FIELD NOTES
A FOUR-PHASE INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

“Culture...is the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others.”

- Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov

KEY CONCEPTS

The following are some of the key concepts discussed in this lesson.

▲ Culture: “Culture is a learned set of shared interpretations about beliefs, values, norms, and social practices, which affect the behaviors of a relatively large group of people.” (Lustig & Koester, 2006)

▲ Intercultural Competence: The ability to communicate and act appropriately and effectively across cultural differences. Effectively means we achieve the goals. Appropriately means we do so in a way in which all parties involved feel respected and valued.

▲ Intercultural Learning: Developing one’s intercultural competence.

FOUR CORE INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCIES¹

The following are the four core intercultural competencies, originally outlined by Dr. Michael (Mick) Vande Berg, that make up the four-phase developmental framework of intercultural learning.

I. Increasing awareness and understanding of our own characteristic ways of making meaning and acting in familiar and unfamiliar contexts;

II. Increasing awareness and understanding of others’ ways of making meaning and acting in familiar and unfamiliar contexts;

III. Responding mindfully in contexts that disorient or challenge us;

IV. Bridging cultural gaps in those contexts: Shifting perspective, attuning emotions, and adapting our behavior in effective and appropriate ways.

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FOUR-PHASE DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK

We can help others—and ourselves—develop by framing intercultural learning as a four-phase process, focusing on the competencies in the middle first, and working outward.

REFLECTION

Take some time to reflect on and respond to the following questions. You may find it beneficial to discuss your responses with colleagues who are also participating in the training.

1. In which of the four phases of intercultural development do you personally feel most developed?

2. In which of the four phases do you feel you have the most room to grow?

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3. In which of the four phases do you feel you’re best helping students develop? How are you supporting their learning in this phase?

4. In which of the four phases do you feel you are most challenged when it comes to helping students develop?

5. What is one key insight you’ve had as a result of this training?