

Bridging Cultures

Webinar on
Intercultural
Communication

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To understand what **Intercultural Communication** is... we need to figure out first what **Culture** means

- Visible and invisible aspects of culture (iceberg model of culture)
- The invisible aspects of culture influence the visible ones → e.g. religious beliefs are clearly manifest in certain holiday customs, and notions of modesty affect styles of dress = especially for girls/women/ladies



- Speaking of cultural differences, here's the analogy with the cultural iceberg
- Hall is also best known for depicting culture as an iceberg → all cultures have a small visible component (10%) and a larger part that is hidden from view (90%)
- Many cultural differences are hidden from view, "below the surface"



❖ **Body language** is a universal form of communication → understanding the ways in which nonverbal cues are perceived differently across cultures is crucial in promoting effective cross-cultural communication and avoiding misunderstandings

Different interpretations

- **Eye Contact** = a sign of confidence, attentiveness, or a sign of disrespectful, aggressive attitude?
- **Thumbs-up** = approval or an offensive gesture?
- **Pointing with index finger** = a common harmless gesture or a rude behaviour?
- A **smile** can work wonders pretty much anywhere! However, it can be 'controlled' like in Asian countries or reserved for close relationships like in the Middle-East





Why Intercultural Communication matters

- ✓ It is **easy to forget** about “the others”, about the other cultures, if they are not part of our everyday life
- ✓ **Intercultural Communication is everywhere** = always communicate! Without communication we can't sort out any intercultural-related issues

Cultural Stereotypes & Biases

- Definition of stereotypes and biases
- How they form and influence interactions → example in this video:
https://youtu.be/38y_1EWIE9I?feature=shared



Stereotyping and Generalisation

- ✓ Stereotyping involves a form of **categorisation**
- ✓ While categorising, we cannot perceive small details
- ✓ Stereotypes provide an **over simplified** version of a group and shouldn't be used for classifying individuals in their entirety

Stereotypes can be helpful or harmful depending on how we use them

➤ A stereotype becomes helpful when:

- it's used to describe a **group norm** rather than the characteristics of a specific individual
- it is used to describe what people from this group will **probably** be like and not evaluate the people as good or bad
- It's necessary to **acquire information** about the people involved before a new experience
- It can be **modified**: based on further observation and experience

- ✓ Full Presentation available during online module or in class
- ✓ Email: info@tellaacademy.org





Thank You!

→ Any questions?

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