

# Intercultural behavior assignment

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“ Preservation of one’s own culture does not require contempt or disrespect for other cultures. ” Cesar Chavez Whatever people are going to spend a semester abroad or have a longer job-related standing or some job meetings with foreign persons, most of them prepare for abidance linguistically. They learn vocabulary and read books about the political system, religion, and history. This kind of information is meaningful and important. But most of the time people forget that’s important to know the norms, thinking, daily habits and behavior of the foreign culture and also the own culture.

For this there are many corporations, which are specified on intercultural training. Especially in the time of globalization intercultural competence became more and more important. Contacts between companies, organization and individuals have to be successful. People of different cultures have to work together and come to a profitable solution. Often the value systems of the people have big differences. For example in China you have a complete difference behavior than in Germany or Jordan. If people of two cultures meet each other, there can be huge problems.

A bad preparation, insufficient interest for the foreign culture, misunderstanding or conflicts can be causes a competitive disadvantage for the company and therefore increases costs. 1 Consequently multinational companies try to decrease the number of failed projects. This can be prevented with a good preparation according to the culture in form of an intercultural training. These trainings have to be concerted to the efforts of the participants and a defined goal. But Intercultural Behavior is not only a thematic in the industry.

For example spending a semester abroad the students have to know about some rules and behavior in the foreign culture. In the following assignment is an explanation and description of the basics of intercultural training design and methods. Later the theory is applied on the country Jordan. The audiences are students at the University who want to spend a Semester abroad in Jordan.

## 2.0 Theoretical Foundations

For a better understanding it's important to define some theoretical foundations about culture, intercultural competence and intercultural training.

The following contains theory about culture concepts and different methods to detain an intercultural training.

### 2.1 Concept of Culture

The term culture is an essential part of the intercultural communication area. There is a disturbing lack of the meaning. Some say culture is learned behavior; others say it isn't behavior at all, but an abstraction from behavior – what ever that is. According to Leslie A. White, “ culture exists only in the mind. ”

2 On the other side Edward Tyler introduced the concept of culture as an explanation of the differences among human societies.

He said culture is the “(...) complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society. ”

3 Of course women posses and create it as well. In general culture is a fragile phenomen, but a powerful human tool we need for survival. Because it exists only in our minds, there is a constant change and easy lost. Written languages, governments, buildings and other man-made things aren't culture itself you can see them more as the products of culture.

Broken pots and other artifacts which were covered by archaeologists are only material which reflect cultural pattern. 4 According to G. Hofstede culture have different layers: 5 national layer according to one's country regional and/ or ethnic and/ or religious and/ or linguistic affiliation layer gender layer generation level, that means separating grandparents from parents and from children social class layer, related with educational opportunities and with a person's occupation or profession 2. 2 Intercultural Competence The culture standards of the different countries have huge different.

That is the reason why the communication between two persons from different cultures is often difficult. Based on that, it's important that people who meet each other have specific skills to solve the cultural problems. These abilities are called intercultural competence. Researchers are sure, that intercultural competence is necessary for the successful cooperation of two individuals or companies. Intercultural competence is a generic competence that means it is a part of the key competences or sometimes called soft skills. 6 Some authors aren't agreeing what knowledge and ability are connected with intercultural competence.

But in the last years the three-factor model of Gudykunst, Wiesenmann und Hammer (1977) was accomplished. Figure 0. : Three- factor-model of intercultural competence (analog to : Stellamanns, 2007, p. 22) The Three-factor-model distinguish between three components: intercultural knowledge (cognitive) intercultural sensibility (affective) intercultural decision-making and responsibility (behavior oriented) First one is the cognition. This describes the basic cultural and specific cultural appreciation. That means <https://assignbuster.com/intercultural-behavior-assignment/>

you have specific knowledge about general cultural appreciation or specific cultural appreciation.

General cultural appreciation refers to the cultural awareness like knowledge about the dependence on culture, the own and foreign thinking, acting and behavior. On the other side specific cultural appreciation means the knowledge about a foreign culture, values and norms. Also the communication and interaction rules. The mentioned knowledge is the basic for intercultural competence. 7 Second component is the affection. This refers to the positive attitude against a foreign culture, tolerance, the ability of reducing stress and fear within a cultural contact and the respect against tradition from another culture.

Last point is the behavior component. It signals the motivation and interest to make new contacts with individuals of a foreign culture. In detail affability, civility and the empathy against another culture. Furthermore the most important factor is the ability to develop new acting strategies in the intercultural interaction. 8 2. 3 Intercultural training The awareness of problems in intercultural acting leads to the development of opportunities, which help people of different cultures to communicate without problems. One of the most used methods of intercultural learning is the intercultural training.

In recent years the business of intercultural training has grown rapidly. There are more than one thousand vendors worldwide. 9 It's an intensive course, which enables the participants to get in touch with the different needs and characteristic of a foreign culture within a short time. Participants are able to

compare their own culture, behavior and rules with the foreign one. Such a training includes different elements. Figure 0. : Elements of an intercultural training Intercultural Trainings are accomplished by Professional coaches or people who are familiar with the foreign culture.

Intercultural training has its roots in the 60's in the USA. Since the 80's this method was introduced in Europe, too. Multinational companies have built their own intercultural training centres, e. g. Coca Cola, Nestle or Siemens. There are also a number of corporations which offering intercultural training for specific countries. As a result it is important to research this field. Over the time there is an amount of different methods and strategies to accomplish a high effective international training. 10 2. 3. 5 Language Course Why to acquire a new Language?

Learning a new Language provides many benefits, even that may not be that easy. People learn new languages for different reasons; one of them is to improve the knowledge about cultures. Knowing a foreign language makes it possible to know more about the culture, because it enables the person to travel to that country and know more about the culture and also to meet new people and being able to conduct conversations with them in their language, what will make them to respect you. Another reason to get familiar with a new language is that will enhance the business opportunities.

For example Arabic-speaking nations are a fast growing market for trade, with its rapidly growing population provides a huge export market for goods and services. 11 The Arabic Language Arabic is not one of the easiest languages in the world; Nevertheless, there are simple ways to control it.

Based on the number of speakers; Arabic is the fourth largest language in the world. But not all the 250 million speakers speak the same Arabic: The Arabic language consists of several dialects. These dialects are the actual mother tongue. The degree of commonality among the various dialects is very different.

A Moroccan can understand an Algerian very good, but surely no Yemenis. A Moroccan and a Yemeni will be able to understand each other when they communicate using the Standard Arabic language. The standard Arabic language is understood throughout the Arab world, also in other Islamic countries. The reason is that the Quran is written in the standard Arabic language, so when a Muslim in Turkey or Pakistan wants to pray, he/she has to read some of the Quran, that's why the people in the non-Arabic but Islamic countries can understand the standard Arabic language.

Since nobody learns standard Arabic from the beginning as a child, they must learn it at the school. In the school, standard Arabic is read and written and almost always spoken. Everyone who was about a year in the school, who can read a newspaper or write a short letter, he/she can standard Arabic. Every written document can be written only in the standard language, no single dialect would be written. A newspaper or literature that would be written in the Yemeni dialect, it might not be understood in Egypt.

The understanding of the common Standard language among all Arabic countries leads to the saving of the national identity as Arabs. In addition, Arabs are proud of the many linguistic possibilities and the beauty of the standard language. This is why most radio and television broadcasts are in

standard Arabic language. Every Arabian understands at least a little bit Standard Arabic, even if he/she cannot read it. In countries with a good school system, such as Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Palestine, or the countries of the Arabian Peninsula, most of the people there can speak the standard Arabic language. In Maghreb countries “ Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, and Libya” the standard Arabic was ousted in school from the French. However, this development is declining, and now standard Arabic is more spoken again. 12 2. 3. 6 Quiz Intercultural training should cover the knowledge necessary for survival in other culture and to be aware of culture and cultural differences. “ Culture shock is considered a normal, even desirable, part of the cross-cultural experience and intercultural trainings cannot prevent its occurrence.

We say “ desirable” because if people do not experience culture shock, it often means that they are not moving widely within the host country and instead are staying in enclaves with familiar people from their own culture. Even though some culture shock is not preventable, intercultural trainings can encourage people to understand the stresses they face and to deal with them effectively”. 13 2. 4 Training Design and Training Methods “ As globalization becomes a household word, the intercultural agenda is becoming the world’s agenda.

Interculturalists have been working for decades to improve intercultural understanding, but it is now increasingly imperative to reach this goal. The intercultural field must be ready for new responsibilities in facilitating mutually beneficial interactions among the wide range of cultures that inhabit the globe. “ 14 Nevertheless, the intercultural field including <https://assignbuster.com/intercultural-behavior-assignment/>



intercultural training and methods is becoming more and more important. Over the last decades methods that were used in other scientific fields are now partly transformed and integrated into intercultural training.

The importance of the methods became more or less equal to the topics and appearance of a training program. Methods are the utilities that are used by the trainers of a program to implement their intercultural skills. It is important for a trainer to have an assortment of methods due to the fact that only one method does never fit to every client or purchaser for all requested results. 15 Abstractly, methods are regarding to the content not emotionally and neutral. “ Methods per se are neutral. In themselves, methods are not pleasant or threatening or sentimental or dealistic – but content can be and trainers can be” 16. The methods that are preferred by a trainer and brought into the training program are depending on his individual style. If he leans to be aiding and maintaining, a role-play could possibly end gently, even though the role-play itself was relatively confrontational. The opposite way around, a non-menacing case study can be curiously within the training if the trainer prefers conflicts, especially when he wants to prepare the attendees of an intercultural training for stressful situations in the business world as well as for everyday life. 7 Defining Terms “ The terms method and methodology are frequently misused. A methodology is a body of methods and rules followed in a science or profession, or the study of principles and procedures in a particular field. Intercultural training comprises a methodology. ” 18 A method stands for a process to achieve a goal. A technique is also a related to an intercultural training. If a triad is used for discussing a case study you talk about technique. The case study is used as

a method, the triad is used as the technique and the two are elements of the intercultural training methodology.

Traditional and Modern Methods Tried-and-true methods are called the traditional methods due to the fact that they have worked out in several fields over a long period of time. On the other side, everything that has been improved more recently can be regarded as modern methods.

Traditional Methods Modern Methods Lectures Interactive video Case studies Self-assignment instruments Role plays Computer-based training Simulations Web-based training program Critical incidents  
 Figure : Traditional and Modern Methods Most of the traditional training methods are presented with the help of modern technology.

For example, critical incidents can be introduced as an interactive video or actors in a short movie can perform a role-play. Types of Training As there are different needs of the trainees and the desired outcomes out of the training the trainer has to consider between two dimensions where the didactic and experiential refer to the process by which training is delivered.

Culture-general and culture-specific related to the content of the training program. 19 “ The differentiation has to be fine-tuned: culture general and culture specific types of training. This subdivision leads to the following

table. 20 Didactic Experiential Culture-general Didactic culture-general

Experiential culture-general Culture-specific Didactic culture-specific

Experiential culture-specific Figure : Typology of intercultural Trainings<sup>21</sup>

Didactic culture-general trainings: Didactic culture-general trainings have the purpose to sensitize the attendees because there are more culture than their own ones, especially for cultural anomalies in general. Additional questions

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are: how does awareness take place, how do stereotypes and prejudices appear, what is culture. Experiential culture-general trainings

The result of these kinds of trainings is the overall sensitization of the participating members regarding any other culture. Culture-Awareness-Training is one typical example for this type. The aim is to expose the attendee's ethnocentrism to several situations, response like fear against foreignness and stereotyping. An example can be the game Bafa-Bafa. It is a simulation that was brought to life by Gery Shirts. It is often used to sensitize members for different cultures in general. The main purpose is to point out an imitated culture and to deal with its rules and guidelines to get to know how one responds to other cultures.

A target group to use this type could be consultants who are travelling a lot and deal with many different cultures and not just a particular one. 22

Didactic culture-specific trainings “ Didactic culture-specific trainings can be compared to a seminar or lecture about the hard facts such as the current political situation, economic data, legal situation, religious orientations but also facts about the mentality, the norms the attitudes and the rules of conduct to be found in the target country. “ 23 Trainers prepare the participants and advice them for several circumstances that may happen attached to a certain culture.

This is mostly the key aspect of such a type of training due to the fact trainees can work out hard facts by themselves. Ordinary tasks are culture-specific culture assimilators. Experiential culture-specific trainings  
Experiential culture-specific type of training is concentrated on the

interaction between the trainer and the attendee with the help of tasks such as cultural simulations or role-plays. The trainers should not lean on only one training type, although this is a relatively closely classification. 24 Guidelines for Choosing a Method for Intercultural Training The decision depends on the purpose of the international training. 5 “ The key is to decide which method is most significant to the desired outcome and to focus on that without ignoring the others. “ 26 The desired outcomes are the skills, attitudes and knowledge required for moving in a completely new environment or developing more effectiveness regarding a current and changing multicultural environment. These outcomes should be defined as behavioral objectives. They describe what the trainee has learned in the training. Before the training program is designed and the methods are fixed, clients and trainers have to think about the outcomes.

Especially due to the fact, not all methods do facilitate the same results. 27 Therefore objectives need to be set as guidelines for focusing the desired outcomes of a course. The verb is the most important word in a learning objective. It has to outline a specific behavior that the attendee can execute after instruction. The objective must be observable and measurable. 28 For example, if the goal is to teach an intercultural negotiation skill, the attendees need to exercise the skill itself in order to learn how to negotiate.

The trainer also has to consider that attendees' attitude regarding negotiating in different cultures and how they think about the training program, if they have to test extraordinary skills. 29 Designing a Training Program The following section deals with course design. The design of the Jordanian intercultural training is subdivided in six parts and consists of the <https://assignbuster.com/intercultural-behavior-assignment/>

following tasks: Ice Breaker Energizer Critical Incident Role-plays Language Course Quiz The responsibilities of a course designer are similar to those of architects and contractors.

Architects and contractors do understand one another, but each those own unique skills and brings them into the job of designing and creating a building. Course designer draw their knowledge and understanding of human behavior as well as educational psychology and on their ability to transform performance expectations into necessary knowledge, attitudes, and skills. 30

“ In today’s era of high-tech training, courses are often designed internationally by training specialists and developed externally by media experts. Of course, the trainer, as architect, is responsible for the outcome of both processes, design and development. 31 3. 3. 5 Travel Guide One goal of the Jordanian intercultural training was to direct the participants’ attention towards a possible one-week trip trough the country starting in the capital of Jordan and ending in Aqaba at the Red Sea. We introduced several hotspots between Amman and Aqaba together with accommodations for staying overnight, for example resorts at the Dead Sea, a Bedouin camp in the desert of Wadi Rum, as well as an accommodation close to the Unesco World Heritage Petra. 3. 3. 6 Language Course The Jordanian Arabic Language

The Arabic language spoken in Jordan is a set of dialects of the Levantine Arabic language that are originated in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan “ HKJ” and are spoken by Jordanians “ More than 6 million people” , the Jordanian dialect is understood in the Middle East as well as the rest of the Arab World. Jordanian Arabic has a Semitic language structure, with lexical influence of English, Turkish and French. As mentioned before and as it is in <https://assignbuster.com/intercultural-behavior-assignment/>

other Arab countries, the official language in Jordan is the standard Arabic language, and all of the official documents are written in that language as well as the media.

As we know, the Arabic language has several dialects. These dialects consist of sub-dialects. The Jordanian dialect consists of three sub-dialects, according to the region and the nature of life in that region. The three sub-dialects in Jordan are: Urban, Rural and Bedouin; Urban Jordanian is mainly spoken in the capital of Jordan “ Amman”. The Rural Jordanian is spoken in villages and small cities, mainly in the north and west of Jordan. Bedouin Jordanian is spoken by Jordanian Bedouins mostly in the desert, east and south of Jordan. 32 The small language course

A small Arabic language course was designed at our intercultural training to let the participants get a basic idea about the Arabic language, to try pronouncing it and to write their names in Arabic, which was interesting because The Arabic alphabet is written from right to left. Whether a letter is in initial, medial, or final position in a word determines the shape of the letter. The participants were provided with some basic words, which could be useful for them when they go to Jordan or even another Arabic country, for example how to greet someone “ and the difference between greeting a female or a male” or how to introduce themselves. . 3. 7 Quiz Quiz about Jordan A quiz has been taken place in the training to give the participants the chance to evaluate some of the situations in Jordan, to decide whether an intercultural behavior is appropriate or not, and to answer some questions regarding to the information they have got from the training. By answering the quiz, the participants were able to identify some of the situations and <https://assignbuster.com/intercultural-behavior-assignment/>

behaviors regarding to the Jordanian culture, for example it was clear for the participants that most of the Jordanians don't eat pork, due to the fact that 98% of Jordanians are Muslims.

They were also able to evaluate some of the situations related to the social network in Jordan and the relationship between old and young people. 5.

Conclusion We have argued in the first two parts of this report that intercultural training research is coming of age and that the importance of intercultural communication skills has grown because of the ongoing rise of globalization. However, there is definitely a real need for intercultural competence in several professions.

Therefore there are now many theories and rich databases available to rely on. We used the theoretical framework about the structure of intercultural competencies and combined it with different methods of intercultural training to design the Jordanian workshop for students who are interested in spending some time in Jordan. As for the context, we considered a high cultural distance between the background of the attendees and the Jordanian culture regarding the training procedures.

That is why the design and the elements of the training were chosen very carefully to make sure the participants could increase their general intercultural awareness related to the culture and the country itself.

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