

EDUCATION

Cultural Awareness

Rationale

Culture is a set of values, beliefs, practices, and behaviors shared by a particular group of people. We may see things differently through our unique cultural lenses, even though the events we experience may be the same. Culture helps us make sense of the people we interact with and the world we live in. For some Deseret Industries associates, cultural differences can create misunderstandings and even anger in the workplace. As we help associates to become more culturally aware, we can help them focus less on their differences and be more compassionate toward and understanding of others' ethnicity, age, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, country of origin, mental or physical ability, or economic status. Elder Dallin H. Oaks encouraged us to have "tolerance toward the personal differences that are inevitable in the beliefs and conduct of a diverse population" ("Weightier Matters" [Brigham Young University devotional, Feb. 9, 1999], 6; speeches.byu.edu).

Objective

Help Deseret Industries associates become more knowledgeable of and sensitive to other cultures, decrease personal biases and stereotypes, and recognize the influence of their own culture within the workplace and among their co-workers.

Potential Discussion Items

- Observe the Deseret Industries associate as he or she interacts with people who are not from his or her own culture. Be prepared to give feedback on your observations, including advice on how to interact with people from different cultural backgrounds.
- Ask the Deseret Industries associate, "What does it mean to be culturally aware?" Explain that an individual's culture is based on many factors, including the individual's ethnicity, age, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, country of origin, mental or physical ability, economic status, beliefs, and values.
- With the Deseret Industries associate, talk with the Deseret Industries development counselor about the specific values and practices of other cultures. Encourage the associate to talk about his or her own personal beliefs, values, and assumptions.
- Role-model cultural awareness and sensitivity.

Suggested Resources

- Bridges out of Poverty: Strategies for Professionals and Communities by Ruby K. Payne, Philip DeVol, and Terie Dreussi Smith (2001).
- "Bridging Culture On-Line: Strategies for Teaching Cultural Sensitivity," by M. Cecilia Wendler and Roxanne Struthers: <http://nursing.ucla.edu/workfiles/CAIIRE/Articles/bridging%20culture%20online.pdf>.
- "Church Diversity Breaks Stereotypes": <http://www.mormonnewsroom.org/article/church-diversity-breaks-stereotypes>.

- “Cultural Awareness Learning Module One”: <http://dept.sfcolllege.edu/ruralalliance/docs/Cultural%20Awareness%20Learning%20Module%20One.pdf>.
- “Cultural Competence and Awareness Training”: <http://ebookbrowse.net/gdoc.php?id=368601906&url=f9257f178f7e08857a26936e5d8f023a>.
- “Educating for Cultural Awareness: A Cultural Diversity Training Program for Teachers of Internationally Educated Health Care Professionals,” by Patricia Thille and Blye Frank: <http://www.r-scope.ca/websitetublisher/downloads/Educating%20for%20Cultural%20Awareness.pdf>.
- The Culturoosity Group: http://www.culturoosity.com/online_learning_resources_full.htm.

