

## KEYS TO DEVELOPING YOUR

# Intercultural Communication Skills

Intercultural communication skills are needed to share information effectively with people from other cultures and social groups. Improving these skills takes effort and time, and is an ongoing process. At the center of skilled intercultural communication is *respect* for one another. Below are some helpful practices to foster intercultural communication:

1

**Examine Your Underlying Assumptions.** Our cultural backgrounds lead us to approach interactions with others in a particular manner that we may take for granted. For example, some cultures are more direct than others when making requests. We should not assume others approach communication like us.

2

**Be Open And Culturally Humble.** Recognize that your experience is likely different from that of others. Be genuinely open-minded and inquisitive. Ask sincere questions and listen. To communicate well, you need to learn about others and their cultures.

3

**Work Through Missteps Compassionately.** When misunderstandings happen, suspend judgment and focus on shared goals. Work together respectfully to clarify the miscommunication and recognize this situation as an opportunity to learn.



RESOURCES: Waters A, Asbill L. (2013.) Reflections on cultural humility. American Psychological Association. <http://www.apa.org/pi/families/resources/newsletter/2013/08/cultural-humility.aspx>

Meyer E. (2014). Navigating the Cultural Minefield. Harvard Business Review, 92(5):119-123.