

Cultural Mindedness, Dialogue, and Action Planning Model

Module Five: Action Planning for Inclusion of Diversity

Introduction

Module five applies the conceptual tools of the previous four modules into a problem solving activity called action planning. The process begins with writing a case example of a real life incident that the participants have witnessed or heard about on campus, in a workplace or a community in the last year or other specified time period. Through small group dialogue, an incident involving a diversity issue is created and then analyzed in relation to the three conceptual tools that promote culture mindedness –aspects of culture, levels of culture, and the six barriers. This hands-on learning experience enables the participants/students to explicitly identify cultural dynamics embedded in the interactions in the case.

Participants then dialogue which of the competency behaviors could prevent or diffuse the conflict in the case example as well as specific organization strategies that could be applied to the case. Discussing organization-wide strategies fosters awareness and understanding of how cultural dynamics permeate all contexts in which we live and work including the cultural meanings and customs that are embedded in organization hierarchies, policies, programs and processes that affect inclusive social relations within the whole organization.

Learning Objectives

1. Write a case example of a diversity issue
2. Practice the steps in the action-planning process in relation to the case example
- 3, Review student description and comments about the action -planning process
4. Read the references about organization-wide diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies

1. Learning Activity: Writing a Case Example for Use in the Action Plan

Purpose Practice identifying and describing the specific elements that arise in real-life cultural diversity incidents, called case examples.

Instructions Form groups of four or five people. Discuss a diversity issue or conflict occurring in a work setting within the last year or two. It can be an incident you personally experienced or something you heard about.

It may have such elements of diversity as gender, ethnicity, race, age, ableness, religion, sexual orientation, sexual identity, physical appearance, social economic status, verbal communication, or nonverbal communication. It can be in relation to such roles as supervisor, teacher/student, salesperson/customer, health provider/ patient, or coworker/coworker, and other.

Write Case Example

1.2 Learning Activity: Action Planning

Purpose: To demonstrate a holistic and inclusive problem solving process related to diversity issues and conflicts.

Instructions:

Form into small groups. Dialogue the answers to the following four questions in relation to your case example. For each question, someone in the group needs to serve as recorder to write the ideas discussed by the group. Another person needs to serve as spokesperson for your group later in the whole group dialogue of each group's action plan.

1.3 Steps in the Action Plan Process:

1. Identify the diversity issue (s) in the case example, such as, age, gender, sexuality, perceived race, ethnicity, social economic status, physical ability, or other reason for treating a person as "other."
2. What Levels and Aspects of Culture can be identified in this case? (See Modules One and Two for listing of Levels and Aspects of Culture)
2. What Barriers do you see in the case? (See Module Three for listing of Six Barriers)

3. What Competency Behaviors would improve the interactions in the case? Specify who in the case needs to practice the competencies (see listing of competency behaviors in Module Four)

4. Select organization strategies that would promote and support the inclusion of diversity throughout the organization (organization strategies are listed next before the debrief section).

5. What measures would indicate the strategies are improving the situation in the organization?

2. ORGANIZATION STRATEGIES

Organization researchers have identified the following organization strategies as being supportive of cultural awareness and understanding throughout the organization. The following organization strategies are organized into two types. The first list of strategies help improve relations **within the organization**, among coworkers, managers, supervisors, administrators and all employees. The second set of strategies help improve relations **external to the organization**, with clients, students, customers, patients and in community outreach and change projects. (For a complete description of tactics useful for each strategy listed below, see Hogan, 2013: 90-95).

2.1 Internal Organization Strategies

1. Maintain Cultural Awareness and Support at all Levels of the Organization

2. Recruit Culturally Diverse Employees

3. Provide Career Development Opportunities to all Employees

4. Create Flexible Benefit and Service Plans That Meet the Needs of Diverse Employees

5. Monitor the Change Process

2.2 External Organization Strategies

1. Establish Effective Relationships with Client Communities/Organizations
2. Review the Ethics and Social Responsibility of the Organization
3. Strive for Customer and Client Satisfaction in a Culturally Appropriate Way
4. Develop Techniques for Working with Culturally Diverse Clientele

2.3 Debriefing Questions for Action Planning Process

Write your answers to the debriefing questions 2 to 6.

1. Let the spokesperson for each group present their case analysis and action plan to the whole group (if this applies to your learning context otherwise write the answers to the following debrief questions.).
2. Describe your personal reaction (feelings, thoughts) to the exercise. Did a dialogue in connection with the case example and action planning occur in your group? If so, describe the process.
3. Can you list any personal competencies that you found useful in carrying out this exercise?
4. What did you learn about yourself in the course of this exercise?
5. What did you learn about others in the course of this exercise?

6. Name two ways you can use what you have learned in daily life—at home, work, school, or other setting.

3. Student Response to Action Planning for Inclusion of Diversity Learning Activity

3.1 Write your case example here:

Last year I took my mom to the emergency room late at night because she had severe pain in her right shoulder that did not allow any motion in the arm. She had been dealing with the pain for about two days prior to her visit to the emergency room at her medical provider. At about 10 PM I drove her to the nearest HMO hospital which was about two cities away from where we live. Her visit lasted until 5 AM because they did multiple tests and we needed to wait for the test results.

My mom told me to go home at around 2 AM because I had class at CSUF at 8:00 AM. I did not want to leave her alone because she does not speak English and I had to translate for her since there was no one at the hospital who spoke Spanish. When I was talking about leaving, the doctor said they were just waiting for the test results and he assured me they would use a Spanish translating system through a computer so I did not have to be concerned about a translator.

After I left my mom asked for some water and a snack because she was hungry. They told her they would get the water and snack for her, but the water and food did not arrive. Also, when the test results came back they failed to use a translator and just told my mom she was fine to go home. They did not explain anything to her in her primary language contrary to the doctor's assurance. The next day my mom told me everything that had happened and I called the hospital yet they did not apologize. They just told me that nothing could be done.

3.2 Steps in the Action Plan Process:

1. Identify the diversity issue (s) in the case example, such as, age, gender, language, sexuality, perceived race, ethnicity, social economic status, physical ability, or another reason for treating a person as "other."

Student's Response: **The diversity issues are language difference and Mexican ethnicity**

2. What Levels and Aspects of Culture can be identified in this case? (See Modules One and Two for listing of Levels and Aspects of Culture)

Student's Response: the **Levels of culture** in my case example, are **personal level** (my mother and I), our **ethnic subculture level** (of my mono-lingual Spanish speaking Mexican –American mother), **the hospital's organization culture level** (monolingual English-speaking services only)

Student Response: **Aspects of Culture: social status factors and verbal and nonverbal communication--** as Mexican Americans in the hospital, we have less status than the health professionals working in the Emergency Room and my mom's Spanish language was not understood by the English monolingual health professionals.

2. What Barriers do you see in the case? (See Module Three for listing of Six Barriers)

Student's Response: The barriers identified in this case example are **language, discrimination, judgements, and organization barrier--** program that was unfriendly to the cultural diversity of my mom's language and ethnicity.

3. What Competency Behaviors would improve the interactions in the case? Specify who in the case needs to practice the competencies (see listing of competency behaviors in Module Four)

Student's Response: The following personal competencies are relevant in this case example: The hospital staff needed to **be resourceful** (in relation to Spanish language translation system), **pay attention to thoughts and feelings, show respect, and empathy** (in relation to providing the requested water and snack and informing my mother about the outcome of the tests.

4. Select organization strategies that would promote and support the inclusion of diversity throughout the organization (organization strategies are listed below-- before the debrief section).

Student's Response: the hospital needs to **recruit culturally diverse employees** to be able to serve diverse patients, in this case Spanish

speaking. Also, the hospital should **strive for client satisfaction in culturally relevant ways** by hiring bilingual staff as soon as possible or make sure the language translating service they have actually works.

5. What measures would indicate the strategies are improving the situation in the organization?

Student's Response:

- Surveys showing patient satisfaction with hospital visit and patient understanding of information about tests and treatment
- Patient positive feedback on how they were treated
- Number of bilingual staff working at hospital is proportional to the various ethnic culture groups in their hospital service area.

3.3 Student's Response to Debriefing Questions:

Write your answers to the debriefing questions in the following spaces.

1. Describe your personal reaction (feelings, thoughts) to the exercise. Did a dialogue in connection with the case example and action planning occur in your group? If so, describe the process.

After doing this exercise, I felt angry and sad to relive this experience by talking about it. It is sad that people are being denied certain things just because they speak a different language. My mom along with many other people out there have the same right as those who speak English to receive quality service, especially when it deals with their health. It is not fair that my mom was denied basic snacks and water. I was mad at myself for not staying all night with my mom at the hospital and even blamed myself for the actions of the health professionals working there. I thought to myself that if I had stayed all night with my mom she would not have been hungry or thirsty for those hours she was waiting. Now that I am writing my feelings out, I started to think the only people to blame for their actions are the persons who performed those actions, or in this case, did not perform those caring actions. I wrote the action plan for an online learning activity so I did not dialogue with others

- 2 Can you list any personal competencies that you found useful in carrying out this exercise?

As I wrote the action plan, I had to **be patient** with myself because I felt anger and sadness when I thought about my mom being thirsty and hungry as she waited for several hours in the Emergency Room. I also had to **stop my judgment** of the health care professionals for my perception of their neglect of my mother. They were incredibly busy keeping people alive in the Emergency Room.

2. What did you learn about yourself in the course of this exercise?

This exercise requires critical thinking and analysis. The process wasn't easy but it helped me to digest the material and conceptualize the important elements to be considered with action planning. From this exercise, I learned that I blame myself for things I never did and do not have control over. I need to change this about myself because it affects me negatively. I tend to bring myself down for things I could have done but are now in the past. I can't change the past but I can focus on the future. I also learned that I take things personally and I shouldn't because it also affects my feelings about myself as if I am inadequate. I have always been a sensitive person and I need to toughen up a little especially in the world we live in today with the prevalence of the Six Barriers (verbal & nonverbal, bias, discrimination, etc.). The competency behaviors are helpful reminders for me. And, I learned that I need to improve my skills in problem solving and train myself to look at things from different perspectives. I need to become more strong and confident for myself, my loved ones, and the people who are part of my Mexican American culture.

3. What did you learn about others in the course of this exercise?

I learned that there are people out there that are completely different from me and that everyone in society needs to understand their own values as well as to learn about the values of other people. I also learned that not everyone has a caring heart like I do. It is hard to accept that not everyone out there is nice or has the same heart as I do but it is reality. I need to learn how to live in a world with people who have different beliefs and customs when it comes to cultural diversity. If everyone in society would practice the 14 personal competencies and action plan cultural conflicts to remove the six barriers, then society will change in positive ways such that all people will feel accepted and will be included.

4. Name two ways in which you can use what you have learned in daily life.

One way I can use what I learned today in my daily life is focusing on the positive instead of the negative in conflicted situations This will help me feel better about myself instead of putting

Mikel Hogan, Ph.D. Applied/Public Anthropologist: Four Skills of Cultural Diversity Competence, Cengage/Brooks-Cole, 4th Edition, 2013

myself down. Another way I can use what I have learned in my daily life is staying true to my beliefs and values despite what other people have to say about them and take the time to be more organized and try to create problem-solving action plans when I feel conflicts with others. Lastly, I plan on practicing the fourteen competency behaviors in my daily life with my classmates, teachers, co-workers, friends and family and to observe myself carefully to control and manage any of my biases, stereotypes and judgments of others who are different.

4. References on Inclusive Organization-wide Strategies

Beaulieu, S.(2020). *Breaking the silence habit: A practical guide to uncomfortable conversations*. California: Barrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Hogan, M. (2013). *Four skills of cultural diversity competence*. California: Brooks/Cole/Cengage.

Jhaj, S. (2019). *Delivering on the promise of democracy: Visual case studies in educational equity and transformation*. Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers.

Sandoval-Lucero, E. & Maes, J.B. (2019). *Case studies in equity, diversity, and inclusion in higher education: An intersectional perspective*. Iowa: Kendall Hunt Publishing Company.