



ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH, INC

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STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE CROSS-CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING AND COMPETENCE IN SCHOOLS

Developed by Nate Terrell, LCSW and Anita Foeman, Ph.D.

- 1) Replace “color blindness” and/or stereotypes with a “cultural lens” which enables you to view members of other groups within the school both in the context of their culture and as unique individuals.
- 2) Understand stylistic and cultural differences among members of the school community.
- 3) Identify and change any attitudes, beliefs, etc. which impair your cross-cultural effectiveness.
- 4) Use every “teachable moment” to develop a school community within which diversity is celebrated and all students are treated with respect and sensitivity.
- 5) Overcome fears which prevent honest cross-cultural engagement (such as the fear of “saying the wrong thing” or being perceived as overly angry, sensitive, etc.).
- 6) Engage in effective dialogue about cross-cultural issues by asking open-ended questions, listening attentively (without jumping to conclusions) and honestly and calmly discussing your point of view.
- 7) Build cross-cultural relationships by seeking to understand the experiences, perceptions, etc. of members of other cultural groups.
- 8) Be open to differing perspectives about cross-cultural issues since the truth often lies in shades of gray rather than sweeping generalizations.
- 9) Understand the stages of identity development for both minority and majority group members.
- 10) Engage students in activities which promote cross-cultural sensitivity and understanding.
- 11) Adjust your teaching methods to the specific learning styles and needs of each of your students.
- 12) Understand the group dynamics which often occur among members of minority and majority groups.
- 13) Whenever possible, make your curriculum relevant to the cultural history, life experiences, interests, ambitions, etc. of your students.

14) Have the courage to effectively address and/or confront others when they exhibit prejudices or cultural insensitivity and know that one person can have a huge impact on others through her/his attitudes, behaviors, etc.

15) Transform your school by continually becoming more cross-culturally sensitive and competent.

