

## Developing Cultural Competence

### Day 1

<p><b>Purpose</b> <i>This session is all about...</i></p> <p>Program Leaders developing the skills to work effectively with co-leaders across cultures.</p>	<p><b>Learned Online (0 min)</b> <i>Refresh these key concepts learned in online training.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(n/a - this session does not have an online component)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Duration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 hours</li> </ul>	<p><b>Activities (0 min)</b> <i>Develop skills by facilitating these activities on the next page.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural Suitcase Activity (1 hr, 15 min): Recognizing the biases and experiences that can create challenges when working across cultures.</li> <li>Building Co-Leader Chemistry Activity (45 min): Building empathy and practicing the co-leader inventory as a tool for working across cultures.</li> </ul>
<p><b># of Facilitators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 + extra facilitators to circulate during the Building Co-Leader Chemistry Activity</li> </ul>	<p><b>Important Takeaways (5 min)</b> <i>Wrap-up with these key concepts learned today.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Some aspects of our cultural suitcase might make us stronger or weaker than our co-leaders to facilitate specific parts of the program experience. It’s important to discuss these with your co-leaders at the beginning of each program.”</li> <li>“If you create a culture on your program where you are the dominant voice on all activities, students miss out on much of what your other co-leaders bring to the table. It’s important to facilitate a balance between all program leaders on the program.”</li> <li>“Always check in with your co-leaders daily to ensure everyone is on the same page. Actively ask the question--is there anything you think we should be doing differently?”</li> <li>“Much of what someone feels isn’t always expressed unless there is an explicit place to express it. Different cultures have different levels of sensitivity around directness in conversations. Establishing a daily space to communicate with co-leaders helps avoid challenges that result from unvoiced thoughts or concerns.”</li> <li><i>Anything else you’d like to add.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Resources Required</b></p> <p>Facilitators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program Leader Guidebook</li> <li>Whiteboard or large sheet of paper. Enough for one large piece of paper per small group of 3-4 program leaders</li> <li>Markers</li> </ul> <p>Program Leaders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program Leader Guidebook</li> </ul>	

## Cultural Suitcase Activity (1 hour, 10 min)

### 1. EXPLAIN

- “To operate effectively with your co-leaders and students across lines of cultural difference, you must be aware of your own cultural stereotypes and biases. You must challenge yourself to consider if your gut reaction, informed by your own past experiences, is the best way to navigate the situation.”
- “Each of us has strengths and weaknesses that are the product of our own collective life experiences. Effective program leaders learn how to leverage their strengths and rely on their co-leaders to support their weaknesses (or cultural blind spots).”
- “We’re now going to dive into an activity to help understand the impact of our own life experiences on the way we view culture.”

### 2. DO

- Divide group into smaller groups of 3-4 Program Leaders. Ensure each group is a diverse mix of program leaders. For example, avoid groups of all international staff.

### 3. EXPLAIN

- “Let’s start by defining culture. In your groups, define what you think culture means to you. When you’ve defined it, illustrate it on your paper without using any words. Each individual in your group should have some part in the illustration.”

### 4. DO

- Set timer for 10 minutes. Announce when timer goes off.
- Call on a few groups to stand up and share their definition of culture, along with their illustration.

### 5. EXPLAIN

- “You can already see some differences even in the way we define culture. These differences are based on our own experiences. For the sake of this activity, we’ll establish a common definition of culture just so we’re all on the same page.”

### 6. WRITE on the whiteboard where everyone can see, and READ out loud:

- “Culture is a way of life of a group of people—the behaviors, beliefs, values, and symbols that they accept, generally without thinking about them, and are passed along by communication and imitation, often (but not always) by one generation to the next.”

### 7. EXPLAIN

- “Now, flip your paper over and draw a large empty suitcase on the back. Divide the suitcase up into equal parts, with one part for each member of your group. If your group has six people, you should have six empty spaces in the suitcase.”
- “Each person should now spend 10 minutes illustrating aspects of their culture that they’re bringing into this shared experience.”
- “After everyone adds their illustrations into their own section of the suitcase, you’ll have 10 minutes to go around and each share the meaning of your illustrations with your group. For example, perhaps you identify as Buddhist or Jewish. If so, that might be part of the culture you’re bringing into this work.”

### 8. DO

- Set the timer for 10 minutes. Announce that it’s time to move from illustrating to sharing.
- Set the timer for 10 minutes. After 10 minutes of sharing announce that they’re going to discuss, within their small groups, some of the ways their culture has played out and informed their life.
- For each of the following questions, pose the question and allow the small groups to discuss for 5 minutes. After each group has discussed for 5 minutes, call on one group to share out an example. The example sharing should take 1 minute.
  - i. “What aspect of your cultural suitcase are you most proud of? How has that aspect shaped the way you act in the world? Specific examples are important.” (5 min)
  - ii. “What aspect of your cultural suitcase have you sometimes been embarrassed about? How has that impacted the way you’ve acted in the world? Specific examples are important.” (5 min)
  - iii. “What aspect of your cultural suitcase has ever been misunderstood? If you’ve never experienced this, what aspect of your cultural suitcase has the greatest possibility of being misunderstood? How has that shaped how you act?” (5 min)

- iv. “What aspects of your cultural suitcase might position you to be extremely strong at a specific aspect of being a program leader? Ex. Speaking about your religious faith, etc..” (5 min)

## 9. EXPLAIN

- “To close out, we’re going to spend some time thinking about how the various aspects of our culture we’re bringing into this shared experience might be at odds at times. Circle all the aspects in your cultural suitcase that might cause friction or misunderstanding while co-leading a program.”
- “After identifying these areas, spend 2 minutes on your own brainstorming ways to avoid this friction or misunderstanding.”

## 10. DO

- Call on a few groups to share their answers. They should share the aspect of their cultural suitcase, the possible friction or misunderstanding, and the brainstormed solution. Draw out common areas of possible misunderstanding. Specific themes to emphasize include:
  - i. Cultural differences around directness in conversation
  - ii. Cultural differences around physical touch
  - iii. Cultural differences around romantic relationships
  - iv. Different views about the role of women
  - v. Different views about seniority

# Building Co-Leader Chemistry Activity (1 hour, 15 min)

## 1. EXPLAIN

- “We’re going to roleplay some of the proactive steps you should take with your co-leaders to ensure positive chemistry. Before we get started, I want to take a moment and demonstrate why this really matters in the first place.”
- “Look around the room. Make eye contact with someone who you believe has some part of their identity that is different than yours. For example, perhaps you make eye contact with someone of a different gender or someone from a different cultural background.”
- “Now go and sit beside the person you made eye contact with. This person will be your partner for the rest of this session.”
- “You’re going to spend the next five minutes interviewing your partner. Ask them to tell you about a time when they felt diminished, disrespected, or undervalued when working on a group or in a team. Ask them for lots of details about the situation, including what happened, why they think it happened, and how they felt.”
- “After five minutes, you will switch. When time is up, I’m going to randomly call on a few of you to tell your partner’s story.”

## 2. DO

- Make sure everyone has a partner.
- Set the timer for 5 minutes.
- When the timer goes off, have each pair switch roles (interviewer becomes interviewee).
- Set the timer for 5 more minutes. Announce when the timer goes off.
- Ask for volunteers to tell their partner’s story. Telling someone’s story is a powerful way to build empathy, so don’t skip this step! If no one volunteers, select a few people at random. Ensure that you have a wide range of stories, including stories by and from local Program Leaders.

## 3. EXPLAIN

- “Everyone has examples of feeling undervalued in a co-working situation. When someone feels this way about their co-working situation, they’re unlikely to share the best of themselves. In the case of leading programs, this means a direct loss to the quality of our students’ experience.”
- “In most of these cases, positive proactive communication could have prevented the situation from happening.”
- “Now let’s switch gears and dive into some of those proactive steps that can be taken before a program begins to ensure positive and proactive co-leader chemistry.”
- “Turn to the section of your Program Leader Guidebook called Building Co-Leader Chemistry. The steps listed here should be completed at the start of each program. You should include all co-leaders in this discussion. If you’re repeating a program with the same co-leaders, you should still have the conversation. Focus on what worked well and what to improve.”

- “Pretend you and your partner are co-leaders and are about to start a new program together. Role-play going through these steps and answering the questions on the page. You’ll have 15 minutes.”

**4. DO**

- Set the timer for 15 minutes.
- Have all available staff from your Country Management Team wandering from group to group, observing the role plays.
- Announce when 15 minutes are up
- Call on a few groups to share their reflections from the roleplay. Specifically, ask them what they are thinking after this roleplay, what they learned, what they think they’d need to do differently, etc...