



# Building Cultural Competence

**Innovative Activities and Models**

Edited by Kate Berardo and Darla K. Deardorff



Foreword by Fons Trompenaars



“... The cry for intercultural competence becomes louder during a time when we don’t have to travel anymore to find an increasingly diverse population and when training is needed now more than ever. This book therefore is quite timely in bringing fresh perspectives to developing intercultural competencies.”

—Fons Trompenaars,  
*Founder and director of Trompenaars Hampden-Turner*

“*Building Cultural Competence* makes a valuable contribution to intercultural trainers by presenting 50+ innovative activities designed specifically for the development of intercultural competence and framing the use of these activities in terms of intercultural facilitation and intercultural development.”

—R. Michael Paige,  
*Professor of International and Intercultural Education, University of Minnesota,  
 author of Education for the Intercultural Experience, and coeditor of Student Learning Abroad*

“A new book of training activities is always welcome, but this volume offers something more: a thoughtful, careful analysis of how to design and execute relevant cultural training. You get the toolkit, in short, as well as guidance from some of the master builders.”

—Craig Storti,  
*Author, trainer, and consultant in intercultural communications*

**F**or human resources directors, corporate trainers, college administrators, diversity trainers, and study abroad educators, this book provides a cutting-edge framework and an innovative collection of ready-to-use tools and activities to help build cultural competence—from the basics of understanding core concepts of culture to the complex work of negotiating identity and resolving cultural differences.

*Building Cultural Competence* presents the latest work in the intercultural field and provides step-by-step instructions for how to effectively work with the new models, frameworks, and exercises for building learners’ cultural competence. Featuring fresh activities and tools from experienced coaches, trainers, and facilitators from around the globe, this collection of over 50 easy-to-use activities and models has been used successfully worldwide in settings that range from Fortune 500 corporations to the World Bank, nonprofits, and universities.

Learn updates on classic models like the DIE (Description, Interpretation, Evaluation) framework and the U-Curve model of adjustment. Engage in new exercises to help build intercultural competence and use practical, step-by-step guidance on how to effectively facilitate these activities. Stay relevant and have positive impact with clients, organizations, and students with this well-organized, easy-to-implement, and highly effective collection of frameworks, models, and activities.

This new, research-based, 4-stage model works for developing cultural competence in any environment, and for designing effective cultural competence courses. Education abroad administrators will be able to use these activities in their pre-departure orientations for students going abroad, while corporate human resource professionals will find these activities invaluable in cultural competence-building programs.

**Stylus**  
 PUBLISHING, LLC.

22883 Quicksilver Drive  
 Sterling, VA 20166-2102  
[www.Styluspub.com](http://www.Styluspub.com)

ISBN 978-1-57922-804-0



Cover design by Laura Augustine  
 Cover art by Brandon Laufenberg



Berardo  
Deardorff

# Building Cultural Competence

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# BUILDING CULTURAL COMPETENCE

## *Innovative Activities and Models*

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*Edited by*

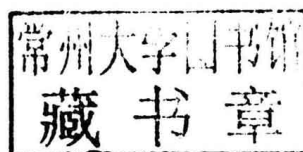
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*and*

DARLA K. DEARDORFF

*Foreword by*

FONS TROMPENAARS



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STERLING, VIRGINIA



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Published by Stylus Publishing, LLC  
22883 Quicksilver Drive  
Sterling, Virginia 20166-2102

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Building cultural competence : innovative activities and models / edited by  
Kate Berardo and Darla Deardorff.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-57922-803-3 (cloth : alk. paper) — ISBN 978-1-57922-804-0  
(pbk. : alk. paper) — ISBN 978-1-57922-805-7 (library networkable e-edition) —  
ISBN 978-1-57922-806-4 (consumer e-edition) 1. Intercultural communication—  
Study and teaching—Activity programs. 2. Multiculturalism—Study and teaching—  
Activity programs. 3. Multicultural education. I. Berardo, Kate. II. Deardorff, Darla K.

HM1211.B85 2012  
303.48'2—dc23

2011050374

13-digit ISBN: 978-1-57922-803-3 (cloth)  
13-digit ISBN: 978-1-57922-804-0 (paper)  
13-digit ISBN: 978-1-57922-805-7 (library networkable e-edition)  
13-digit ISBN: 978-1-57922-806-4 (consumer e-edition)

Printed in the United States of America

All first editions printed on acid free paper that meets the  
American National Standards Institute Z39-48 Standard.

**Bulk Purchases**

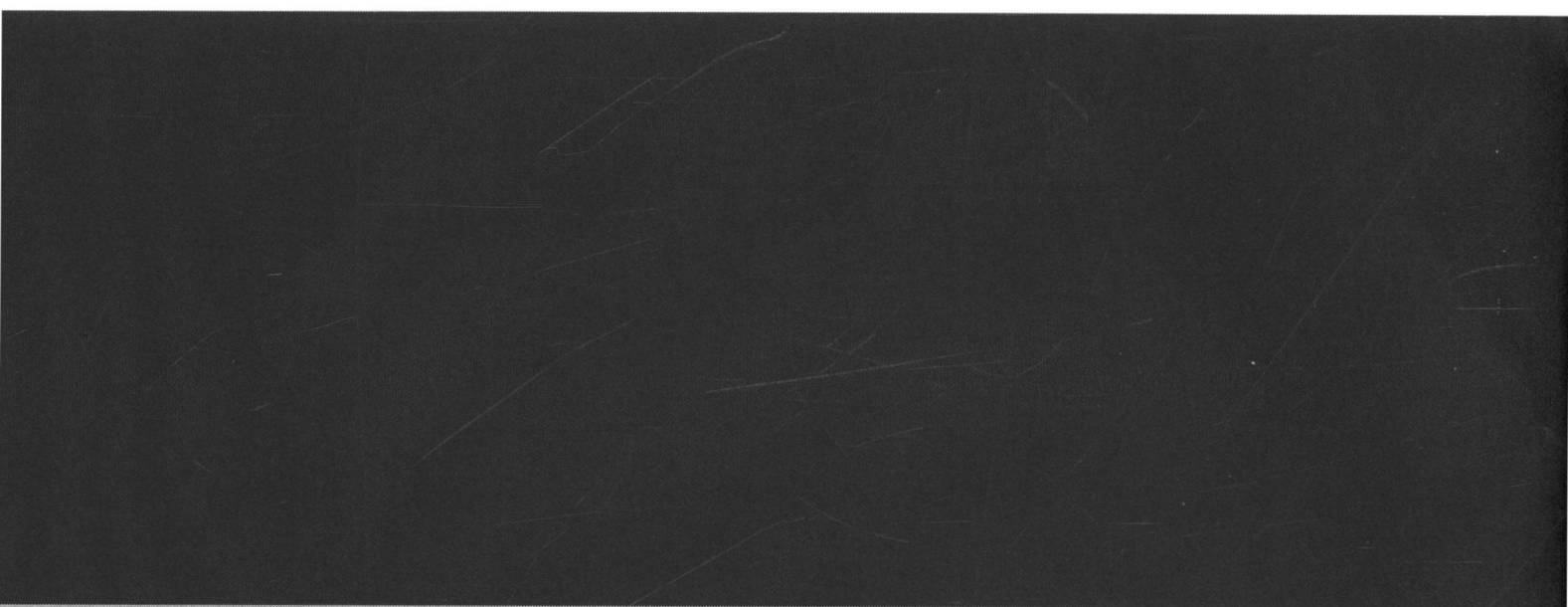
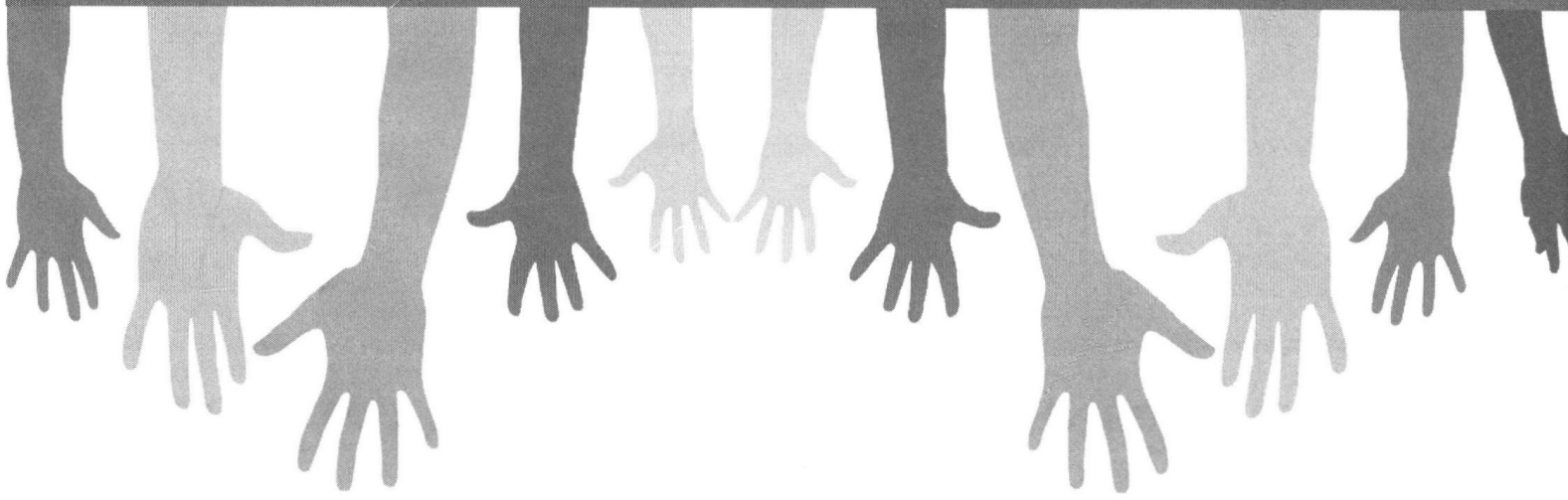
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First Edition, 2012

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

# **BUILDING CULTURAL COMPETENCE**



*Dedicated to all intercultural professionals seeking to advance the thinking  
in our field, and in honor of all the pioneers of this field  
who laid the foundation from which we build.*





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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Our thanks go primarily to our families for their unlimited patience with the time, energy, and multiyear process it required for us to move from concept to manuscript with this book. We would also like to thank Peggy Pusch in particular for her specific guidance in compiling this work, and all of our colleagues (you know who you are) for the support, challenge, and inspiration they provide. Finally, our

thanks go to Jim Lance and the folks at Stylus for an incredibly seamless publishing process and to our fantastic contributors who worked often through several rounds of editing to deliver the best end product possible. It takes a village not only to raise a child, but also to write a book; this work is indeed a collective effort, and we are proud to have been part of it.





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# FOREWORD

What a delight to be able to write a foreword to *Building Cultural Competence*, a book that brings creativity and innovativeness to training tools, models, and activities. I full-heartedly agree with the authors on how amazing it is that an important field such as ours has made so little progress in the last 30 years. Further, the cry for intercultural competence becomes louder during a time when we don't have to travel anymore to find an increasingly diverse population and when training is needed now more than ever. This book therefore is quite timely in bringing fresh perspectives to developing intercultural competencies.

## TOWARD TRANSCULTURAL COMPETENCE

The many sections of this book show clearly the developments our profession has been going through as a field and what learners need to be going through to develop intercultural competence. In the earlier sections, a lot of attention is given to cultural understanding. What is culture, and how does it apply to me? Later parts of the book deal with cross-cultural understanding leading to respect. Then the book focuses on how to deal effectively and appropriately with differences and comes to the core of what we call *intercultural competence*. Finally, some contributors provide training activities that show how to embed this process of maximizing diversity that we call *transcultural competence*.

To further the discussion, it is interesting to see how the activities and tools in this book align with the Transcultural Competence Profiler (TCP), which is normally completed online. For a free try, go to [www.thtconsulting.com](http://www.thtconsulting.com) and use the password *Stylus*.

The four aspects of intercultural competence in the TCP are the following:

1. Recognition: How competent is a person to recognize cultural differences around him or her?
2. Respect: How respectful is a person about those differences?
3. Reconciliation: How competent is a person to reconcile cultural differences?
4. Realization: How competent is a person to realize the necessary actions to implement the reconciliation of cultural differences?

We are delighted to see for the first time some parallel models in this book and, even better, a set of practical tools and instruments to help the intercultural professional.

## OVERVIEW OF THE TCP AND ITS RELATION TO THIS BOOK'S ACTIVITIES

### Recognition

The book begins with a set of chapters to help readers understand core concepts related to culture and cultural understanding. New and adapted exercises build awareness of how cultures form, the importance of perspective-switching, and the nature of culture change. This section focuses on activities that help people understand these cultural differences.

### Respect

How we define ourselves, culturally speaking, is the focus of the next section. This set of activities includes introductions, icebreakers, and exercises that take people on a learning journey to understand, articulate, and negotiate their cultural identities, which will help individuals respect cultural differences.

How respectful is a person about those differences? Respect serves as the basis for our attitudinal, cognitive, and behavioral orientation toward people who have diverse values.

In our profession, we focus some of our work on helping people recognize cultural differences. Stopping at the level of awareness and recognition only might support one's (negative) stereotypes. Respect for those

differences is crucial for one's competence to deal with cultural differences.

### **Reconciliation**

The next set of frameworks and exercises in this book are designed to help individuals moving across cultures to plan for and manage their transitions effectively. It updates one of the most established arenas of intercultural work with fresh thinking and ideas on how to best prepare people for cultural transitions.

I am very pleased that attention is given to going beyond understanding differences, a key component of cultural competencies in being able to resolve differences. In this section the contributors focus expressly on building creative problem-solving skills required to navigate the complexities of various cultural situations. Isn't it a good idea that Kate and Darla included a section on dealing with dilemmas? Well done!

### **Realization**

The activities in the last section of this book have been developed expressly with the goal of building global teams as one of the ways to create realization. This section contains a single tool—one designed for professionals who do intercultural work. One of the best ways we can help others is to continue to help ourselves in the journey of intercultural competence building.

I was happily surprised and impressed by how much valuable thought and instrumental training tools have been developed in all stages of transcultural competence. I am hopeful that with the work of Kate, Darla, and their contributors, the next 30 years will be more progressive in dealing with the dynamics of the meeting of cultures and go beyond just explaining that we are different. Best wishes in developing cultural competence in others!

Fons Trompenaars  
August 26, 2011

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# CONTENTS

*Acknowledgments ix*

*Foreword xi*

*Fons Trompenaars*

- 1** HOW TO USE THIS BOOK 1  
*Kate Berardo and Darla K. Deardorff*
- 2** THE DEVELOPING ART OF INTERCULTURAL FACILITATION 13  
*Janet M. Bennett*
- 3** HOW TO DESIGN AND ASSESS AN INTERCULTURAL LEARNING EXPERIENCE 23  
*Jeanine Gregersen-Hermans and Margaret D. Pusch*

## ACTIVITIES

- SECTION 1:** Introduce Core Concepts 45
- SECTION 2:** Understand Differences 81
- SECTION 3:** Explore Cultural Values 119
- SECTION 4:** Navigate Identity 143
- SECTION 5:** Manage Cultural Transitions 183
- SECTION 6:** Communicate Successfully 225
- SECTION 7:** Build Global Teams 261
- SECTION 8:** Resolve Differences 311
- SECTION 9:** Develop Professionally 355

*Editors 371*

*Contributors 373*

*Index 381*





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# CHAPTER 1

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

*Kate Berardo and Darla K. Deardorff*

*I do not believe you can do today's job with yesterday's methods and be in business tomorrow.*

—Nelson Jackson

*We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.*

—Albert Einstein

*Building Cultural Competence* brings you a collection of tools and activities to help build cultural competence—from the basics of understanding core concepts of culture to the complex work of negotiating identity and resolving cultural differences. Often as facilitators and consultants, we encounter the question of how to develop individuals' intercultural competence. This development of cultural competence (or the many other terms used to describe successful interactions with those from different backgrounds; see Deardorff, 2009) is becoming an increasingly hot topic, not only in the intercultural field but in a variety of fields, including business and higher education, and research has shown that the acquisition of such key intercultural skills unfortunately doesn't just happen.<sup>1</sup> Rather, this cultural competence must be intentionally developed over time through effective learning experiences. Thus, this book is truly cutting-edge in proposing new and innovative training activities to help you develop learners' cultural competence.

Fundamentally, this is a book about staying relevant to organizations, clients, students, and learners by offering the latest and best the intercultural field has to offer by pulling together what's new and interesting from experienced coaches, trainers, and facilitators around the globe. It contains brand-new exercises, updates on classic models like the descrip-

tion, interpretation, evaluation (DIE; Nam & Condon, 2010) framework and the U-Curve model of adjustment, and adaptations—and dare we say improvements—of more conventional activities and exercises that can help build the intercultural competence of the people we work with.

The need for innovative new approaches to training and facilitating intercultural learning has been well established in research and is one of the main impetuses for writing this book (e.g., Berardo, 2008). As seasoned intercultural trainers, we found ourselves frustrated by the lack of innovation in our field, seeing many of the same activities being used for the past 20 plus years. As the epigraphs at the beginning of this chapter suggest, we felt it was time to see what was out there in terms of new ways of thinking and training in intercultural competence development, plus share some of our own activities we feel have worked particularly well in training settings.

As this book's editors, we have spent over two years working closely with each other on this project, soliciting innovative intercultural activities from around the world, carefully and thoroughly vetting the activities, and then selecting 52 of these to include in this book. Given our own training experiences and desire to have a very practical, usable resource, we hope this book can not only serve as a recipe book of activities

but also as a desk reference you can flip through for inspiration and ideas to design your next program effectively. The contributors of the activities hail from over 10 countries and include many experts in the field who have had decades of training experience. These contributors represent a wide variety of experiences (i.e., many are global nomads themselves) and backgrounds in such professional fields as education, business, anthropology, and health care. These activities have been effectively used in settings ranging from corporations to the World Bank to nonprofits and to universities with participants of all ages from children to adults.

## WHO SHOULD USE THIS BOOK?

Are you a consultant who wants to stay relevant with clients and meet their needs in regard to cultural competence development? Are you a human resources professional looking for truly innovative activities to use with your employees to help them work more effectively in diverse teams? Are you an education-abroad administrator seeking some learning experiences to better prepare your students for study abroad? This text is designed specifically for trainers and educators in higher education, business, and non-profit settings, and at all experience levels. These well-organized, at-a-glance exercises are easy to use and can be adapted to breathe new life into existing intercultural work.

## HOW THE BOOK IS ORGANIZED

The next two chapters frame the art and science of building cultural competence in learning experiences. They are designed to provide an essential review of the key concepts and practices that help ensure success when engaging in the deep work of building cultural competence, and should be essential reading for any facilitators and coaches before undertaking any of the exercises in this book.

In Chapter 2 intercultural pioneer Janet M. Bennett first takes us through effectively facilitating a cultural competence learning experience. She artfully captures in words (a low-context medium) the nuance and essence of effective facilitation (a high-context concept). She covers what competencies are needed to effectively facilitate intercultural learning; how to balance different needs and preferences that stem from cultural differences, learning styles, and developmental needs in a program; and how to skillfully handle the variety of challenging situations we may

face when engaging in the transformative learning process behind building cultural competence.

In Chapter 3 Jeanine Gregersen-Hermans and Margaret “Peggy” D. Pusch skillfully assume the daunting task of capturing and condensing how to design and assess an effective cultural competence building learning experience into a single chapter. They compress their decades of facilitation and design experience into five key guiding principles for effective facilitation design and assessment and offer a number of checklists, question lists, and other practical tools to help practitioners put these guiding principles into action.

## The Main Sections

Following these chapters are a collection of activities and models in nine sections that represent the main content of this book, organized by what they will help participants to learn in building their cultural competence and help you as a facilitator achieve in a learning experience. Box 1.1 provides a brief overview of each section in the book.

Each section contains two main types of contributions: activities and models. Activities include ice-breakers, introductions, exercises, games, case studies, and simulations that help build cultural competence. Models include tools and frameworks. Box 1.2 provides a legend to help you understand what these different types of activities and models are and what they contain.

## What Is Included in Each Activity Description

All activities are written in the same format and include the information shown in Box 1.3 in a quick ready-to-use layout.

The tools and frameworks follow a slightly different format, as detailed in Box 1.4.

## Quick Glance Guide at All Frameworks and Activities

Box 1.5 and Box 1.6 provide an overview of the different models and activities in this book.

## USING THE BOOK’S MATERIALS IN LEARNING PROGRAMS

We suggest you use this book as

- a means to design entire learning experiences. Chapters 1, 2, and 3 can help you think