

## Workshop:

### “ Intercultural Competence”

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#### Background:

We often work, socialise and interact with people of different backgrounds. Often we do not have time or focus to be aware of the complex dynamics of such relationships.

You probably know that people from different countries need different personal spaces. You might feel uncomfortable if somebody stands too close or too distant from you while you are talking to him/her. Of course you are aware that the importance of punctuality varies in different societies. However, you are annoyed when you have to wait for your team colleague for the third time in a row.

Intercultural Competence represents one of the key skills for a successful interaction with others. How do you cope with unexpected situations? How do you communicate with people who have different cultural backgrounds from your own? There is no standard one-size-fits-all solution. You have to develop your own strategy dealing with intercultural uncertainties and misunderstandings. The first important step is to reflect upon your own cultural attitudes and values to understand your own cultural imprint.

Humor is an important intercultural skill as it helps people to “think outside the box.” It aids in the development of ideas that are beyond of accepted norms. Humor, if used in a cautious and respectful way, can support intercultural understanding and communication. It also functions as a social lubricant. Humor activates mental flexibility and creates new perspectives in interactions. This helps people to first understand, then accept and adopt new aspects of culture and communication.

#### General Objectives:

This workshop will help participants to interact more effectively in culturally diverse settings. It will enhance their intercultural awareness and sensitivity. They will be capable of articulating and practising attitudes, knowledge and skills that lead to intercultural competence.

At the end of the workshops, participants will be able to:

- Better understand what culture and Intercultural Competence mean
- Realise how the individual sense of humor can be helpful in intercultural interaction
- Identify and reflect about self-awareness, personal values, behaviour and mindset
- Be aware of the intercultural differences in the interaction between men and women
- Be conscious of the no goes, taboos and personal boundaries
- Recognise and reflect about cultural differences, stereotypes and prejudices
- Strengthen the skills of empathy and awareness of others
- View the importance of non-verbal communication
- Use different perspectives when interacting with others

**Target audience:**

This workshop is primarily aimed at anyone interested in improving their abilities to effectively and appropriately interact in a variety of cultures and situations.

For example public officials and employees working in a multi-cultural setting like sales, administration, production, human resource as well as students preparing for their professional life or students going to study abroad.

**Methods:**

The workshop will focus on the interaction between the participants and their practical experience like dialogue-exercises, role play, group discussions with regard to cross-cultural communication. We will cover the topic in an informative and enjoyable way using concepts from the field of Intercultural Communication.

A selection of various humor tools and methods will be used to stimulate the change of perspective, our general perception, mindfulness and flexibility.

**Language:**

English or German

Please note: Perfect English is not expected from anyone wishing to attend the workshop, mistakes are welcome!

**Participants:**

max. 16

**Duration:**

1 day/6 hours

**Lecturer/Trainer:**

Kirsten Hänle, German

- Certified HumorKom® Humortrainer/Humorcoach
- Bachelor in International Business
- Certified Intercultural Mentor
- Clown & Comedy Actor
- 10 years of living and working in the US and The Netherlands
- Several management positions in sales and marketing of international companies
- married, mother of four kids

Feel invited to join this supportive workshop in a stimulating and joyful atmosphere and connect with other members of the university.

*Everything we see is a perspective, not the truth. (Marc Aurel)*