

# Assessing Personal Culture

## Goals

Define culture

Identify our own personal culture

Identify the effect of our personal cultures on a group

## Icebreaker

Name 6 Things (15 mins)

- Name six words/phrases that describe essence of who you are/ if they were taken away from you, you would not be the same person (5 mins)
- Break into groups of 3 ppl (10 mins)
  - Once in the group, cross one item off list and share why you crossed off that item and what the remaining items mean
  - Continue crossing off items and sharing explanations until 1 item remains
  - With the last item, explain to the group how can or cannot define who you are as a person

## Questions (5 mins - shout out to large group)

What did you notice as you wrote the list? As you shared list?

What did it feel like to have to cross items off list?

What did you learn about yourself? About peers?

## Definition of Culture (2 min explanation)

- Defined by groups you are born into (e.g. racial or ethnic groups or groups you choose to be part of (social or religious groups))
- Combination of thoughts, feelings, attitudes, beliefs, values and behavior patterns shared by people in any given group
- It provides a guide by which to live and make decisions
- We move between cultures all the time

## Culture can be confusing (5 mins)

Big C (refers to perceptions about groups)

Race

Ethnicity

Gender

Groups with a common identity

Little C (refers to characteristics, attitudes, behaviors that make us unique)

Individual culture identity

Not tied to any specific group

Honors the complexity of each individual

Problems arise when the two C's get mixed up because the attitudes/beliefs/behavior patterns of one person can get superimposed onto a group

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Show Venn Diagram (Personal Culture/Culture of GAB/Culture of School) - culture is learned via social interactions and it manifests itself through behaviors, etc of a group - each individual manifests beliefs and behaviors that come from a group - but we are part of many groups

## Practice Activity (5 mins)

Break off in pairs and fill out the worksheet

Culture Perceptions in Pairs

Category	Perception Partner A	Reality Partner A	Perception Partner B	Reality Partner B
Country of family and heritage				
Languages spoken				
Hobbies and Interests				
Favorite Foods				
Types of TV or Movies Preferred				
Types of Music Preferred				

## Questions (5 mins - large group)

How did it feel to have responsibility for making perceptions?

How did it feel being on the receiving end of perceptions?

How did it feel revealing your perceptions?

Were you surprised by any of the perceptions made?

## Assessing Culture (15 mins)

Think about your culture and answer the following questions - jot down your thoughts on a piece of paper

How might your culture be different from others?

How might your culture be different from the students in your group?

How might the culture of the group be different from your culture?

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Share in partners, then find new partners, and so on until you have shared with the whole group.

## **Closing Questions**

What were the aha moments of today's workshop?

How does what we learned today apply to the grant making process?

## **Take Away Thoughts**

The more aware you are of your personal culture, the more conscious you become about how your culture affects others.

We all need to be aware of ourselves and our culture and how it can create barriers to interactions with those who are different. Becoming aware of differences and being able to analyze our own cultures and how it affects others can help us make decisions that both respect differences and adjust for those differences.