

## DEBRIEFING AND COACHING QUESTIONS

### **PERCEPTION**

#### *General Debriefing*

1. What are the risks and/or rewards associated with being inquisitive about something you know little or nothing about?
2. How will being in a foreign culture affect your capacity to be patient and tolerant when you are under pressure?
3. What are your favorite daily routines? What do they give you that is important?
4. What are 5 things you think it would be useful to know about a foreign country you have never visited that you could find out about before you go there?
5. Think of a time when you have had to be really mentally flexible. What were the circumstances, and were you able to be this way?

#### *General Coaching*

1. What might the consequences be in the workplace if a person holds an incorrect judgment about someone (i.e. "He is always honest" or "He can't be trusted") but doesn't know his judgment is incorrect?
2. What's the right balance between staying true to your own culture and adapting to the ways of a new culture?
3. Have you ever had a teacher, a friend, or a parent encourage you to take up something new and you did so? What happened?
4. How much uncertainty in a workplace should be tolerated before action is taken? How should that tipping point be determined?
5. When you are in a culturally unfamiliar environment and things don't go as planned, what additional skills beyond those you already have do you think you will need to manage the situation effectively?

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### **Non-judgmental Debriefing Questions**

1. Do you think it's possible to be completely non-judgmental about another person? Why or why not?
2. When a person deliberately withholds expressing a judgment s/he has about someone else, what do you imagine the reasons for doing so might be?
3. What do you think the difference is between a decision and a judgment?
4. What role do you think facts, statistics, and other forms of evidence should play in forming a judgment about something?
5. What role do you think emotion should play in making a judgment about something?

### **Non-judgmental Coaching Questions**

1. How does openly expressing your judgment (positive or negative) about a person affect your

- relationship with that person? Explain.
2. When is communicating a judgment about a person or situation the wrong thing to do? Explain.
  3. When is communicating a judgment about a person or situation the right thing to do? Explain.
  4. In the culture you are going to be in, what opinion do you imagine people there have of people who are quick to judge? Explain.
  5. In the culture you are going to be in, what opinion do you imagine people there have of people who are slow to judge? Explain.
  6. What might the consequences be in the workplace if a person holds an incorrect judgment about someone (i.e. "He is always honest" or "He can't be trusted") but doesn't know his judgment is incorrect?
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### Inquisitiveness Debriefing Questions

1. What are the circumstances in which inquisitiveness can be a bad thing in the workplace?
2. What are the circumstances in which inquisitiveness can be a good thing in the workplace?
3. What conclusions - good or bad - do you usually draw when you're around a person who shows little or no curiosity about something everyone else is interested in?
4. What do you think the relationship is between curiosity and knowledge?
5. What are the risks and/or rewards associated with being inquisitive about something you know little or nothing about?

### Inquisitiveness Coaching Questions

1. If you were to be more inquisitive than you currently are at work, how do you think that would affect yourself and your co-workers?
  2. When you are around a bunch of people who are absolutely fascinated by something that you have no interest in, how do you respond?
  3. How do you think the relationship between being "excited by something new" and "getting things done" should work?
  4. When you first become curious about something, what are the next steps you usually take?
  5. How can habits and routines get in the way of a person understanding another person? Give examples.
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### Tolerance of Ambiguity Debriefing Questions

1. Is it easy to be "less sure" of some things than it is of others? Give examples.
2. What advantages and/or disadvantages does being absolutely certain about something give a person?
3. What impact, if any, does planning and creating organizational structures have on a person's tolerance of ambiguity?
4. What signs do you look for to let you know that someone else is not willing to tolerate ambiguity in a situation?
5. What is the difference between being open to possibility and being naive?

**Tolerance of Ambiguity Coaching Questions**

1. When you are in a workplace situation where it is unclear what next steps should be taken, how are you affected emotionally?
  2. How much uncertainty in a workplace should be tolerated before action is taken? How should that tipping point be determined?
  3. When you go to a party where you hardly know anyone else who is there, what do you do to make yourself comfortable?
  4. Is it possible for a person to be spontaneous and open to possibilities yet still be focused and decisive? Explain.
  5. What does being more tolerant of ambiguity make possible in a situation that otherwise might not be possible?
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**Cosmopolitanism Debriefing Questions**

1. What was the first ethnic food you ever ate? What was that experience like?
2. Do you prefer to go to foreign movies or American ones? Why or why not?
3. When you travel abroad, how much of your time do you spend learning about the place you are going to?
4. If you could choose to be reborn at any time and in any place in history, when and where would you be reborn?
5. Have you ever done something that was considered culturally inappropriate? What was it, and how did it affect you and other people?

**Cosmopolitanism Coaching Questions**

1. How do you think knowing the history and traditions of a foreign country would impact how effectively you would work in that country?
  2. Are there any traditions you know about in other countries that you don't experience in the U.S. that you wish were here as well? What are they, and why do you think that?
  3. Why do you think people get upset when someone in a position of power from another culture imposes their way of doing things in the person's home culture?
  4. What's the right balance between staying true to your own culture and adapting to the ways of a new culture?
  5. How do you think cultural difference and geography impact the way people think about the problems they face?
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**Interest Flexibility Debriefing Questions**

1. What is the value, and the limitation, of "sticking with what you know"?
2. Have you ever been so captivated by a new idea or an activity you've never seen before that the only thing you wanted to do was learn about it? Give examples.
3. What do you think excites people so much about having a "bucket list"?
4. Have you ever been bored because your life seems to be repeating itself again and again? What do you do when that happens?
5. Have you ever had a teacher, a friend, or a parent encourage you to take up something new and you did so? What happened?

**Interest Flexibility Coaching Questions**

1. What are your favorite daily routines? What do they give you that's important?
2. When was the last time you took up a new interest or hobby? What was it, and how did it work out?
3. What do you think happens to a new work relationship when one person takes an interest in the hobbies another person has, even if the first person is totally unfamiliar with those hobbies?
4. Have you ever felt really uncomfortable learning something that everybody else already seemed to know about, yet you stuck with it until you understood anyway? What happened then?
5. What are the risks involved in learning about something that is completely unfamiliar? The rewards?

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**RELATIONSHIP****General Debriefing**

1. Given the cultural landscape in your new workplace abroad, how much attention should you give to consciously working on developing good work relations?
2. In your day-to-day work life, how aware are you of how the people around you are doing?
3. When you think of a work colleague you admire, what do you notice about how that person handles relationships with new employees?
4. Is there any difference between "interpersonally engaging" with a person at work and just "getting things done together that we have to do"? If so, how would you describe that difference?
5. Has a teacher, parent, or friend ever pointed out something about your abilities you're never noticed before? How did that affect you?

**General Coaching**

1. When you strongly believe something different to what another person you work with believes, is it more important to keep that relationship on good terms or to demonstrate you are right?
2. How might having "insider knowledge" of a culture from someone who lives there affect your work life?
3. What do you think the relationship is between being able to "read" someone else's emotions and being able to listen to them effectively?
4. How does understanding a customer's emotions affect the service you are able to provide to them? Explain.
5. Have you ever clearly impacted another person but not known why or how until after the fact? What did this teach you?

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**Relationship Interest Debriefing Questions**

1. Who is the most interesting person you have ever met? Why?
2. When is it best to be working as part of a team, and when is it best to be working alone?

3. How might having “insider knowledge” of a culture from someone who lives there affect your work life?
4. Have you ever had someone from a foreign culture approach you at work or in the community and show an interest in your life? How did this affect you?
5. What is the connection between having a trustworthy relationship with a person and your joint ability to overcome future workplace obstacles?

#### Relationship Interest Coaching Questions

1. Have you ever been in a social situation and really wanted to talk to a particular person, but didn’t do so? What stopped you?
2. When you think of a work colleague you admire, what do you notice about how they handle relationships with new employees?
3. Think back to a time you were really interested in getting to know someone, but they didn’t reciprocate your interest. What did you learn from that experience?
4. How do you go about building trust with the clients you service at Fidelity?
5. What’s the best relationship advice you’ve ever gotten from someone?

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#### Interpersonal Engagement Debriefing Questions

1. Is there any difference between “interpersonally engaging” with a person from another culture at work and just “get things done together that we have to do”? If so, how would you describe that difference?
2. Who was the best teacher of a skill (riding a bike, playing an instrument, learning an academic subject) you ever had? Why do you say that?
3. Has anyone ever given you the “cold shoulder” at work? How did that affect your capacity to do your job?
4. Who is currently your “best friend” at work? How did it get to be that way?
5. Are there any questions that are “too dumb to ask” when you’re getting to know someone for the first time? If so, what are they?

#### Interpersonal Engagement Coaching Questions

1. What’s an example of a “pleasant surprise” you’ve had when you met a new person?
2. What’s an example of an “unpleasant surprise” you’ve had when you met a new person? In hindsight, was there any way this could have played out differently?
3. If you were advising a young child as to the best way to make friends at school, what would you tell them to do?
4. When you were first romantically interested in someone, what was the most embarrassing thing you did to express that interest? What did it teach you?
5. How would you describe the relationship between feeling trustworthy about someone and having the ability to resolve a difficult conflict with them?

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#### Emotional Sensitivity Debriefing Questions

1. Do you consider your own emotions to be an ally, a nuisance, or somewhere in-between?
2. What do you notice happens to most people when their emotions are recognized by someone?
3. Have you ever felt a powerful emotion but no one else noticed it? What was that like?
4. Do you think emotions have anything to do with motivation?

5. What do you think the relationship is between being able to “read” someone else’s emotions and being able to listen to them effectively?
6. How would you describe the relationship between emotions and thinking?

### Emotional Sensitivity Coaching Questions

1. What is it like for you to be around people who are emotionally expressive most of the time?
2. When you are feeling a positive emotion such as joy, do you prefer to share it or to keep it to yourself?
3. How much trust do you place in your emotions to help guide you in your life?
4. When was one of the most difficult times you ever experienced in being able to control your emotions at work? What happened?
5. Do emotions play a role in being a conscientious person? If so, explain.
6. How does understanding a customer’s emotions affect the service you are able to provide to them? Explain.

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### Self-Awareness Debriefing Questions

1. What do you consider to be the most important values a person should have in his/her life? Explain.
2. Do you have friendships with people who believe things very different to the beliefs you have? How do you know this?
3. Have you ever had the experience at work of someone being unhappy with you but you didn’t know why? What did you do?
4. Have you ever had a colleague or friend who constantly offends others for reasons that are obvious to everyone but him/her? Explain.
5. What, if anything, is the connection between self-awareness and learning new things?

### Self-Awareness Coaching Questions

1. Have you ever had the experience of being “unaware of your own strength”? (include all kinds of strengths in your answer: mental, emotional, your skill set)
2. Has a teacher, parent, or friend ever pointed out something about your abilities you’re never noticed before? How did that affect you?
3. What limits have you noticed about yourself in your efforts to be the sort of person you want to be? How do you know about these limits?
4. Who do you think you have had the biggest impact on in your life? Explain.
5. Think about a person who has really inspired you in your life - what was it about that person that was the cause of that inspiration?

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### Social Flexibility Debriefing Questions

1. How important is it to be diplomatic when you are operating in an unfamiliar culture?
2. Do you consider yourself to be an adaptable person? Why or why not?
3. When you were younger and found yourself in a mostly ‘adult’ situation, what did you do to make yourself comfortable?
4. Has anyone ever gone ‘out of their way’ to understand your perspective, even when you knew they disagreed with it? What was that like?
5. What is your opinion of the word “compromise”?

**Social Flexibility Coaching Questions**

1. How well are you able to argue “both sides” of an issue? Explain.
2. Are you able to listen to another person’s point of view even if you don’t like that person?
3. When you strongly believe something different to what another person you work with believes, is it more important to keep that relationship on good terms or to demonstrate you are right?
4. What is a belief you have about the world that you would never compromise, no matter what?
5. Have you ever been proved wrong about something you were sure about in public? How did you react?

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**SELF-MANAGEMENT****General Debriefing**

1. How would you assess your capacity to adapt and change to a new situation without compromising your overall identity?
2. What do you imagine a person has to do to remain emotionally and mentally healthy when they first start living and working in a new culture?
3. How would you describe the relationship between being an effective problem solver and learning/discovering new ideas?
4. Have you ever been in the position of having to motivate another coworker who had become discouraged about some aspect of their work? What did you do?
5. Who is a person in your life whom you would describe as truly “comfortable in his own skin”? What about this person’s behavior led you to this conclusion?

**General Coaching**

1. In addition to skills you already have, what else will be required to manage your thoughts, emotions and responses to stress when you are in a foreign culture?
2. When you start work in a new culture, what is the appropriate balance between asking for support from people familiar with that culture and rolling up your sleeves and getting to work?
3. Can you think of a time when you were convinced to change your values because of the persuasiveness of someone else? What did you learn from this experience?
4. Have you ever known someone who seems to “take everything in stride”? What do you think their secret is?
5. When you have to wait for further information before proceeding on a project, how do you spend your time in the meantime?

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**Optimism Debriefing Questions**

1. What are you looking forward to about working in another culture?
2. How do you know when someone is being appropriately optimistic as opposed to being unrealistically positive?
3. How do you see the relationship between taking the initiative in a difficult situation and maintaining your optimism about that situation?

4. How do you see the relationship between optimism and the capacity to change something?
5. What character traits do you associate with optimism?

#### Optimism Coaching Questions

1. When you have previously had to deal with unexpected events popping up out of “nowhere”, what have you done to deal with them successfully?
2. Have you ever been in the position of having to motivate another coworker who had become discouraged about some aspect of their work? What did you do?
3. Describe a time in the past when you have faced a challenge you ultimately overcame: what did you learn from this experience?
4. What’s the best way for a person to accurately decide whether to continue supporting a project or goal or to “cut his losses” and abandon that project?
5. When you are engaged in a team project at work, what have you observed other team members do to sustain momentum for the project?

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#### Self-Confidence Debriefing Questions

1. When you think of a skill you have already developed, what do you remember doing to build and sustain your confidence when you were learning that skill?
2. How does self-confidence differ from self-reliance? How are they the same?
3. What role does self-confidence play when you have to deal with something unexpected?
4. What opportunities await you in working in another culture?
5. Is there a relationship between self-confidence and support from others, or is self-confidence entirely a matter for the individual?

#### Self-Confidence Coaching Questions

1. Have you ever ultimately succeeded at a task that other people thought couldn’t be achieved? Explain how you did this.
2. When does self-confidence tip over into unrealistic appraisal? How can this be identified?
3. Have you ever been around someone who appeared to be self-confident but really wasn’t? How did you know?
4. When you start work in a new culture, what is the appropriate balance between asking for support from people familiar with that culture and rolling up your sleeves and getting to work?
5. What do you do to recover from situations in which nothing goes right?

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#### Self-identity Debriefing Questions

1. To what extent do your values guide your behavior?
2. Can you think of a time when you were convinced to change your values because of the persuasiveness of someone else? What did you learn from this experience?
3. How much of a person’s identity is a result of the influence of their surroundings, and how much is a result of individual self-discovery through experience? Explain your answer.
4. Is it possible to have a strong sense of self without being a rigid person? How would that work?
5. How do you answer the question, “Who am I?”

#### Self-identity Coaching Questions

1. How well are you able to get along with people who have different beliefs to yours?
  2. How much of how you see yourself is connected to the culture you grew up in?
  3. Who is a person in your life whom you would describe as truly
  4. “comfortable in his own skin”? What about their behavior makes you come to this conclusion?
  5. Have you ever been in a work situation where the standards expected of everyone were impossibly high? How did this affect everyone?
  6. What are useful ways to keep a working relationship going well even when it’s clear that the people involved have very different values?
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**Emotional Resilience Debriefing Questions**

1. What do you think is the most difficult emotion to “recover from” when something has gone wrong in a person’s life?
2. What is your definition of resilience?
3. Who is the most resilient person you have ever met? What makes you say that?
4. Is there a relationship between emotional resilience and mental toughness? If so, how would you describe it?
5. Are there any downsides to being considered a resilient person?

**Emotional Resilience Coaching Questions**

1. What needs to happen to a person and/or inside that person to allow them to recover from a huge setback?
  2. How does having to be emotionally resilient repeatedly over a long period of time affect a person?
  3. What sort of emotional resilience might be necessary when a person moves to work in another culture?
  4. Are men and women emotionally resilient in the same or different ways?
  5. What role does pressure play in the ability of a person to be emotionally resilient?
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**Non-Stress Tendency Debriefing Questions**

1. What is your first reaction when something unexpectedly stressful appears in your life?
2. Have you ever known someone who seems to “take everything in stride”? What do you think their secret is?
3. What is your understanding of how a person’s body and emotions respond to stress- and how much of this can be influenced by the person?
4. What happens to you when you are asked to do something at the last minute that you have never done before?
5. Have you ever seen someone who appears to be really calm in a stressful situation, but you know that’s not really the case? How did you come to that conclusion?

**Non-Stress Tendency Coaching Questions**

1. Do you have any practices you use to keep yourself calm in your life?
  2. Since living and working in a different culture involves a lot of change, what do you think are some good ways to prepare for that change?
  3. On the occasions when you have responded poorly to stressful events, what did you learn that you want to be aware of the next time something similar happens?
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4. How do you see the relationship between trustworthiness of team members and their capacity to endure stressful work events?
  5. What are the “early warning signs” you notice in yourself when you are just beginning to feel stressed?
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#### Stress Management Debriefing Questions

1. What stress reduction methods do you personally use in your life?
2. Think of a time when you have been totally prepared for a work situation in advance. What impact did this have on the amount of stress you experienced in the situation?
3. How would you describe the relationship between stress and risk - including “calculated” risk?
4. What is the relationship between stress and skillfully managing your priorities?
5. How do you think people in the culture you will be working in think about stress? What does that do to influence your thinking about your own approach to stress?

#### Stress Management Coaching Questions

1. When you have to wait for further information before proceeding on a project, how do you spend your time in the meantime?
2. Is stress contagious between people? If so, how can this be effectively dealt with?
3. What is the relationship between taking the initiative in a situation and the amount of stress a person then experiences?
4. If you are in a situation you are unable to influence (for whatever reason), what do you do to keep your composure?
5. How can a stressful situation be turned into an opportunity?