

# Module 1: Conceptual Framework

## Lesson 1.6

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Employ Cross Cultural  
Communication



## Learning Outcomes

- Understand the effect culture has on communication
- Communicate effectively in a cross cultural context



## Lesson Content

- Cross Cultural Communication
- Understanding the effect of culture on communication
- Cross-cultural communication tips



# Introduction

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Communication is achieved when the ideas in one person's head are transmitted and translated into someone else's head

Doing this across language and culture can be very difficult, as most languages around the world use terms, expressions, and shared understandings that are not easily translated from one to the other



**FOOTBALL**



**SOCCKER**



**TROUSERS**  
**PANTS**





## Cross Cultural Communication

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Learning the local traditions to greet people and exit a conversation is essential for UN-EP personnel. Greetings in the person's native language also assists with building rapport. This will form an impression of people within the first few minutes. Getting to learn a person's name and giving yours is also invaluable in creating effective dialog with a community.



# Cross Cultural Communication

## **Cross cultural communication is:**

- Knowing different cultures have different ways of communicating
- Bridging the gaps between the different ways cultures communicate

## **UN-EP members must be capable of communicating across cultures, which requires:**

- Understanding your culture; and,
- Understanding the Host Nations (HN) culture





## Culture and the UN-EP

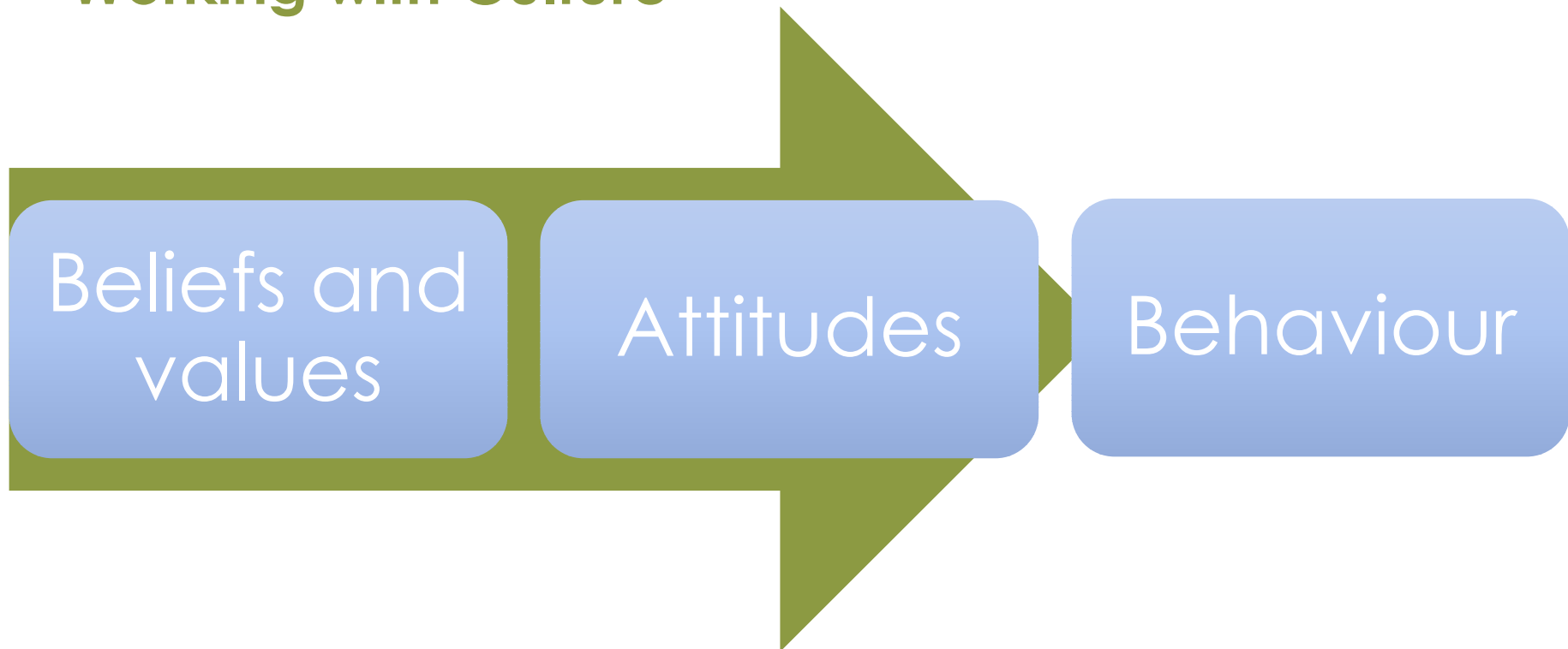
- Understanding cultural context is key for mission success, but even more important for the UN-EP
- UN-EP often communicate between cultures
- Actions will often carry more weight than words



# Understanding the Effect of Culture on Communication

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## Working with Culture





## Understanding Culture: Beliefs

- Do not require evaluation or proof
- Rigid, in spite of refuting facts
- At the core of cultural identity if shared across the community



## Understanding Culture: Values

- Determine what cultures prioritize
- Based on the way we think about beliefs
- Determine “right” from “wrong”



## **Understanding Culture:** Relationship between Beliefs And Values

- Relationship between beliefs and values is complex and dynamic
- Values are generally attached to beliefs
- Human beings can simultaneously have competing beliefs and values



## Understanding Culture: Attitudes

- Attitudes are your emotional response to a belief and/or value
- Changing an attitude requires a change in either a belief or value
- Because attitudes are result of belief-value pairings, and these are complex, changing attitude can be difficult



## Understanding Culture: Behaviours

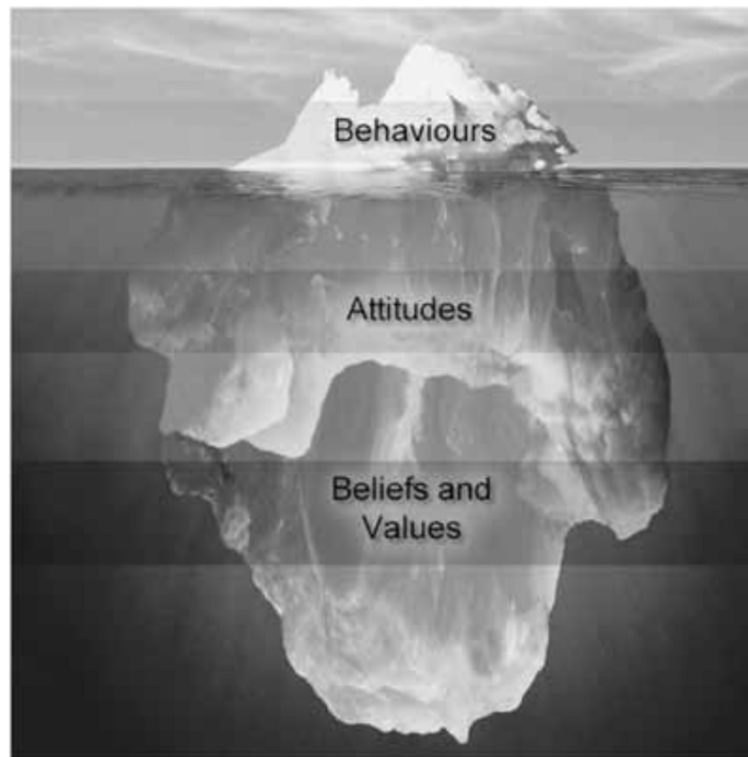
- Behaviour is how people express themselves
- Behaviour can be verbal or non-verbal
- Understanding behaviour means understanding a person's motivation

### **Motivation can be either:**

- **Internal** - beliefs and values that form attitudes leading to behaviour
- **External** – an external factor influence attitudes or values (for example: rewards and punishment)



## Understanding Culture: The Iceberg of Culture







## **Tips for Cross Cultural Communication**

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- Knowing how culture impacts communication is foundational to overcoming cultural hurdles to communication
- Having good strategies at your disposal is key to overcoming intercultural differences in communication



## 10 Principles To Enhance Cultural Competence:

1. There is no such thing as an impartial view
2. Focus on the intent of the message
3. Understand what the audience takes away
4. Seek knowledge, do not be limited by unknown
5. Be adaptive and flexible
6. Be empathetic, look at world through eyes of others
7. Apply critical thinking skills to identify root causes
8. Use creative thinking
9. For every action, there is a reaction
10. Stay mission focused



## 10 Principles to Enhance Cultural Competence: Impartiality

You must recognize that there is no such thing as an impartial view

### **Ask yourself:**

- What are my assumptions?
- What is my mission?
- How do the local nationals see the mission?



# 10 Principles to Enhance Cultural Competence: The Message

**Focus on the intent of the message rather than just on what you think you have heard**

- Consider what you think you said?
- Use simple, direct language.
- Do not use humour
- Do not use metaphors (and ask for clarification on their metaphors)





# 10 Principles to Enhance Cultural Competence: The Audience

Understand what your audience takes away rather than focusing on what you think you have said

## **Languages needs to be:**

- Clear
- Precise
- Exact



**Do not hesitate to explain why are you doing/asking something**



## 10 Principles to Enhance Cultural Competence: Seek Knowledge



- Always seek knowledge, but do not be limited by the unknown
- Research the HN and its customs as thoroughly as you can
- Do not be afraid to ask questions to members of the HN



# 10 Principles to Enhance Cultural Competence: Flexibility and Patience

## Be flexible, adaptive, and patient

- **Flexible** – no mission goes as planned
- **Adaptive** – adjust your communication to the audience
- **Patience** – they may not see things the way you see them





## Learning Activity

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**Question:** What do you find most frustrating when you are trying to communicate with someone?





## 10 Principles to Enhance Cultural Competence: Empathy

- Look at the world through the eyes of others
- Actively listen to people
- Don't assume you understand them

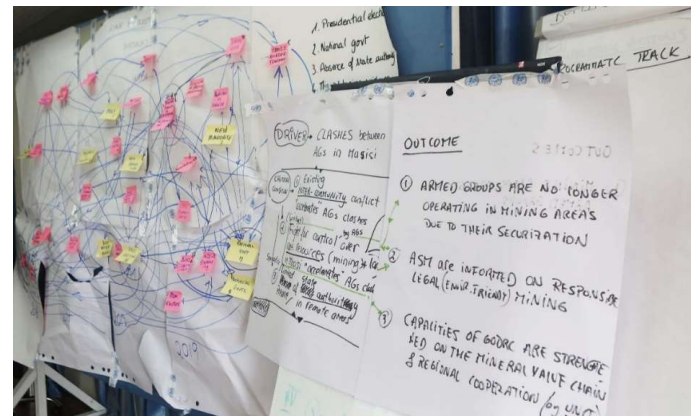


**What would I do in their situation?**



## 10 Principles to Enhance Cultural Competence: Critical Thinking

- Apply critical thinking to problems to identify root causes
- Make assessments based on available facts
- Skepticism is good, but disagreement for sake of disagreement is bad





## 10 Principles to Enhance Cultural Competence: Creative Thinking

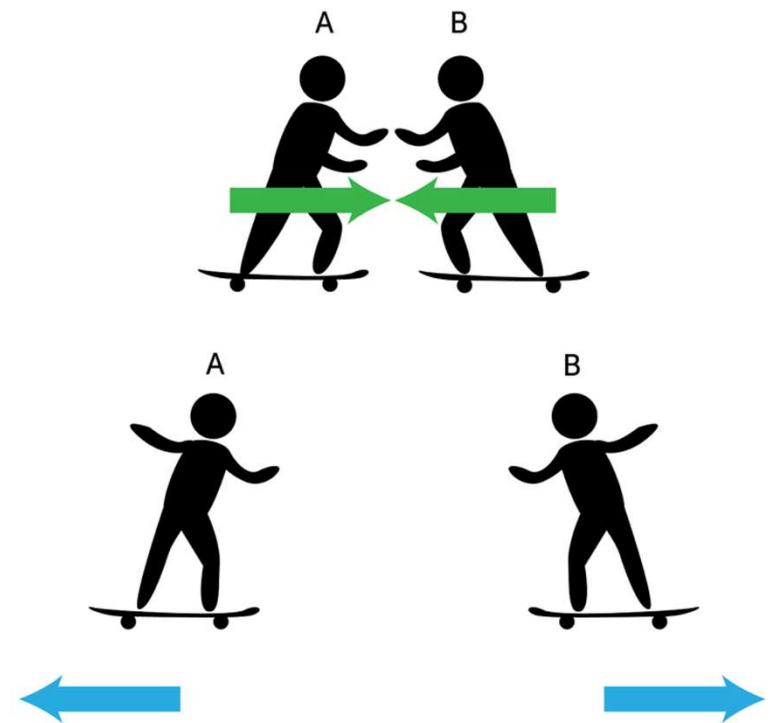
- Apply creative thinking to problems to find innovative solutions
- Have an open mind – listen to all ideas
- Brainstorm – no idea is a bad idea





## 10 Principles To Enhance Cultural Competence: Actions And Reactions

- For every action, there is a reaction
- You must be aware that there are unintended consequences to our actions.





## 10 Principles To Enhance Cultural Competence: Mission Focussed

- Stay focused
- Remember the mission



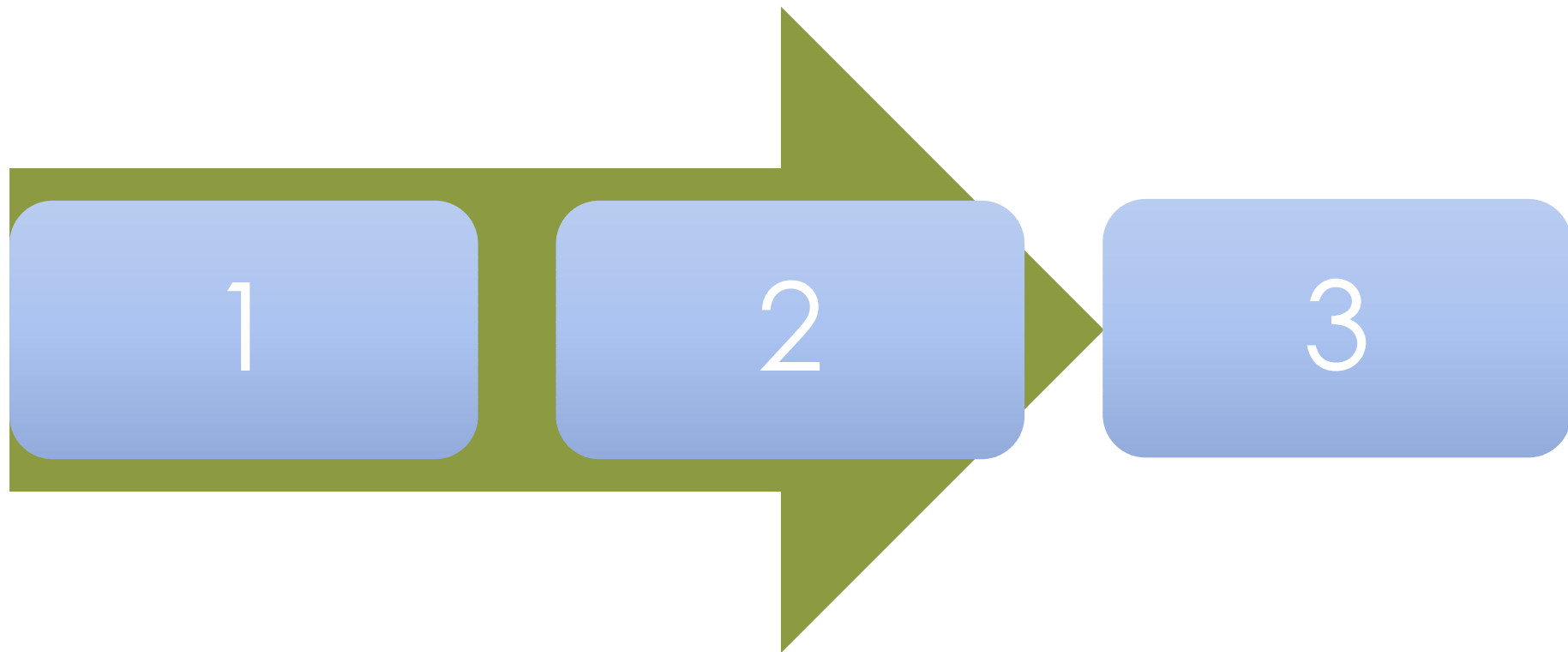


## Review

**Question:** What are the ten tips to enhance cultural competence?



## Review





## Take Away

- Culture can influence communication
- You must understand your own cultural biases in order to counter them
- Use the 10 principles to enhance your cultural competence





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# QUESTIONS?