

AMSSA Migrant Worker Hub Workshop Handout:

Culturally Aware Workplace Relationship Management



Territorial Acknowledgement

As a provincial umbrella association, AMSSA acknowledges that B.C. is on the unceded homelands of First Nations who have stewarded this land since time immemorial. We recognize the privilege that we have as settlers on this land and acknowledge that AMSSA's operations is on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkwəy̅əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlilwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

Thank You

We would like to thank Dr. Moussa Magassa, CEO, The Intercultural Capacity Building Inc., for presenting at the National Virtual Roundtables for Migrant Worker Organizations and contributing to the content of this handout.

Culturally Aware Workplace Relationship Management

On July 21-22, 2022, AMSSA's Migrant Worker Hub hosted The National Virtual Roundtables for Migrant Worker Support Organizations. The roundtable events provide an opportunity to share on regional priorities and service gaps in relation to migrant workers, while providing a space for those working with and supporting migrant workers to connect and share best practices. In the afternoon of Day 2, a professional development workshop presented by Dr. Moussa Magassa was held, titled: Culturally Aware Workplace Relationship Management. The information presented during the workshop is reflected in this accompanying handout to be used as a learning tool for those working with and supporting migrant worker communities in Canada.

[The workshop recording can be accessed on the Migrant Worker Hub here:](#)

[English Version](#)

[French Version](#)

INTRODUCTION

Organizations that support migrant workers have identified a need for more information on supporting migrant workers facing workplace conflict. Many have mentioned that conflict can arise as a result of the varying cultural backgrounds of the workers. There is a need to reflect on the meaning of cultural competency, cultural humility, and cultural awareness in working with migrant workers, to understand how these qualities can impact the workplace, to improve skills in assessing and resolving intercultural conflicts, and to explore best practices for successfully navigating intercultural communication and conflicts.



DEFINITIONS

Cultural competency: the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with people who are linguistically and culturally different from ourselves (Myles, J. M., 2019).

Cultural humility: the ability to maintain an interpersonal stance that is other-oriented (or open to the other) in relation to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to that person (Hook et al., 2013)

Cultural awareness: the ability to observe, appreciate, and accept similarities and differences between cultures. Otherwise being aware of others and accepting their cultures and cultural identities (GreggU-<https://www.youtube.com/GreggU/about>)

KEY HIGHLIGHTS CONCERNING CULTURAL COMPETENCY AND HUMILITY IN THE WORKPLACE

Conflict in the workplace:

- Conflict occurs when expectations, goals, or objectives diverse. They occur in all human relationships, and can take place at home, at work, in the community, and at interpersonal levels.
- We can be at conflict over ideas, information and activities, or over deeply held values (value-laden conflict).
- The roots of cultural conflict—and the approaches to that conflict—often reside within the history of the culture and the belief systems. The simple existence of different cultures and cultural groups always carries the potential for conflict between groups.

Most workplace conflicts are rooted in:

- People's diversity and cultural expressions, socialization, worldviews, identities, and value systems
- Expectations and goals
- Power relationships



Photo by Fouzels

- Privilege history and background
- Institutional structures, policies and laws
- Communication (i.e. formal vs. informal; verbal vs. non-verbal; ways we communicate)

A four-step approach to analysing intercultural conflicts:

1. Uncover the underlying or hidden goals and beliefs
2. Determine the facts in order to resolve conflicts generated by misperceptions or misunderstandings
3. Be sensitive to the other's position and perspective, understand their frame of reference, and strive to empathize
4. Seek mutual agreement on the issue, claims and justifications. Clear up miscommunication and misperception by describing each other's positions.

Organizations that foster cultural competence at the individual level can benefit from:

- Providers/translators that speak the clients' language(s)
- Cross-cultural skills
- The ability to recover from inevitable cultural collisions
- Inclusive decision-making
- Considerable knowledge about cross-cultural differences
- Cross-cultural communication skills
- Diversity management skills
- Inclusive beliefs and values
- Awareness of personal biases and stereotypes
- Leadership commitment

Three pillars of cultural intelligence:

- Knowledge: knowing what culture is, how cultures vary, and how culture affects behaviour
- Mindfulness: choosing not to respond automatically, and inhibiting undesirable responses; having a heightened awareness of the current experience or present reality
- Behaviour: the ability to generate appropriate behaviour in a new cultural setting



RESOURCES

Diversity Officer Magazine: <https://diversityofficermagazine.com/>

A publication exploring contemporary issues and ideas in the field of diversity, including expertise, research and credentials.

GreggU

- “Introduction to Developing Cultural Awareness” video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WThqy1LGX9A>

A source of free video courses focused on self-improvement and professional development.

Mediate.com

- Exemplary Leadership: How Dispute Resolution Professionals Change Cultures” video and materials: <https://www.mediate.com/exemplary-leadership-how-dispute-resolution-professionals-change-cultures-video-and-materials/>
- Cross-Cultural Conflict Resolution in Teams” article: <https://www.mediate.com/cross-cultural-conflict-resolution-in-teams/>

A resource of articles, videos, and more exploring practical applications of mediation techniques and practices.

Academic resources:

- Hook et al (2013). Cultural humility: Measuring openness to culturally diverse clients
- Mutisya, E. (2011). Conflict Analysis and Resolution: Socio-cultural and Intrapersonal Perspectives http://www.monitor.upeace.org/innerpg.cfm?id_article=786
- Myles, J. M. (2019). Developing intercultural competence: A shift in thinking
- Waters, Amanda and Lisa Asbill (2012). Reflections on cultural humility (https://www.mtroyal.ca/AboutMountRoyal/TeachingLearning/CSLearning/_pdfs/adc_csl_pdf_exculhumcap.pdf)

To facilitate outreach and referrals, please refer to AMSSA's Migrant Worker Hub BC Service Map: <https://www.amssa.org/resources/services-map/>



The **Migrant Worker Hub** is a digital centre of resources and tools to enhance the knowledge and capacity of individuals, employers, unions, professional associations and other organizations supporting migrant workers in British Columbia.

To access all the resources available visit: <https://migrantworkerhub.ca/>

Questions? Send us an email to migrantworkerhub@amssa.org