

Cultural Competence Self-Assessment Checklist*

This self-assessment tool is designed to explore individual cultural competence. Its purpose is to help you to consider your skills, knowledge, and awareness of yourself in your interactions with others. Its goal is to assist you to recognize what you can do to become more effective in working and living in a diverse environment.

The term 'culture' includes not only culture related to race, ethnicity and ancestry, but also the culture (e.g. beliefs, common experiences and ways of being in the world) shared by people with characteristics in common, such as people with disabilities, people who are Lesbian Bisexual, Gay, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ), people who are deaf, members of faith and spiritual communities, people of various socio- economic classes, etc.) In this tool, we are focusing on race, ethnicity and ancestry. However, remember that much of the awareness, knowledge and skills which you have gained from past relationships with people who are different from you are transferable and can help you in your future relationships across difference.

Read each entry in the Awareness, Knowledge and Skills sections. Place a check mark in the appropriate column which follows. At the end of each section, add up the number of times you checked that column. Multiple the number of times you checked "Never" by 1, "Sometimes/Occasionally" by 2, "Fairly Often/Pretty well" by 3 and "Always/Very Well" by 4. The more points you have, the more culturally competent you are becoming.

This is simply a tool. This is not a test. The rating scale is there to help you identify areas of strength and areas that need further development in order to help you reach your goal of cultural competence.

Remember that cultural competence is a process, and that learning occurs on a continuum and over a life time. You will not be asked to show anyone your answers unless you choose to do so.

While you complete this assessment, stay in touch with your emotions and remind yourself that learning is a journey.

*Adapted from the [Greater Vancouver Island Multicultural Society](#) Cultural Competence Self-assessment Checklist.

| Awareness | | Never | Sometimes/ Occasionally | Fairly Often/ Pretty Well | Always/ Very Well |
|--|---|---------|----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Value Diversity | I view human difference as positive and a cause for celebration | | | | |
| Know myself | I have a clear sense of my own ethnic, cultural and racial identity | | | | |
| Share my culture | I am aware that in order to learn more about others I need to understand and be prepared to share my own culture | | | | |
| Be aware of areas of discomfort | I am aware of my discomfort when I encounter differences in race, color, religion, sexual orientation, language, and ethnicity | | | | |
| Check my assumptions | I am aware of the assumptions that I hold about people of cultures different from my own | | | | |
| Challenge my stereotypes | I am aware of my stereotypes as they arise and have developed personal strategies for reducing the harm they cause | | | | |
| Reflect on how my culture informs my judgement | I am aware of how my cultural perspective influences my judgement about what are 'appropriate', 'normal', or 'superior' behaviors, values, and communication styles | | | | |
| Accept ambiguity | I accept that in cross cultural situations there can be uncertainty and that uncertainty can make me anxious. It can also mean that I do not respond quickly and take the time needed to get more information | | | | |
| Be curious | I take any opportunity to put myself in places where I can learn about difference and create relationships | | | | |
| Aware of my privilege, if I am White | If I am a White person working with a Person of Color, I understand that I will likely be perceived as a person with power and racial privilege, and that I may not be seen as 'unbiased' or as an ally | | | | |
| Aware of social justice issues | I'm aware of the impact of the social context on the lives of culturally diverse populations, and how power, privilege and social oppression influence their lives | | | | |
| | | 1 pt. x | 2 pt. x | 3 pt. x | 4 pt. x |

| Knowledge | | Never | Sometimes/ Occasionally | Fairly Often/ Pretty Well | Always/ Very Well |
|---|---|---------|----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Gain from my mistakes | I will make mistakes and will learn from them | | | | |
| Assess the limits of my knowledge | I will recognize that my knowledge of certain cultural groups is limited and commit to creating opportunities to learn more | | | | |
| Ask questions | I will really listen to the answers before asking another question | | | | |
| Acknowledge the importance of difference | I know that differences in color, culture, ethnicity etc. are important parts of an individual's identity, which they value and so do I. I will not hide behind the claim of "color blindness". | | | | |
| Know the historical experiences of non-European Americans | I am knowledgeable about historical incidents in the United States of America's past that demonstrate racism and exclusion towards American's of non-European heritage. | | | | |
| Understand the influence culture can have | I recognize that cultures change over time and can vary from person to person, as does attachment to culture | | | | |
| Commit to life- long learning | I recognize that achieving cultural competence involves a commitment to learning over a life-time | | | | |
| Understand the impact of racism, sexism, homophobia ... | I recognize that stereotypical attitudes and discriminatory actions can dehumanize, even encourage violence against individuals because of their membership in groups which are different from myself | | | | |
| Know my own family history | I know my family's story of immigration and assimilation into America | | | | |
| Know my limitations | I continue to develop my capacity for assessing areas where there are gaps in my knowledge | | | | |
| Awareness of multiple social identities | I recognize that people have intersecting multiple identities drawn from race, sex, religion, ethnicity, etc. and the importance of each of these identities vary from person to person | | | | |
| Inter-cultural and intracultural differences | I acknowledge both inter-cultural and intra-cultural differences | | | | |
| Point of reference to assess appropriate behavior | I'm aware that everyone has a "culture" and my own "culture" should not be regarded as a point of reference to assess which behavior is appropriate or inappropriate | | | | |
| | | 1 pt. x | 2 pt. x | 3 pt. x | 4 pt. x |

| Skills | | Never | Sometimes/ Occasionally | Fairly Often/ Pretty Well | Always/ Very Well |
|--|---|---------|----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Adapt to different situations | I am developing ways to interact respectfully and effectively with individuals and groups | | | | |
| Challenge discriminatory and/ or racist behavior | I can effectively intervene when I observe others behaving in a racist and/or discriminatory manner | | | | |
| Communicate across cultures | I am able to adapt my communication style to effectively communicate with people who communicate in ways that are different from my own | | | | |
| Seek out situations to expand my skills | I seek out people who challenge me to maintain and increase the cross-cultural skills I have | | | | |
| Become engaged | I am actively involved in initiatives, small or big, that promote understanding among members of diverse groups | | | | |
| Act respectfully in cross-cultural situations | I can act in ways that demonstrate respect for the culture and beliefs of others | | | | |
| Practice cultural protocols | I am learning about and put into practice the specific cultural protocols and practices which necessary for my work | | | | |
| Act as an ally | My colleagues who are immigrants or People of Color consider me an ally and know that I will support them with culturally appropriate ways | | | | |
| Be flexible | I work hard to understand the perspectives of others and consult with my diverse colleagues about culturally respectful and appropriate courses of action | | | | |
| Be adaptive | I know and use a variety of relationship building skills to create connections with people who are different from me. | | | | |
| Recognize my own cultural biases | I can recognize my own cultural biases in a given situation and I'm aware not to act out based on my biases | | | | |
| Be aware of within-group differences | I'm aware of within-group differences and I would not generalize a specific behavior presented by an individual to the entire cultural community | | | | |
| | | 1 pt. x | 2 pt. x | 3 pt. x | 4 pt. x |