

## LESSON SCENARIO

### Title

The Hidden Rules of Intercultural Communication

### Abstract

This lesson reminds students of the definition of culture and looks at how culture is transmitted. It points out that there are different channels of nonverbal communication, and how something that is unsaid can be just as important (or more!) than what is said.

### Preparation time

Preparation time is estimated to be 1 hour, which consists of studying the terminology of the lesson and various examples.

### Teaching time

45 minutes.

### Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, participants will be able to:

- Understand the challenges of intercultural communication in terms of language, communication styles and cultural perceptions
- Examine how cultural norms and hidden rules shape people's behaviors and reactions

## Lesson Plan for F2F Teaching and Learning

No.	Duration	Activity description	Training methods	Materials / Equipment
1	45 minutes	<p>This activity requires an introduction to the topic and its best to implement it after e.g. iceberg culture activity.</p> <p>This activity is combined with a second group (which two groups are working together should be arranged ahead of time), and that movement time is included in the total time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each group's facilitators should give the introduction below and hand out the cards before the groups come together (will probably</li> </ul>	Group activity	Handout 1

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	<p>be less chaotic that way).</p> <p>Intercultural Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If possible, facilitators should try to give the "norms" out to students who's personality seems like they would struggle acting out that norm to simulate some of the discomfort they may feel.</li> <li>• All of the students from both groups will intermingle as described below; they can talk with people in their own group as well as the other group, and should talk to as many people as they can.</li> <li>• Every minute and a half or so while the students are talking with each other, tell them to switch people and talk to someone else. "Each of us has our own culture and way of communicating. In this exercise, each of you will be given an additional nonverbal norm – something that will be ingrained in you and that you will always follow." "We need two volunteers to have slightly different role in this activity (get the two volunteers). Each of you – except our two observers here – will get a card with your new "norm".</li> </ul> <p>Once you have the cards, (have these rules up on a flipchart or slide)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow the norm that is on your card.</li> <li>• Talk with someone who has a different color mark on his or her card.</li> <li>• Don't talk to two people with the same color in a row – for example, don't talk to two reds directly after each other.</li> <li>• Do not share what your norm is with others, including observers.</li> <li>• Try to figure out the difference in your nonverbal communication norms.</li> <li>• At the end, we will check to see who has the most toothpicks left and who was given the most."</li> </ul> <p>Pass out the cards – remind students not to share the content with anyone else. "Observers, you are going to wander around anywhere you would like, but you can't talk to anyone, only observe, and you can't look at anyone's card. See if you can distinguish what the various norms are; make</p>		
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	<p>notes if you would like.”</p> <p>“We are going to join with another group – everyone but the observers can talk to anyone in either group that has a different colored mark about anything (movies, where they like to travel, hobbies, etc.)”</p> <p>“If the person you are talking with violates your rule, give that person a toothpick - if they violate it again, give them another one, but don’t give the same person more than two, even if they violate your rule more than once as you are talking. Keep talking until time is called. Remember not to share your rule.”</p> <p>Activity (approximately 10 minutes of interactions, then a few minutes to split back out into regular small groups)</p> <p>After a few minutes, tell the students to switch and talk to someone else (can’t be with someone who has his/her color). During the 10 minutes, they should talk to at least 5-6 people (as many as they can) – each with a different color.</p> <p>Gather each small group back together (they should have interacted for 10 minutes or so).</p> <p>Have the students describe some of the nonverbal differences they encountered or that the Observers saw. As they discuss the differences, write key words in clusters of the categories listed below, but don’t reveal what the categories are to the students. Once the students have given some answers, look at each cluster of words you’ve hopefully gathered into each category.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Touching/contact</li> <li>• Eye contact</li> <li>• Gestures</li> <li>• Personal space</li> <li>• Timing (silences, interruptions, pauses, etc.)</li> </ul> <p>Have a conversation with the students about how it felt to do this activity (frustrating, fun, a challenge to try to figure out what the other person’s norm was).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What did it feel like to give someone a</li> </ul>		
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		<p>toothpick? What about when you received one?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Was it easy or hard to discover what someone else's nonverbal rules were?</li><li>• Observers, how did it feel to not have any additional information about what was going on? How did it feel to just watch and not participate? (this could lead to conversations about culture shock, so be prepared that it might come up)</li></ul> <p>Full lesson plan available at <a href="https://static1.squarespace.com/static/56167d1de4b0141a0f9a9378/t/56be4a0545bf21297ea4624f/1455311366141/Toothpick.pdf">https://static1.squarespace.com/static/56167d1de4b0141a0f9a9378/t/56be4a0545bf21297ea4624f/1455311366141/Toothpick.pdf</a></p>		
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## Handout 1

**You find direct eye contact offensive. When you speak, you try not to look people directly in the eye; instead, you avert your eye contact from listeners. If someone looks you in the eye, give him or her a toothpick.**

**You like to know that people are listening when you speak and you expect that people show they are listening by nodding their heads and making eye contact. You nod your head and look right at the person when others speak. When you are speaking, if listeners are not nodding their heads or making eye contact with you, give them each a toothpick.**

**You find people standing closer than 18 inches or so to you offensive. Stand at quite a distance from people and give them each a toothpick if they come too close.**

**You use your hands and body when you speak, even touching the other person on the arm to make your point. You indicate agreement to the conversation with thumbs up signals and other gestures, and feel everyone should do the same. If they stand too still and don't engage with you, give them a toothpick.**

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**You like when people get their ideas out quickly in conversations and you are easily distracted by vocalized fillers such as “um,” “ah,” and “er.” If people do not speak quickly enough or if they use vocalized fillers, give them each a toothpick.**

**When speaking, you pause frequently and you do not like to be interrupted until you finish speaking. You do not interrupt others when they speak. If people interrupt you and do not give you enough time to pause, give them each a toothpick.**

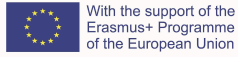
**When listening carefully you stand fairly still with your arms folded firmly in front of you so that nothing can “intrude” on your attention. If your conversation partner is standing with a “relaxed” posture or is overly animated, give her or him a toothpick.**

**Smiling and standing close to a person (even touching them on the arm) as you speak is your way of letting someone know you are really listening to what they say and are focused on them. If someone doesn't smile back at you or moves away as you move closer, give him or her a toothpick.**

**Smiling during a conversation indicates to you that the conversation is not being taken seriously. If your conversation partner is smiling while you talk, give him or her a toothpick.**

**You like to know all the details about a topic, so ask as many questions as possible to be very clear about what the person is telling you. If the person skims over details, or doesn't answer your questions, give him or her a toothpick.**

**You like to get just the overview, so you can cover more ground in the conversation. If someone gives you too many details, interrupt and say you really have all you need. If they keep giving you too much information, give him or her a toothpick.**



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