

Brief comments

This intercultural training program is well-structured and well-considered. The student clearly identified the objectives of the program and designed activities to achieve them. Theories are applied and the rationale of different activities is justified. The ethical issues related to the target group are appropriately addressed.

Intercultural training program for refugee women living in Australia

I. Introduction

TUMI¹ Enterprises specializes in training for vulnerable populations and covers a range of topics. It has been requested to create an Intercultural Training Program for a specific population in Australia. The following report will begin by explaining the objective of the program and will give a brief definition of basic concepts about the specific population. It will then explain the different themes to be covered per day and will go on by explaining the activities that the trainees will implement. It will also cover ethical considerations that need to be taken into account and it will conclude by describing an evaluation tool to be used during the duration of the training and afterwards.

In order to develop an appropriate program that focuses on the real needs of a specific group, some definitions have to be taken into consideration.

The term refugee is used for a person that has experienced well- founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is out- side the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it. (UN General Assembly, 1951) On the contrary, an asylum-

¹ Ceremonial knife used in the Inca culture. Today the Tumi is a cultural icon turned good luck symbol in Peru. (Discover-Peru.org, 2015)

seeker is someone who says he or she is a refugee, but whose claim has not yet been definitively evaluated. (Refugees, 2015)

In this sense Storti mentions “no two trainings are alike ... with a number of variables affecting the content, design and delivery”. (Storti, 2009) The program will have different methods to better understand the needs of the participants and will keep an open approach to adapt the methodology according to any new propositions that may arise.

The main objective of the training is to help refugee women with their acculturation process into Australia. In addition to that, other objectives such as developing better intercultural conflict resolution techniques and improving communication strategies will be addressed. Some of the objectives will be developed after the first encounter with these women, as they will voice their needs and topics of interest.

The changes that this training hopes to bring about are an improvement in attitudes towards these women’s current situation as refugees, foster better intercultural relationships, provide them with tools to engage in a new country and give them the tools to better face the challenges ahead.

II. Target audience

Australia accepts approximately 12 000 refugees each year (Multiculturalaustralia.edu.au, 2015) and with this many people entering the country every year, it is essential to have certain considerations to avoid conflicts. The target audience of this intercultural training is refugee women recently living in Australia (6 months or less). Some of these women arrive in the country after being prosecuted in their country for their race, religion, membership of a particular social group or political opinion. Some of the main considerations towards them are:

- *Language barrier* is often seen as a source of discrimination or stereotyping
- *Homesickness* as they have left relatives and places where they felt safe to come to a completely new environment.
- *High levels of stress/depression* as a result of all the conflicts and possible obstacles they have had to endure.
- *Dependent on outside assistance*, usually the government and other organizations that provide for them. It can

trigger feelings of uselessness, anxiety, helplessness, etc.

These are just possible experiences that these women might have had, but it is important to consider that back in their home countries they had a routine, with several activities that fulfilled their daily lives. If they feel empowered and carry a positive attitude they will be ready to embrace the change.

III. Program description by themes

Table 1

Day	Type	Themes - Concepts	Objective	Activities ²
1	Seminar and workshop	<p>a) Culture</p> <p>b) Language and non verbal communication</p> <p>c) Cross cultural</p>	<p>a) Understand what culture means for each of the participants. Point out cultural differences and similarities between the participants and the new country. (Awareness). Look at the different stages of culture shock.</p> <p>b) Looking at one's own language and understanding other communication mechanisms to better navigate the new system.</p> <p>c) Look at the positive aspects of both cultural maintenance and intergroup</p>	<p>- Ice Breakers - games to know the participants</p> <p>- Expectation board where people say what they want to get out of the training (after explaining the objectives)</p> <p>- Sharing of cultural background</p> <p>- Acting exercises to work</p>

² Some activities will cover more than one topic at once and they will comply with the objectives described for each topic.

		adjustment	relations to foster better cultural adjustment. (Ward & Kennedy, 1994)	with non verbal communication techniques - Group discussion (Sharing of experiences about adjustment)
2	Seminar and workshop	a) Social identity theory b) Multiculturalism c) Stereotypes & discrimination	a) Look at social identity theory and categorization as an essential way to social recognition. (Wagner, Sen, Permanadeli & Howarth, 2012) b) Embrace the diversity in religions, cultures, ethnicities and races. Identify differences in these women as opportunities for growth and personal development. c) Look at out-group homogeneity effect as a basis for the emergence of stereotypes and attribution theory to see why people act the way they do. Look at possible strategies to overcome these two issues.	- Participatory video exercise in small groups to foster exchange of ideas - Creation of timeline of their experience since their arrival - Photo gallery. Display of each participant's photo and the story behind it. - Videos from different experiment and studies about these topics
3	2 Guest	a) Application of concepts from day 1 & 2	a) Sharing experiences with a refugee woman (with several years living in Australia) and sharing experiences with an Australian-born woman	- Presentation by guest speakers followed by group discussion - Use of different ICTs to

4	Speakers	b) Cultural hybridisation	b) Introducing the idea that a new cultural form can be generated after the combination of two other cultures. Look at notions of globalization.	create a “hybrid booklet” using all of the participant’s examples of hybridisation.
	Seminar and workshop	a) Intercultural competence b) Interpersonal relations c) Intercultural conflicts d) Evaluation techniques	a) Develop a set of attitudes, knowledge and skills to interact with people from other cultures. (Deardorff, 2006) b) Apply concepts from Social Penetration theory to look at how relationship bonding occurs from a superficial level to a more intimate one in terms of communication. (Altman and Taylor, 1973). c) Understand the meaning of conflict and relate it to real life situations they might experience in the future. See the different conflict resolution strategies between individualistic and collective cultures. (Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998) Look at conflict styles. d) Let the participants voice their opinions about the training and find ways for improvement.	- Role play (Evaluation tool - see Table 2) - Lego Serious play (Lego.com, 2015) to foster group work, imagination and promote creativity as a means to help with communication in different multicultural settings. - Evaluation of the training program: use of sticky notes to write 1 thing they learned, 1 thing they liked, and 1 thing they need more information about. (Evaluation tool- see table 2) Goal Calendars (Evaluation tool - see Table 2)

IV. Rationale for the sequence

There are many possible topics that will benefit and enrich these women's lives. Unfortunately, introducing several new concepts in one single day or even the course of a week could be daunting. The program has been designed to address the intercultural process of refugee women living in Australia from an individual perspective to a more collective one.

The teaching methods will consist of seminars, workshops and guest speakers during the 4 days of training. Seminars will be designed to introduce each of the Themes- Concepts listed in Table 1 in a one-way communication model at the beginning, while the workshops will work as a complement of the topics to be covered. The workshops will include the activities listed in Table 1. In this sense, the audience will have to actively participate because in order to effectively engage the participants they have to put every concept into practice. The following description will help understand the choice in topics and the readings if they request additional learning materials. (Included in References)

Day 1 has been designed take a look at the experiences of the refugees when they arrive to Australia. The first day will be focused on asking them to take a closer look at their own lives and seeing how their experiences have shaped their lives.

- a) Culture - Third Culture Frame or Model from Carley Dodd, 1998 discussed by Dr. Stephen Holmes, 2015
- b) Language and non verbal communication - Based on Chomsky's theory of linguistic universals and universal grammar, 1972
- c) Cross cultural adjustment - Implications during cross-cultural transitions by Ward and Kennedy, 1994

Day 2 will cover different topics that relate to things that they might or might not have experienced in terms of the way they relate with other people. They will start to look at themselves as part of a specific culture or group and the different topics below will help them understand how people from other cultures or backgrounds might see them.

- a) Social identity theory - Reading on culture and stereotypes by Wagner, Sen, Permanadeli & Howarth, 2012
- b) Multiculturalism - Study by Shahar and Kurz and their use of Three Cultural Metaphors
- c) Stereotypes & discrimination - Use of different exercises and videos from Understandingprejudice.org

Day 3 will help put those concepts into perspective and relate to other women. One of them will be from a same type of experience as a refugee but already living in Australia for several years and the other one will be an Australian born woman that can share what its like for her to live there. The participants will have a chance to relate to both women and ask particular questions to each.

- a) Guest speakers - TBA
- b) Cultural hybridisation - Article on Globalization and Hybridization by Pieterse, 1994

Day 4 has been planned to ask the participants to engage in possible real life situations and start seeing themselves in the *bigger picture*. The topics for this day are more collective rather than individual and they call for application of all the topics covered in previous days.

- a) Intercultural competence - Article on intercultural competence by Deardorff, 2006
- b) Interpersonal relations - Theory based on study by Altman and Taylor, 1973
- c) Intercultural conflicts - Article by Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998

V. Ethical considerations

- Confidentiality: The experiences shared during the training will be strictly confidential and anonymity will be enforced if any stories end up being shared outside of the program with prior consent from the participants.
- Re-victimization: Avoid activities that might re-victimize or remind traumatic events in the women's lives.
- Religious considerations: the participants will be from various backgrounds and even if some have the same religion, their level of involvement will be different. It's necessary to announce at the beginning of the program that this training is for all women refugees and religion will not be addressed. External resources will be provided if participants want to seek religious guidance.

- **Practices:** Remember that the women participating come from all different backgrounds and norms or practiced that are acceptable in their country of previous residence or origin might not be acceptable in Australia. Maintain a participatory environment to make note of those practices and share them with the rest of the group.
- **Rights and duties:** As refugees, they have a set of programmed steps they have to follow and a set of rules in order to stay in their new country of residence. The program will be mindful of this, and it will be sensitive when asking them to accomplish particular goals.

VI. Evaluation

The reason for evaluating is to determine the effectiveness of a training program. (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2006) In addition to that, it will help the trainees gain insight on how the program was received by the participants to see if any changes have to be made for future training courses. It allows for critical thinking from both the participants and the trainees and useful data can be obtained such as analysing how the participants best learned the information provided and how the program could be improved. The following table³ describes the different activities that will be completed to gather the necessary information to evaluate all aspects of the training.

Table 2

Level	Objective	Application	Activity	Time
1 Reaction	Measure customer satisfaction. Get feedback on the process of delivery	During	- Survey about experience - Sticky note exercise (From Table 1)	Day 4
			- Pre-test and post-test with questions by topic	Day

³ Table created by taking into consideration the 4 Levels of evaluation of training programs. (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2006)

2 Learning	Measure how their knowledge or skills have increased with the training	During	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Role play (From Table 1) - Case Study - Goal Calendars (From Table 1) 	1,2,4
3 Behaviour	Change in attitudes and actual application in daily lives. Application in real world	Post	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Questionnaire about application of concepts learned - Interviews - testimonies (video format) - Report from Director of Centre 	1 Week after
4 Results	Impact in the long term. Influence on the overall community	Post	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Success stories identified by the Centre - Report on analysis of the group in comparison to new refugees 	1 Month after

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