

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Phase II: Establishing Community Engagement Infrastructure



Activity 17: Increase Cultural Sensitivity

Goals

1. Consider the context and cultural norms in different parts of the world
2. Consider how to adjust CE techniques to better fit global needs

Prerequisites

None

Who Should Participate?

Program leadership (strategic thinkers), Program management (tactical thinkers), Program staff (operational expertise)

Length

30-45 minutes

Definition

Cultural Sensitivity: awareness and appreciation of the values, norms, and beliefs characteristic of a cultural, ethnic, racial, or other group that is not one's own, accompanied by a willingness to adapt one's behavior accordingly. [American Psychological Association](#)

Activity Instructions

Part 1 – Time Travel

1. Select one from each category:

A. Place

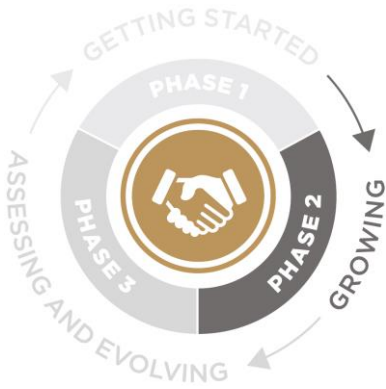
- New York City
- Tokyo
- Moscow
- Nairobi
- Bozeman, Montana
- Rio de Janeiro

B. Year

- 1754
- 1914
- 2050

C. Goal

- Get across town
- Get a meal
- Make a friend
- Steal the microfilm and get back to spaceship by midnight



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2. One day, you fall asleep and wake up in a new environment. You are now in Place A in the year B with a goal of C. How do you proceed? What are your first three steps? How do you orient yourself? What information do you need?
3. Consider how to establish trust with the locals and accomplish your goals. Consider language, customs, and time zones.

Part 2: Community Engagement Considerations

This activity can help underscore how we sometimes take our local ideas and techniques and blindly apply them to different cultures. Before traveling to a new environment, we typically try to understand the context – we look at climate, customs (are there expectations around dress or how formal the culture is), local transportation and currency.

If you want to work with people in other parts of the world, try to understand the potential new community members and how they might like to engage.

1. Work with others in your group to create a list of elements to research and consider as you approach potential community members in other parts of the world. Some examples are given below.
2. Think through some of these issues and adjust community engagement techniques and activities.
3. Consider [Activity: Engage with New Communities – Nodes](#). Are there connections with some in the potential audience to help think through some of these issues?

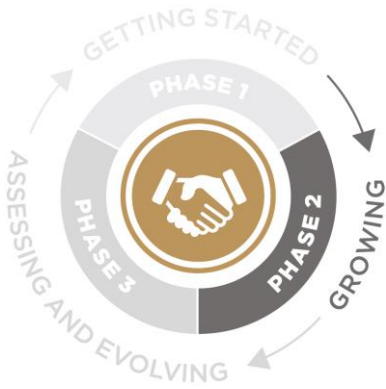
Elements to Consider

Language

- Are you able to speak their primary language?
- Is English a common second language?
- Do you need to think about translators or provide transcripts?

Customs

- Are people formal or informal when meeting new people?
- Is there a hierarchy for introductions?
- Is there an expectation for friendly introductory chat before a presentation?



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- Will online meetings work, or do you need to meet people in person first?

Time zones

- Are you expecting them to attend meetings in US-based time zones?
- What are the best times of day for remote meetings that span several time zones?
- Consider meetings specifically for that time zone

Internet access

- Is there sufficient internet access and bandwidth to support video conferencing?
- Are there times of day that are best for connectivity?

Next Steps: Based on the results, consider if you need to update your Communication and Engagement Plan