

Intercultural Training Workshop: "Bridging Cultures - Middle Eastern and Western Perspectives"

Workshop for one day
(8 hours)



Objectives

- Cultural Awareness:** Increase understanding of the key cultural differences and similarities between Middle Eastern and Western cultures.
- Communication Skills:** Enhance verbal and non-verbal communication skills for effective intercultural interactions.
- Practical Strategies:** Provide actionable tools and strategies to navigate and bridge cultural gaps in professional settings.



Exercises and Activities

- Cultural Snapshots Icebreaker
- Cultural Self-Assessment
- Comparative Analysis
- Role-Playing Scenarios
- Etiquette Quiz
- Trust-Building Activity
- Personal Action Plan



Target Audience:

Individuals from the **Middle East** who are moving to or working in Western environments, aiming to understand **cultural differences** and enhance **communication** in diverse workplaces.

AGENDA

8:30-9:00 | Registration and Welcome Coffee

Objective: Allow participants to arrive, register, and mingle informally.
Activity: Light refreshments and networking.

9:00 AM - 9:15 AM | Opening Remarks and Workshop Overview

Objective: Set the tone, outline objectives, and explain the day's structure.
Activity: Trainer introduces themselves and provides an overview of the workshop agenda and goals.

9:15 AM - 10:00 AM | Icebreaker: "Cultural Snapshots"

Objective: Build rapport and begin thinking about cultural experiences.
Activity:

- **Instructions:** Each participant shares a brief story or example of a cultural experience they've had, either positive or challenging, in a Western context.
- **Purpose:** Encourages sharing and highlights diverse experiences within the group.

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM | Understanding Culture: Foundations and Dimensions

- **Objective:** Define culture and explore its impact on behavior and communication.
- **Topics Covered:**
 - **Definition of Culture:** Exploring what culture is and its components.
 - **Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions:** Brief overview focusing on dimensions most relevant to Middle Eastern and Western interactions (e.g., Power Distance, Individualism vs. Collectivism, Uncertainty Avoidance).
 - **Cultural Iceberg Model:** Visible vs. invisible aspects of culture.
- **Exercise: Cultural Self-Assessment**
 - **Instructions:** Participants complete a short questionnaire based on Hofstede's dimensions to identify their cultural tendencies.
 - **Discussion:** Share results in small groups and reflect on how these dimensions influence their behavior in the workplace.

11:00 AM - 11:15 AM | Morning Break

11:15 AM - 12:30 PM | Middle Eastern vs. Western Cultural Norms and Values

- **Objective:** Deepen understanding of specific cultural norms and values in both contexts.
- **Topics Covered:**
 - **Middle Eastern Values:** Importance of family, religion, hospitality, respect for authority, and collectivism.
 - **Western Values:** Individualism, direct communication, time management, egalitarianism, and self-expression.
- **Exercise:** Comparative Analysis
- **Instructions:** In pairs, participants list key cultural norms and values from Middle Eastern and Western perspectives.
- **Activity:** Each pair presents their findings, highlighting similarities and differences.
- **Outcome:** Enhanced awareness of cultural contrasts and commonalities.

12:30 PM - 1:30 PM | Lunch Break

1:30 PM - 2:30 PM | Effective Cross-Cultural Communication

- **Objective:** Improve communication skills to bridge cultural gaps.
- **Topics Covered:**
 - **Verbal Communication:** Direct vs. indirect styles, language nuances, and clarity.
 - **Non-Verbal Communication:** Body language, eye contact, gestures, and personal space.
- **High-Context vs. Low-Context Communication:** Understanding implicit vs. explicit communication.
- **Exercise:** Role-Playing Scenarios
- **Instructions:** Participants are divided into small groups and given different communication scenarios (e.g., giving feedback, negotiating a deal) to role-play using both Middle Eastern and Western communication styles.
- **Debrief:** Discuss challenges faced and strategies to overcome communication barriers.

2:30 PM - 3:15 PM | Navigating Workplace Etiquette and Professionalism

- **Objective:** Understand and adapt to different workplace etiquettes.
- **Topics Covered:**
 - **Greetings and Introductions:** Formal vs. informal approaches.
 - **Meeting Etiquette:** Punctuality, agenda setting, and participation styles.
 - **Business Communication:** Email etiquette, meetings, and presentations.
 - **Gender Dynamics:** Professional interactions and cultural sensitivities.
- **Exercise:** Etiquette Quiz and Discussion
- **Instructions:** Participants take a multiple-choice quiz on workplace etiquette in Middle Eastern and Western cultures.
- **Activity:** Review answers in groups, discuss reasoning, and clarify any misconceptions.

3:15 PM - 3:30 PM | Afternoon Break

3:30 PM - 4:30 PM | Building and Maintaining Trust in Multicultural Teams

- **Objective:** Develop strategies to build trust and foster collaboration in diverse teams.
- **Topics Covered:**
 - **Trust-Building Factors:** Reliability, openness, and respect.
 - **Overcoming Stereotypes and Biases:** Recognizing and addressing preconceived notions.
 - **Collaborative Techniques:** Encouraging inclusive participation and valuing diverse perspectives.
- **Exercise:** Trust-Building Activity
- **Instructions:** In small groups, participants share personal or professional experiences where trust was successfully built or eroded in a multicultural setting.
- **Discussion:** Identify key factors that influenced trust and brainstorm strategies to enhance trust in their own teams

4:30 PM - 5:00 PM | Final Reflection and Action Planning

- **Objective:** Consolidate learning and create actionable plans for participants.
- **Activity:** Personal Action Plan
- **Instructions:** Each participant writes down three specific actions they will take to apply their intercultural learning in their workplace.
- **Sharing:** Volunteers share their action plans with the group for feedback and support.
- **Closing Remarks:** Trainer summarizes key takeaways, provides additional resources, and opens the floor for any final questions or comments.