

UNIT 9: BARRIERS TO INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

TIME FRAME: (65 MINUTES)

Assumptions (45 minutes)

Diffusing Stereotypes (20 minutes)

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT TO KNOW?

Most problems in the workplace and their resolution involve communication. Therefore, it is important to raise awareness about the underlying causes of communication difficulties.

OBJECTIVES/PURPOSES:

1. Individuals will recognize some of the assumptions and stereotypes we make about others that might block our ability to appreciate other people and to communicate effectively with them.
2. Individuals will explore the cultural influences on communication styles.
3. Individuals will identify which behaviors might be barriers to communication for them.
4. Individuals will demonstrate an understanding of how value differences can impede effective communication.

HOW TO USE THIS INFORMATION:

In this unit individuals will increase their sensitivity and awareness of different issues that they should consider when communicating cross-culturally. Participants will engage in small group discussions and reflection activities that will assist in shaping and sharpening their communication skills. Both of the exercises are extremely important for participant learning. Use exercise (10) first then facilitate exercise (11).

SUPPORTING MATERIALS:

Information on Barriers to Communication

Exercise 10 (45 minutes) -- Assumptions

Exercise 11 (20 minutes) – Diffusing Stereotypes

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, if applicable:

Anand, R. (2000). *Teaching Skills and Cultural Competency: A Guide for Trainers*. Fourth Edition. Washington, DC: NMCI Publications.

Asante, M. K., & Gudykunst, W. B. (Eds.) (1989). *Handbook of international and intercultural communications*. Newbury Park, CA: sage Publications.

Axtell, R. E. (1991). *Gestures: The do's and taboos of body language around the world*. New York: Wiley.

Barnard, G. *Cross-cultural communication: A practical guide*. London: Cassell.

Hall, E. T. (1989). *Beyond culture*. New York: Anchor Books/Doubleday.