

XLAN 1910

Language for Work

Module 5: Intercultural

Communication for Work

Student Workbook

Integrated Language and Workforce Training

Faculty of Foundational, Career, and Intercultural Studies

Integrated Language and Workforce Training

Module 5: Intercultural Communication for Work

Student Workbook

NorQuest College has made every effort to obtain copyright permission. Please bring any omissions to our attention at the following address:

Curriculum Development, 10215 108 Street, Edmonton AB, T5J 1L6

Copyright © 2017, NorQuest College and its licensors

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, or stored in a database and retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Module 5: Student Workbook

Welcome to the Module on Intercultural Communication!

Needs Assessment

Instructions: Before you begin this module, answer the following question:

1. Write three things you **know** about the culture of the Canadian workplace.

- _____
- _____
- _____

2. Write three things **you want to know** about the culture of the Canadian workplace.

- _____
- _____
- _____

Class Discussion: What Is Culture?

There are many definitions of culture. In this course, we will use the idea of an iceberg to talk about culture. Part of an iceberg is above the water and is smaller than the part below, which is larger. Your instructor will discuss the questions below with you.

Class Discussion

- What do you see above the waterline in culture?
- What do you think is below the waterline?
- How do you know the difference?
- Are the things you see influenced by what you don't see?

Learning Activity 1: Drawing an Iceberg of Culture

Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: Draw a picture of the culture iceberg based on what you discussed with the class.

Learning Activity 2: Recognizing examples of culture above or below the water and writing your own example

Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: Read each example and then decide whether it is part of the iceberg above or below the waterline. Add one of your own examples in the empty space.

| Example | Above or below the waterline? Why? |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. A safety manual (book) about working safely in Alberta. | |
| 2. Saying "Good morning" to a co-worker when you get to work. | |
| 3. Asking a co-worker for help. | |
| 4. Safety is very important. | |
| 5. Shaking hands when you meet your new manager. | |
| 6. Using your manager's first name and not "Sir" or "Ma'am". | |
| 7. Being safe is important for teamwork. | |
| 8. Refusing unsafe work is your workplace right. | |
| 9. Showing respect for your coworkers is very important. | |
| 10. Workers should learn to be independent. | |
| | |

Class Discussion: Defining Stereotypes and Generalizations

Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: Look at the following list of statements. Do you have any problems with any of the statements?

| Statements | Problems | Stereotype or Generalization |
|---|----------|------------------------------|
| 1. Canadians like hockey. | | |
| 2. Some immigrants don't work safely. | | |
| 3. Chinese students are good at math. | | |
| 4. Immigrants are taking our jobs. | | |
| 5. Many Canadians like to watch hockey. | | |

In intercultural communication, people use stereotypes and generalizations to talk about members of different cultures. So how are they different? Stereotypes are statements that are made by people outside the group. They are applied to everyone in a group. They are sometimes positive, but are often negative.

Generalizations are statements that people from the culture might use. They are generally true. They apply to many people in the group, but not everyone.

Instructions: Go back to the statements above and identify which statements are stereotypes and which statements are generalizations.

How do you know? Underline the words used when someone is making a generalization.

What are two common stereotypes applied to people from your first country? How do you feel when you hear these stereotypes?

1. _____

2. _____

Video: The Culture of Safety¹

Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: Watch the video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QISNcQgHbKo> about an incident that happens at work and answer the following questions.

1. Who is responsible for Clara's injury?
 - a. The supervisor
 - b. Clara
 - c. Her co-workers
2. Why did Clara not speak up? Check all correct answers.
 - She didn't know what to say.
 - She needed the job.
 - She was a school teacher and now she lives in Canada.
 - She didn't have help from her friend.
3. Is Clara's injury because of personality or culture or both?

4. If you were in Clara's position, what would you have done?

5. Where can you find information about your rights and responsibilities?²

¹ Adapted from Holmes, et al. (n.d.):

http://www.awes.ca/site/assets/files/1326/awes_ews_full_version_2017_lr.pdf

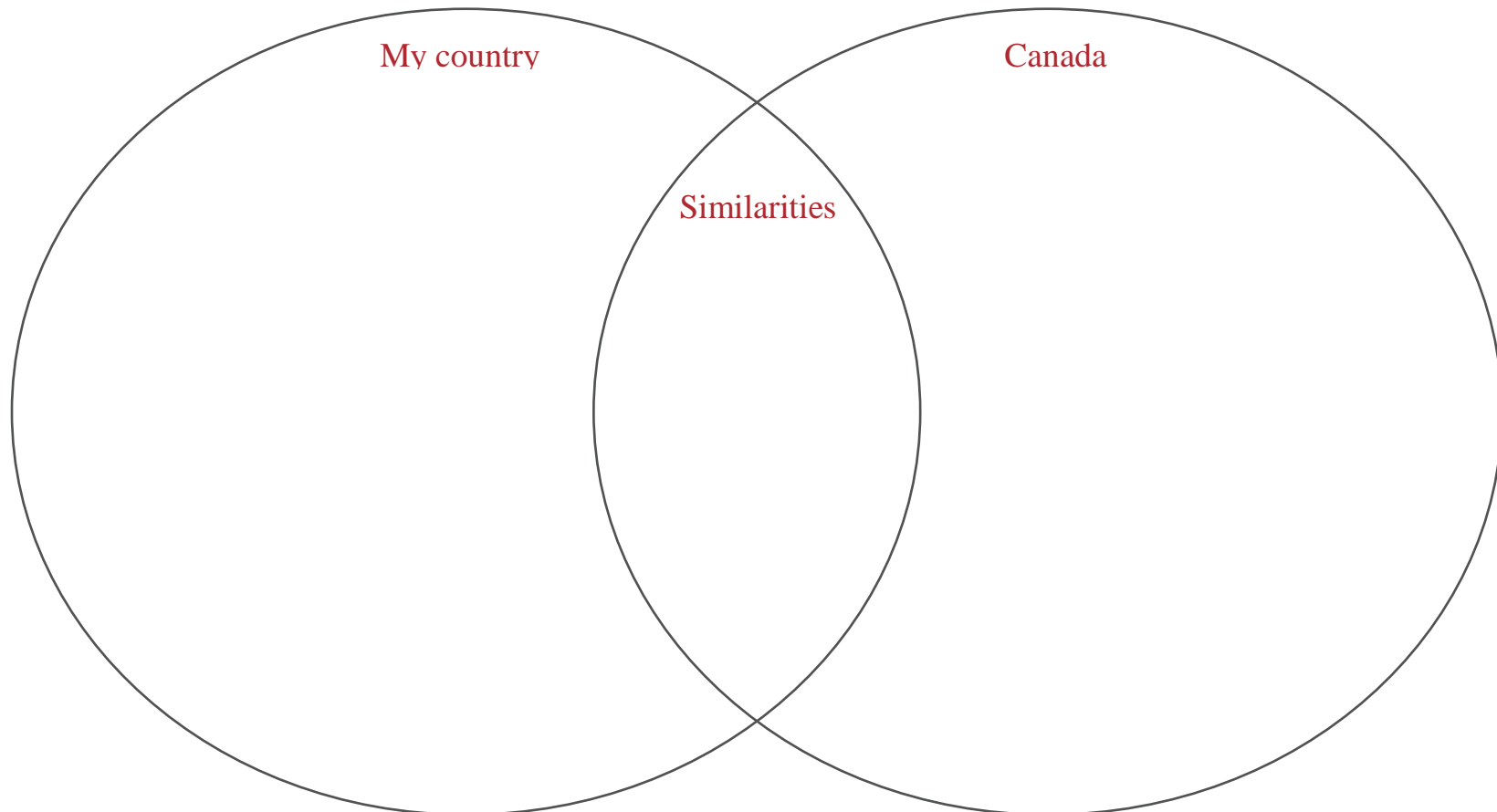
² <http://www.ccohs.ca/>

Learning Activity 3 – Comparing and contrasting safety culture in your country and in Canada

Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: Write the differences and similarities between your culture and Canadian culture for safety.



Class Discussion: Multiculturalism is an invitation to learn

Instructions: Answer the questions that follow with your partner or group.

1. How often are you invited to a friend's house for a party or dinner?
2. Do you always say "Yes"? Why or why not?
3. Is it rude in your culture to say "No"?

Reading Activity 1: Multiculturalism is an invitation to learn

Everyone talks about culture when you first move to Canada. People talk about how different Canadians are or how things were different back home. Comparing cultures is normal and part of learning to integrate into a new culture. In the community, culture is different from workplace culture. At work, there are more strict rules about how to do things. Safety is important, listening to the boss is important, working well with others is important and, of course, making money is important.

Living in a multicultural society means that we don't always have to follow the new culture's rules. In a multicultural society, we are invited to follow the rules. Sometimes we say "Yes," sometimes "No," and sometimes "Maybe." It takes a lot of energy to always think about culture, so just do your best.

In the following story and video, culture is at the centre of workplace misunderstandings.

The Story of Alfred

Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: Read the story and then answer the questions that follow.

One day, Alfred was working as part of a crew of 10 people. He was the only one from another culture. The crew was working outside, digging a ditch for a new electrical line. It started to rain very heavily and the crew didn't want to get out of the truck. The crew boss got out first, picked up a shovel and started digging as fast as he could. He wasn't wearing any rain gear and he got wet in a hurry. Soon after, the rest of the crew started digging as well. Alfred couldn't believe his boss. In fact, when he saw him digging, he got out of the truck and ran up to him. Alfred tried to take the boss's shovel from his hands and told him to go back to the truck. The boss got very angry at Alfred and told him to go and get his own shovel and get to work. Alfred tried again to take the boss's shovel. This time the boss got even angrier. "I'm trying to work here," he yelled. "Go and get your own shovel or get off the jobsite!" Alfred, in shock, went and got his shovel and started digging.

Questions

1. Why did Alfred try to take his boss's shovel?

2. What should Alfred do tomorrow if his boss takes a shovel again?

Video: Culture in the Workplace

Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: Watch the following video about culture in the workplace:

<http://bit.ly/2AtceaV>

Fill in the table below with examples from the video of cultural differences.

| What I noticed from the video that was cultural... | Same (S) or different (D) in my culture |
|--|---|
| | |
| | |

Final Reflection

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. Write three things you **learned** about the culture of the Canadian workplace.

- _____

- _____

- _____

2. Write two things you **want to learn more** about related to culture in the Canadian workplace.

- _____

- _____
