



Cultural Competency

A NEW BEGINNINGS MENTORING TRAINING

The Process of Cultural Competence

- ▶ One of the goals of this training is to help you become more culturally aware of both yourself and the population with whom you will be working.
- ▶ Through this process you will become more culturally sensitive to the needs of the community you are serving.
- ▶ Consider this training as one small step toward becoming more culturally competent.
- ▶ Understand that cultural competence is not a one-time finite achievement. It is a life-long process.

What is Culture?

Culture refers to shared experiences that have developed and continue to evolve in relation to changing social and political contexts, based on:

- ▶ Race, Ethnicity, National Origin, Sexuality, Gender, Religion, Age, Social Class, Disability Status, Immigration Status, Education, Geographic Location, Rural/Urban/Suburban Environments and Time

Cultural Misinformation

- ▶ Everyone holds perceptions about different cultures. Many times these perceptions are inaccurate because they are based on cultural misinformation.
- ▶ Cultural misinformation refers to historical information about a group of people that is applied as a generalization to an individual.
- ▶ Misinformation involves stereotyping: when an individual associates a set of attributes to a group and then applies group attributes to an individual believed to be part of that group.
- ▶ This limits what we can see and understand about an individual and is often used to justify mistreatment of individuals by the dominant culture. Therefore, we must deliberately and intentionally examine cultural misinformation.

Why Consider Culture when Volunteering?

- ▶ Culture shapes individuals' knowledge of community organizations.
- ▶ Culture shapes an individual's experiences with community organizations and whether they see them as viable and accessible resources.
- ▶ Culture shapes individuals' responses to the community organization and the services they are providing.
- ▶ Culture shapes access to other services that might be crucial for an individual's success.
- ▶ The culture of the volunteer will impact the outcomes for the people and organization you are trying to serve.

Language

- ▶ When tutoring, mentoring or volunteering in a community organization, please **refrain from using slang, derogatory or offensive language**. What may seem okay to one group of people could be highly offensive to another.
- ▶ Examples of some offensive language words : redneck, hick, white-trash, ghetto, stupid, swear words or any words that degrade a specific group of people.
- ▶ Learn about other cultures and lifestyles to broaden your knowledge and understanding of others. Certain words can mean something different in one culture than it does in another.
- ▶ Remain sensitive to the effect of your actions and words on people of different ethnicities and cultures.
- ▶ **Apologize if you offend someone.**

Sexual Orientation

- ▶ Please be respectful of others sexual orientation.
- ▶ The government recognizes sexual orientation as a personal right that is protected under the law just as religion, sex, race, and age.
- ▶ Discrimination towards others of a different sexual orientation will not be tolerated.

Questions

1. What is the definition of culture?
2. Give an example of Cultural Misinformation
3. Why should you consider culture when volunteering?
4. Give two examples of offensive language

Answers