

Cultural Sensitivity Training

Satellite Conference and Live Webcast
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Produced by the Alabama Department of Public Health
Distance Learning and Telehealth Division

Faculty

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This presentation is part of the services provided by the State Employee Assistance Program through Behavioral Health Systems, Inc. The State EAP is administered and managed by the State Department of Finance's Division of Risk Management (DORM). If you have questions regarding the policy, procedures or services provided by this program, please contact the Program Manager, Melanie Longpre, at melanie.longpre@finance.alabama.gov. You can also find more information about the State Employee Assistance Program on the Division of Risk Management's website at www.riskmgt.alabama.gov.

Friendly Reminder

- Please silence all:
 - Cell phones
 - Pagers
 - Two-way radios

What is an Employee Assistance Program (EAP)?

- The EAP is a benefit that is provided by the State of Alabama to you and your dependents to help identify and find solutions to personal problems
- The EAP offers short term, solution focused counseling to help you:

What is an Employee Assistance Program (EAP)?

- Clarify a problem using assessments (e.g. *"Is it the blues, or a medical condition, or just a current phase of my life?"*)
- Identify options and local resources
- Develop plans to approach difficult issues

What is an Employee Assistance Program (EAP)?

- The EAP is completely confidential
 - Your name is not shared with anyone at the State of Alabama or DORM

The State of Alabama EAP Benefit

- 3 visits annually covered at 100% (no copay) to address issues including:
 - Marital / Family Concerns
 - Parent-Child Conflict
 - Relationship Issues
 - Stress
 - Depression
 - Work-Related Issues
 - Alcohol and Drug Issues
 - Grief and Loss
 - Life Changes / Transitions
 - Eating Disorders
 - Financial Issues
 - Eldercare Concerns

The State of Alabama EAP Benefit

- Managed by the Department of Finance's Division of Risk Management (DORM)
- Confidential in nature
 - Your supervisor nor the State of Alabama receive names of people who utilize EAP

The State of Alabama EAP Benefit

- Call BHS (800-245-1150) to:
 - Determine appropriate provider referral (no wasted visits)
 - Verify benefit eligibility (discuss free EAP visits)
 - Schedule initial assessment (priority scheduling)

Cultural Sensitivity: Understanding Diversity in the Workplace

Objectives

- Enhance participants' understanding of culture and the importance of self-cultural awareness
- Examine the concept of diversity and its impact to the workplace
- Explore the benefits of diversity and cultural sensitivity

Objectives

- Identify roadblocks to cultural sensitivity
- Outline keys to managing workplace diversity that promote cultural sensitivity

What is Culture?

- “....people with common origins, customs and styles of living, who share a sense of identity and language. Their common experiences shape their values, goals, expectations, beliefs, perceptions and behavior”

What is Culture?

- Culture is all those things that people have learned to do, believe, value and enjoy in their history...the ideals, beliefs, skills, tools, customs and institutions into which each member of society is born
- You identify with a culture that represents your experience, but so does everyone you come in contact with on a daily basis

What is Culture?

- How can that awareness change your behavior as you interact with others on a daily basis?

Disclaimer

- There are exceptions to every rule. Today, we may make generalizations about characteristics shared by groups of individuals. It is important to remember not to make assumptions based on generalizations about a group.

Self-Cultural Awareness

- Why do we need to be aware of our own culture?
 - To better understand the motivation for our actions and reactions
 - To realize that what defines socially acceptable behavior and socially non - acceptable behavior seem natural and routine to the people in that particular culture....

Self-Cultural Awareness

-because they are continuously a part of their way of life; learned from an early age and reinforced over time
- These socially acceptable and non - acceptable “rules” that govern our individual behavior should not be generalized to all settings universally
- One must have an awareness of how “rules” change based upon the social setting

Self-Cultural Awareness

- Why do we need to be aware of our own culture?
 - To promote acceptance of other cultures by realizing that there are no right or wrong cultural beliefs
 - To increase awareness and understanding of other people's actions and reactions

Self-Cultural Awareness

- To ensure that we do not take our own natural and common sense practices for granted and become or remain ethnocentric
 - Different is OKAY – not substandard

Culture: Interpreting Your Environment

- Culture is the lens with which an individual sees, understands and perceives his / her environment
- Culture impacts:
 - Eating habits
 - Religion and politics
 - Family and gender roles

Culture: Interpreting Your Environment

- Communication
- Traffic systems
- Laws of the land
- Body language / nonverbal cues and personal space
- Dress codes
- Concepts of time

Communication: Filtered Through Your Cultural Perspective

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| • Age | • Customs |
| • National origin | • Geographic Location |
| • Race | • Languages used |
| • Gender | • Work style |
| • Religion/Politics | • Learning style |
| • Disability | • Economic status |
| • Education | • Military experience |

What is Diversity?

- Diversity is the mosaic of people who bring a variety of experiences, values, styles, preferences, backgrounds and beliefs as assets to the groups and organizations with which they interact
- It is ever present in organizations throughout the world today....even amongst individuals of the same race
- The “uniqueness” of diversity is a positive

Life Without Diversity

- Take a moment to complete the following exercise:
 - Close your eyes and image that everyone in the room looked just like you. Exactly the same as you! Same hair color, weight, height, eye color, hue of their skin, talked just like you, and dressed just like you!

Diversity and Workplace Outcomes

- Workforce diversity is positively associated with higher business performance outcome measures
- Racial diversity is positively associated with higher performance in organizations that integrate and leverage diverse perspectives as resources for product delivery

Diversity and Workplace Outcomes

- Gender diversity is positively associated with more effective group processes and performance in organizations with people - oriented performance cultures

Diversity and Workplace Outcomes

- Diverse teams are more creative and perform better in problem solving than homogeneous teams
- In the presence of inhibiting conditions in an organization, the positive effects of diversity are stifled

Diversity and Workplace Outcomes

- Cultural diversity in the workplace challenges individuals to respond to their diverse work environment effectively

Diversity and Workplace Outcomes

- “Valuing” individual and group cultural differences is critical to achieving organizational goals
- Know your own cultural background
- Recognize your own stereotypes and biases

Diversity and Workplace Outcomes

- Be aware of other’s perceptions and cultures; challenge yourself to increase your own knowledge of other cultures outside of your own; this promotes cultural sensitivity

Melting Pot verses a Bowl of Soup

- American society has evolved over time. Most used to think of this process as creating one big “melting pot” where all cultures assimilated
- Members of various cultural groups may not want to be assimilated
 - They may want to keep their preferences: tastes, looks, traditions, styles

Melting Pot verses a Bowl of Soup

- To benefit from the uniqueness of each distinct ingredient in the soup, each item in the soup needs to remain whole....yet included

Benefits of Workforce Diversity and Cultural Sensitivity

- Improved understanding of self and others
- Creates a work environment that promotes acceptance
- Provides multiple perspectives on problem solving
- Better performance outcomes

Benefits of Workforce Diversity and Cultural Sensitivity

- Increase employee productivity
- Increased retention rates
- Boosts employee morale
- Reduces complaints and grievances
- Promotes tolerance

Beware
Roadblocks to Cultural Sensitivity!

- Roadblocks to Cultural Sensitivity**
- Stereotypes
 - Bias
 - Prejudice
 - Discrimination
 - Ethnocentrism

- Tolerance: The Key to Cultural Sensitivity**
- Defined as “recognition of and respect for the opinions, practices or behavior of others”
 - Allows you to appreciate and enjoy others who are different
 - Helps you accept that others do not think the way you do

- Tolerance: The Key to Cultural Sensitivity**
- Fosters team building and communication
 - Teams/work groups diverse in skill sets, knowledge levels, ethnicity and culture, perform better than those with identical skill sets
 - Diversity and cultural sensitivity decreases team conflicts and enhances creativity

- Tolerance in the Workplace**
- Address intolerance by others and challenge yourself when necessary
 - Avoid making snap judgments based on how others dress, talk or behave
 - Use positive words to describe people
 - Try to understand the other point of view – there is always one!
 - Look for things you have in common verses highlighting differences

- Promoting Cultural Sensitivity in the Workplace**
- Multicultural calendars
 - Fact sheets
 - Discussion boards
 - Pot luck events
 - Cultural dress (when appropriate)
 - Recruiting practices
 - Share / invite to community events