

MT6.1_4 Group Exercise: “Are you Culturally Sensitive?”

1. Denial

Scenario No 1:

A senior manager in a global company refuses to implement diversity training, saying, “We’re a professional team. Culture doesn’t affect how we do business. Why waste time on this?” They actively avoid learning about cultural nuances and insist that one-size-fits-all practices are sufficient.

Scenario No 2:

A tourist in a remote village complains to their tour guide: “Why are there no ‘normal’ restaurants here? Everything is so primitive.” They expect everything to align with their own cultural norms and dismiss local traditions as irrelevant.

2. Defense

Scenario No 1:

An immigrant student feels excluded in their new school and expresses frustration: “People here don’t understand how hard life is where I come from. They’re so privileged and spoiled!” At the same time, local students perceive the immigrant student as aggressive and uninterested in fitting in.

Scenario No 2:

A hiring manager in a global firm avoids recruiting from certain regions, saying, “People from that country don’t work well in teams—they’re too independent and don’t understand collaboration”. Or “they are well-known as a lazy people”

3. Minimization

Scenario No 1:

A charity worker preparing for a project in a rural African village tells their team, “We’re all here to help people. Let’s not worry about their local customs or traditions. We’re doing what’s best for them.”

Scenario No 2:

A healthcare worker in a culturally diverse city insists that “All patients need the same care, regardless of culture,” dismissing the importance of addressing cultural beliefs about health, treatment, and gender dynamics in medical decisions.

4. Acceptance

Scenario No 1:

A multinational team works on a high-stakes project. A member from an East Asian background avoids open disagreements in meetings, but their silence is misinterpreted by others as agreement. When the project fails, the team realizes there were unspoken concerns.

Scenario No 2:

During a virtual meeting, an international team discovers their Indian colleague schedules a key discussion during Diwali feast. When asked about it, the colleague explains they didn't think it mattered since their workload is heavy and they didn't want to "inconvenience" others.

5. Adaptation

Scenario No 1:

A project leader travels to a country where hierarchical relationships are deeply respected. Although they typically have an open-door policy, they adjust to a more formal structure with team members, only to find their egalitarian colleagues at headquarters view this as "playing favorites."

Scenario No 2:

A journalist is assigned to report on a politically sensitive topic in a conservative country. They adjust their dress, language, and interview style to align with local norms, but their editor back home criticizes them for not being "direct enough."

6. Integration

Scenario No 1:

A consultant who has lived in several countries is tasked with designing a training program for a multinational company. Their approach incorporates elements from various cultures, but some team members feel the consultant is "too global" and lacks a strong cultural identity.

Scenario No 2:

An entrepreneur creates a business that merges design elements from multiple cultures (e.g., Scandinavian minimalism with African patterns). While their international customers praise the concept, some critics accuse them of cultural appropriation.