2), pp. 45–52. Also developed from Sue, D. W., Arredondo, P., & McDavis, R. J. (1992). Multicultural counseling competencies and standards: A call to the profession. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 70*, 477–486.