Workplace

INTEGRATION

A Guide for MANAGERS and MENTORS

18 Conversations to Have with Newcomers to Canada

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Workplace Integration - A Guide for Managers and Mentors **2011**

This resource equips managers and mentors to work with internationally-educated professionals. It provides the tools to help newcomers integrate into the Canadian workplace. This guide should be used in conjunction with the companion resource, *Workplace Integration - A Desk-Reference for Newcomers to Canada,* and its corresponding workbook. The two texts build capacity and support for the workplace integration process. The resources can be used independently for self-directed learning, or as an interdependent set in coaching/mentoring scenarios, training workshops, or related courses. They can be used in business organizations by employers, employees and trainers, or in educational settings such as schools, colleges or community agencies.

Alberta Human Resources, Employment & Immigration - Citizenship & Immigration Canada

Funding for the creation and piloting of this resource was generously provided by *Alberta Human Services* and *Citizenship & Immigration Canada.* The research and development was performed by Paul Holmes of *Anthony & Holmes Consulting Ltd.* in partnership with *Alberta Workforce Essential Skills Society* (AWES). This resource is an independent study and not a statement of policy by *Alberta Human Services* or *Citizenship & Immigration Canada*. At the same time, by investing in this research and development, the funders have highlighted the pressing need to build capacity and develop resources to equip newcomers to Canada, along with their mentors and employers.

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Key Definitions

Workplace Integration

Workplace integration is the unique experience newcomers have of adapting their language, communication and other cultural norms to the norms of their Canadian workplaces. Integration is not assimilation. It happens by adding new norms, not by replacing all existing cultural norms. By adding new skills, behaviors and ways of thinking, a person can respond better to each coworker. Newcomers can fully contribute their expertise and achieve a meaningful sense of belonging. The Canadian workplace is one of the most multicultural workplaces in the world. Everyone benefits from working effectively across cultures, with both Canadians and those who come from the Americas, Asia, Africa, Australia, Europe and other parts of the globe.

Culture

Culture is a group's shared norms - patterns of speaking, behaving and thinking in various situations. Culture can describe the people from a region, country, province, town, organization or even a team. Does everyone follow all those norms all the time? Probably not, which suggests that norms are more like tendencies. Moreover, culture is only one dimension of every human being. Each person is more than their cultural background because they have unique identities and experiences. Observable tendencies in a cultural group are not meant to stereotype people. Instead, they are departure points. They should be understood in relation to the other dimensions of identity, such as personality, gender, generation etc.

Newcomer

A recent immigrant to Canada. This guide is designed to equip managers and mentors working with internationally-educated newcomers in the professional occupations.

English

The English language skills of newcomers can range from "developing" to "adequate" to "fluent". This guide is not intended to teach English. The 18 conversations focus on other aspects of integration, and are designed to work within the limits of the person's existing English level.

Manager

Managers include directors, managers, supervisors, team leads and other leadership positions with the responsibility of overseeing employees in a workplace. They are usually involved wtih performance feedback and helping employees develop their annual learning and development plans.

Mentor

Mentors include anyone in an organization or program responsible for providing feedback and/or advice to newcomers to support integration into the workplace. Mentors often volunteer their time to fulfill the role.

Coaching

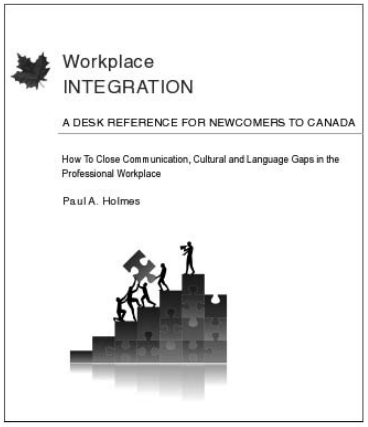
In this guide, managers and mentors are advised to provide both coaching and mentoring to newcomers, depending on needs. Coaching is skills-based and emphasizes telling. Coaches correct behavior, improve performance and impart skills so that the newcomer can accept and adapt to a new workplace culture.

Mentoring

Mentors, on the other hand, guide personal growth. Mentors listen, act as a role model, make suggestions and use a network to make connections. Often, due to the workplace integration needs of newcomers, the lines are blurred between coaching and mentoring. The key role of both mentors and coaches is to be informed and supportive, not removed from the challenges of adapting to a new culture and language.

Use this Guide with its Companion Resource for Newcomers

This guide for managers and mentors is best used together with its companion resource, "*Workplace Integration - A Desk Reference for Newcomers to Canada*". The desk reference and its corresponding workbook were written for newcomers to explain the what, why and how of workplace integration. The desk reference and workbook are freely downloadable from the AWES website at awes.ca. In particular, the desk reference will provide you deeper insights into your own culture, which is the best starting point when working cross-culturally.



Target User

This guide is for managers and mentors who support newcomers as they integrate into the Canadian workplace. The guide was designed on this premise: you are already familiar with the fundamentals of mentoring and coaching; you want a good understanding of the common communication and cultural issues that hold newcomers back from success.

This guide was developed from data collected between 2004 and 2011 from over 500 surveys and questionnaires, and hundreds of interviews, focus groups and training interactions with new and native-born Canadians across multiple business sectors. The common issues are explained as 18 conversations that a workplace integration expert would have with you, the manager or mentor. They are designed to build your capacity so that in turn you can have the conversations with newcomers.

Using the 18 Conversations for Your Own Development

Understanding workplace integration is one of the most important skills for leaders in Canada. Use the information in this guide to begin building your own intercultural capacity first. Then you will be better equipped to support the newcomers you work with.

A leader's journey towards recognizing a need for these skills usually follows a common path: A newcomer's performance gaps persist. The leadership team has tried all the traditional options to close the gaps, from a Toastmasters course to a performance review to a standard in-house mentoring program. The team is uncertain whether the newcomer's gaps are rooted in culture or something else such as English abilities, personality, interpersonal skills, technical competence etc. Think of the 18 conversations as your private workshop with a workplace integration consultant. Use the conversations to help you better identify where a newcomer needs support.

Life After the Guide

This guide is not exhaustive in scope or content. The goal is to raise your awareness so that you can begin to identify effective solutions. Once you are familiar with the guide, there are at least four additional learning steps you could take.

1. Use the guide together with its companion resource, "**Workplace Integration - A Desk Reference for Newcomers to Canada**". The desk reference and corresponding workbook were written for newcomers to explain the what, why and how of workplace integration. In its contents page, you will find a list of specific topics you can turn to for more information.
2. Engage people from others cultures with curiosity and questions. The information in this guide is practical, but to give it context, get to know the workplace cultures newcomers come. Be curious.
3. Follow the suggested reading list, found at the end of this guide, to deepen your knowledge.
4. Participate in a workshop or training program to broaden your skill set.

Proviso

Finally, the views expressed in this guide are the writer's personal perspectives. They grew out of formal studies and a decade of specializing in workplace integration in Canada. They do not represent the policy of any organization, government department or institution. They are a departure point for understanding a reality that will continue to define Canada: the integration of newcomers into the Canadian workplace.

Section 1

Cultivate the Attitude

Successful workplace integration requires cultural competence from both newcomers and Canadians. Intercultural competence is knowing how to work in or with a new culture. Language is important. Technical skills are important. But without cultural intelligence, people in a multicultural workforce often have challenges building sustainable credibility, rapport and trust with others.

At its core, intercultural competence is not a list of do's and don'ts. It is not an encyclopedia of various people groups in the world. At its core, intercultural competence is a specific attitude - open, adaptable, curious and insightful - upon which knowledge and skills grow.

The five conversations in this section cultivate that attitude. They are based upon the five stages in the Developmental Model for Intercultural Sensitivity. More information on the DMIS can be found along with a Suggested Reading List in the appendices.

Conversation # 1 - Be aware of culture.
Conversation # 2 - Avoid knee-jerk reactions.
Conversation # 3 - Deepen your understanding of your own culture.
Conversation # 4 - Experience others as both different yet equally human.
Conversation # 5 - Make the necessary shifts.

1. Be aware of culture. If you haven't had much experience with people from different cultural backgrounds, take the time to raise your cultural awareness. You may have avoided or been disinterested in cultural diversity up to this point. Perhaps you've had a basic introduction to another culture through a vacation or by experiencing ethnic food. Now is the time to take it to the next level. In a job, its easy to be so set on auto-pilot that your are unaware of decisive intercultural moments happening all around you. Although it is good to appreciate your own traditional values and belong to a community of like-minded people, it is likely that cultural differences are escaping your notice. In fact, a whole set of issues could be resolved or avoided, if you put culture on your radar.

Without cultural intelligence you have inadvertently put a cap on the amount of trust, rapport and credibility between you and the colleagues and clients from other cultures. This can limit effectiveness, efficiency and safety on teams. It increases misunderstandings, misattributions and miscommunications. In team situations, it can lead to tension, friction, conflict and self-preservation tactics. It leaves a residue of unspoken assumptions between people. Once you put culture on your radar, you become part of the long-term solution.

Tip - Know that the workforce will continue to diversify

Canada is diversifying rapidly. Various sources suggest that by 2017, 1 in 5 Canadians will be visible minorities, with 1 in 2 people in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. Since 2011, immigration continues to be the key source of net-labor force growth in Canada, and it will be the primary source of population growth by 2031. More than 250 000 newcomers arrive each year. Most of them transition from language training programs into the workplace with improved English, but without a deep enough understanding of Canadian workplace norms.

In response, employers want newcomers to have "Canadian work experience" i.e. an employer reference that suggests a previous "fit" in the Canadian workplace culture. This creates a "chicken and egg" scenario - how does a newcomer acquire Canadian experience without getting employment. Volunteer and intern positions are not the long-term solution. Preferably, Canada needs more managers and mentors with cultural intelligence to help newcomers find that elusive fit. A coach with a good understanding of Canadian workplace culture can do more for a newcomer in a few hours of one-on-one coaching than many hours of classroom learning. Managers and mentors provide the best support when they coach newcomers through the "unwritten rules" of the workplace i.e. the ways of thinking, speaking and behaving that are natural to Canadians, but new to the newcomers.

*See the Suggested Reading List for more information.

Practical Example
Korean Air Flight 801

On August 6, 1997, a Korean Air Boeing 747, hit the side of Nimitz Hill, 3 miles south-west of Guam airport. $60 million and tons of steel slammed into rocky ground at 100 miles per hour, killing most of the people on board. In fact, between 1977 and 1998, Korean Air had 14 major air disasters. Fast forward to 2006 - Korean Air was given the Phoenix Award in recognition of its unprecedented transformation.

KAL's safety record since 1999 is spotless, but what accounted for the "off the chart" number of accidents and sudden transformation? Malcolm Gladwell, in *Outliers*, summed it up: KLA is a complex and strange story that turns on a very simple fact: KLA did not right itself until it acknowledged its cultural legacy i.e. the sharp hierarchy in Korean culture prevented junior officers from questioning the decisions of senior pilots.

By introducing English as the only language of communication inside the cockpit, Korean pilots could challenge decisions in a culture with a more egalitarian structure. When KLA put culture on the radar, the company shifted from the worst kind of airline to one of the best in the world. Culture is a reality. Intercultural skills matter.

2. Avoid knee-jerk reactions. Chance of offending are always heightened in cross-cultural interactions. Avoid rash judgements about others. It is easy to get into a polarized mindset of "us" and "them". Instead of giving in to knee-jerk reactions, suspend judgement by taking a mental step back. Avoid assumptions about motivations and behaviors. The presence of diversity in a group means first impressions can be misleading. Avoid thinking that cultural differences are threatening or divisive. Take the initiative to talk about them. Cultural differences can be resolved with patience and a some mutual accommodation.

Don't bury the issue. Instead, first try to view people as fellow human beings, and then as individuals from another culture - you will be more authentic and less confrontational. Be curious. Ask questions. Explain that you want to understand the motivation. Keep your tone and body language open in order to discuss things more light-heartedly. Shift your thoughts to what you share in common e.g. the needs to be heard and trusted, to belong and to feel valued. Cultural differences originate from the diverse ways people express these universal needs.

Instead of giving in to knee-jerk reactions, use your irritation as a mirror. For example, if someone is in your personal space by repeatedly touching your arm while talking, it reveals much about your own cultural norms for touch and personal space. You don't have to agree with the behavior, but you can avoid judging the motivation. Avoiding those knee-jerk reactions usually means everyone avoids having to apologize later for things they regret having said or done.

Tip - Help newcomers suspend judgment

At first, most immigrants experience a "honeymoon" period in Canada. After some time, culture shock usually follows. Knee-jerk reactions are common when the new workplace expects different ways of communicating and behaving. Culturally competent managers and mentors can help newcomers by explaining the what, why and how of new norms. The desk reference is a great resource for doing this.

Some newcomers are unaware of difference. They may be acting and thinking in ways that cause knee-jerk reactions in others. For example, their communication style might be too direct, or they may not show enough initiative, or they could be more concerned about saving face than asking the right questions.

Change is challenging without a knowledgable coach. The manager/mentor reassures newcomers that using English and adapting to their new workplace culture does not mean replacing their first languages and cultures. Instead, adapting requires adding new thoughts and behaviors, not losing their existing ones. Canada has one of the most multicultural workplace cultures in the world. You can use the "3-Fs" model as a way to empathize with newcomers and encourage them to avoid knee-jerk reactions:

- Feel - "I know how you must feel about..."
- Felt - "I felt the same way when..."
- Found - "I have found that..."

*See the Suggested Reading List for more information.

Practical Example
Aman's Knee-Jerk Reaction

Aman immigrated to Canada, joined a bridge-to-employment program for engineers, and, within weeks of graduating, was employed as a junior project manager. Fen, Aman's department head, had immigrated to Canada from Asia 20 years before. The two needed to work closely together on projects. Within 6 months, Aman was ready to quit. He confided in his workplace mentor that his department head was more critical of his work than of anyone else's. Aman said he had gone beyond his best, but that Fen continued to withhold recognition and career opportunities. In fact, Aman had come to the conclusion that Fen's behavior was rooted in discrimination, in the fact that Aman was brown-skinned, educated abroad, and not born Canadian.

The mentor knew the department head, and took the initiative to ask how things were going with Aman. "Wonderful" was the response. "He is my best project manager. I am planning to promote him to senior project manager within a few weeks." Although the department head considered himself fully Canadian, his motivational style was not. "In Asian culture, parents are tough on their children," he explained. "It's how we show we care for them." Aman, on the other hand, expected a Canadian leadership style from his department head. He assumed Fen's "toughness" was discrimination. Both Aman and Fen had to appreciate that the universal value of inspiring others is demonstrated in culturally defined ways.

3. Deepen your understanding of your own culture. Culture hides more than it reveals, Edward T. Hall said, and what it hides, it hides best from its own people. Canadians suggest that the Canadian culture, or "identity", is the struggle to find our identity. Others say Canadian identity begins with the assertion that we are not Americans. In actual fact, a distinct cultural identity is very obvious to people looking in from the outside.

Canada's cultural identity experienced a big shift in the 1970s and 80s. Visible minorities increased due to immigration. The anti-racism movement moved through Canadian workplaces. It rightly urged Canadians to see the individual, and to be blind to the person's skin color. This led to greater equality in the workplace. At the same time, the equality movement also created a blind spot: by being blind to race, we became blind to cultural differences.

While we must be indifferent differences like race and ethnicity, we must be aware of cultural differences. While we should elevate visible differences through national celebrations like Heritage Days, we mustn't minimize the less visible, more nuanced, aspects of culture, such as intercultural communication. This blind spot to cultural differences is verified in two ways:

- First, the a heightened concern with offending others. A common question from native-born Canadians in an intercultural workshop is "How do I avoid offending other cultures?" If you understand that culture and race are very different human dimensions, you won't be concerned about offending anyone when you talk about cultural differences.

- Second the tendency to ascribe performance gaps to low English skills, and workplace conflict to personality differences. In one study with fifty employees across two Canadian organizations, researchers found that management teams attributed 75% of performance issues to non-cultural factors. Interviews revealed that 90% of the newcomer performance issues were due to a lack of culturally-defined, higher-level communication skills. Only 12% of those newcomers were aware they had those skill gaps. No one had told them. No one knew what the core issues were.

Tip - Accept cultural differences. Don't minimize them.

Recognize cultural differences as a workplace reality, instead of minimizing them. As a manager or mentor, you will be able to identify root issues more accurately and reach mutually agreeable coaching solutions more easily. Be curious about other cultures. Don't assume you will offend a newcomer. Most newcomers wonder why Canadians don't take much interest in other people's cultural backgrounds. They are eager to share their experiences and stories.

As a first step, deepen your understanding of your own cultural roots. The desk reference is a good start. Canadians are known for their tolerance, but by focusing only on similarities we ignore the steep learning curve that newcomers must undergo. Newcomers need Canadians who understand their own culture, and are able to explain it to them. Read the Practical Example to learn about a defining characteristic of Canadian workplace communication.

*See the Suggested Reading List for more information.

Practical Example

Softeners - A Defining Feature of Canadian Workplace Culture

"Softeners" define the Canadian workplace communication style. Softeners are specific words that soften opinion, disagreement, requests and correction etc. in order to build consensus between people. Although softeners occur in every language, they are a defining mark of the Canadian communication style. If a person is unable to use them properly, it is difficult to get ahead in a career.

For example, Canadians tend to use more suggestion than opinion - "We could probably extend the deadline" versus "We must extend the deadline". "Could" and "probably" soften the opinion, making it sound less deterministic. It is not meant to weaken the opinion; rather it indirectly invites ideas from other team members so that consensus can be reached on an issue. It is also a way of bypassing, or minimizing, tension and conflict. There are many more softeners - phrases such as "I could be wrong, but...", "I hear what you are saying, and..." and words like "probably", "perhaps".

Newcomers from other English-speaking countries like the US and UK quickly learn to use softeners when their more direct communication styles are misunderstood. It is much more difficult for non-native speakers to master the use of softeners. The companion text to this guide, "*Workplace Integration: A Desk Reference for Newcomers to Canada*", has a section devoted to softeners in Part 2. Raising your awareness of what defines Canadian workplace culture is one of the first steps in becoming a culturally competent mentor or manager.

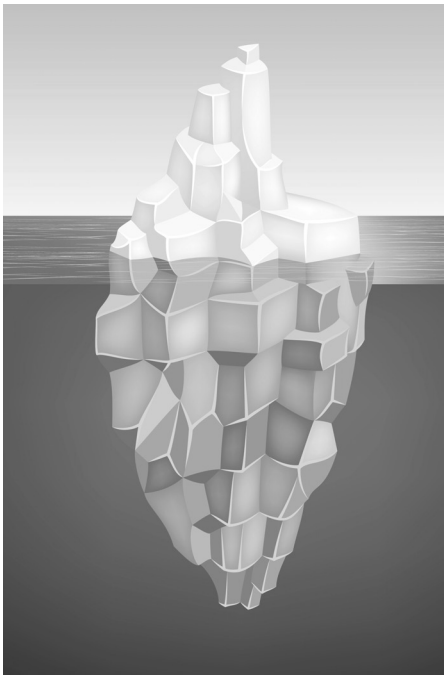
4. Experience others as both different yet equally human. Culture is like an iceberg. The smaller visible part is easy to see. It is all around us in ethnic cuisine, fashion, holidays, books, symbols, architecture, religion and rituals etc. It is the invisible part, below the surface, that you need to understand in order to gain a more sophisticated set of skills to support newcomers in the workplace. These are the less visible aspects like power, time and communication styles.

To get below the surface, you start by being aware of your own culture, that it is only one of many ways of experiencing the world. This can be the hard part - to accept others as different yet having an equally valid experience of being in the world. You may not like everything about another culture, but you choose to step back and avoid judging. Become curious. Seek opportunities to understand. This guide together with the desk reference can give you a more sophisticated set of skills. You need a broader set of lenses to interpret that less visible part of the iceberg.

Tips - Use the iceberg model

You can use the iceberg image as a visual to explain to newcomers how Canadian culture or their own cultures are often invisible. It is the hidden half of culture, below the water, that is important to understand for the workplace. As a manager or mentor, the more you have your awareness raised about that hidden dimension, the better you will be able to identify the cause of a newcomer's performance gaps - whether they are due to low language skills, cultural differences, personality etc.

*See the Suggested Reading List for more information.



Visible Dimension of Culture

Food, fashion, holidays, books, symbols, architecture, religion and rituals etc.

Invisible Dimension of Culture

This includes all the expectations in the workplace for how time is used, power is distributed, credibility is built, problems are dealt with, friendships and rapport are started, and how communication is supposed to occur etc.

Practical Example

What's Wrong with Saying Thank You

Saying thank you to people for their help may seem "normal", but it wasn't for Bo. He immigrated to Canada from Asia with his wife and young daughter. A few years later, Bo's parents came to visit from Asia. They were thrilled to see Anne, their granddaughter. But within a few days, tensions arose.

Anne came home from school. Her grandfather asked her to bring his tea to him. She brought the tea from the kitchen and waited expectantly at the edge of the sofa. He asked her what she wanted. "I am waiting for you to say thank you." Her grandfather was very upset. He asked Bo how he could raise such an impolite daughter. "She has no affection for her grandfather." Bo explained to his father that in Canadian schools, children are taught to say please and thank you to everyone, that it is disrespectful not to use these polite words.

This was hard for the grandfather to understand. In his culture, please and thank you are only used for strangers. Close family and friends are not strangers. Using such formal exchanges creates an awkward "distance" between family members. Gratitude is so obvious between interdependent people that it is an insult to say "thanks". In this example, the grandfather chose to accept the Canadian way of politeness as different to his, yet having an equally valid place in the world.

5. Make the necessary shifts. As your grow in cultural intelligence, you reach a point when you accept that there can be contradictory, yet equally valid cultural norms. Think of the practical example on the previous page about the norms for saying "thank you". North Americans and Asians have certain contradictory views on expressing politeness, yet an argument could be made for either approach.

This acceptance doesn't mean that everything is acceptable to you, or that you need to assume a variety of new cultural behaviors. Cultural intelligence also doesn't imply values "relativism" either i.e. what is judged good in one culture should remain so. Instead, you step back to reflect on your own cultural values and those of the other culture. You deepen your understanding of that culture and its norms. You show a willingness to understand very different ways of being in the world e.g. Asian and North American ways of saying thank you. You weigh your own values against those of the other culture so that you can respond more respectfully to the question: "What kind of team or workplace do we want to work in?" Taking this reflective approach makes it easier to deal with the grey areas, without giving up your own cultural values and norms.

Tip - Help newcomers make the shift

Although certain changes can be made to accommodate newcomers, generally the common expectation (from both newcomers and employers) is that newcomers adapt to the mainstream workplace culture most of the time.

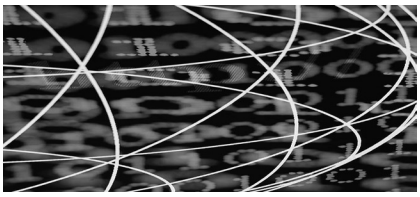
Often, the key question on a diverse team is who adapts? What is the split? Newcomer 90% and Canadian 10 %? If so, what does that 10 percent include for you as manager or mentor? There are two key ways you can adapt to newcomers.

- First, adapt your feedback style to what they would prefer. Some like very direct feedback that focuses on gaps with little attention to strengths. Others need a more Canadian approach, starting with a focus on strengths, then areas for growth, followed by more affirmation. If you assume that everyone wants this style, then you are still operating out a "minimizing culture" mindset. Instead, have the conversation. Ask what the person prefers.

- Second, use plain language when you are in the coaching/advising role. Keep your word and sentence choices simple so that the concepts you are trying to explain are easy to process within the limits of the person's English skills.

Take a look at Tool #1 at the end of this resource. It provides a list of the most common performance gaps in newcomers and an explanation of the cultural, language or personality factors that could be root causes. This tool is a good departure point when you are trying to understand performance gaps, and support newcomers in making the necessary shifts.

*See the Suggested Reading List for more information.



Practical Example
Just be Professional

Cultural intelligence is not always identified as an immediate skill need. For some, it is a blind spot - something a person can't see, although it is real. Sometimes, it is easier to think the following: "If everyone just acts professionally, everything will be okay." Unfortunately, this doesn't work because the practice of "being professional" is a culturally defined norm. It is not universally the same.

Although there are many similarities across workplace cultures, there are also significant differences. Clothes are a simple example. Should managers wear suits or gold shirts? What is normal eye contact? What about hygiene? Is the public washroom a place to clean yourself or a place to keep clean? These examples are basic compared with more nuanced norms like personal disclosure i.e. how much of our personal lives do we share with others at work. Some cultures, such as the Canadian workplace, tend to draw a line between their private and work lives. For others the line is more grey.

The Canadian workplace has distinct cultural norms that should be understood and acted on to ensure career success. Otherwise, employees experience the "glass ceiling" effect i.e. they aren't working within the mainstream culture.

Section 2

Build the Knowledge

Intercultural intelligence is not a list of dos and don'ts that apply to everyone in a particular culture all the time. Instead, it is a set of basic cultural concepts that raise your awareness of potential differences. You bring that accumulated knowledge into every intercultural encounter, but you apply it differently depending on the uniqueness of the situation.

Conversations 6 to 15 in this section give you the basics to work with. But they are only a departure point. For more information on each, turn to the Suggested Reading List in the appendices.

Conversation # 6 - Be mindful of non-verbals.
Conversation # 7 - Read the internal clocks.
Conversation # 8 - Listen for direct and indirect communication.
Conversation # 9 - Recognize linear and circular communication.
Conversation # 10 - Shift with the degree of emotional attachment.
Conversation # 11 - Adjust for self-disclosure.
Conversation # 12 - Understand power.
Conversation # 13 - Build your culture-specific knowledge.
Conversation # 14 - Use a broader diversity lens.
Conversation # 15 - Appreciate the difficulty in mastering English.

6. Be mindful of non-verbals. Take note of the following: eyes and facial expressions, hands and gestures, touch and personal space, long silences and noises like laughing. They can mean more than you have been culturally conditioned to think. Cultures vary greatly in how they communicate non-verbally. When you are interacting with someone from another culture, be more attentive to their non-verbals, as well as your own.

For example, you might be used to disagreeing or criticizing through your body language more than your speech. You might be sending the right message with the wrong non-verbal. Be in the moment, and use your intuition, that ability to know something without too much analytical reasoning. If you know you are going to be working with a particular cultural group, do a Google search on that culture with focus on the non-verbal communication, as well as their communication style. Also, build open communication channels with a few key people from that culture who can contextualize what you read. Ask. Learn. Stay curious.

Tip - Have the conversations about eye contact and personal space

Non-verbal communication accounts for more than 90 percent of all human interactions. Most newcomers would benefit from at least a conversation to raise awareness on this topic. In fact, everyone in a multicultural workplace would benefit from a more sophisticated understanding of on-verbal communication norms. Some newcomers might benefit from more direct coaching on appropriate eye contact and personal space.

- Eye Contact. Some cultures raise children to look someone in the eye as a sign of respect during conversation. They interpret a lack of eye contact as a lack of confidence or even a sign of dishonesty. Other cultures avoid direct eye contact to show respect. They view strong eye contact as a sign of aggression, or too much familiarity with strangers and people in authority.

  Newcomers need to know that in Canada, holding eye contact is essential to show you are listening. This includes talking with a senior colleague or to a group of people in a meeting. Keeping your eyes down, or not looking people in the eyes, gives the impression you are untrustworthy, disinterested, hiding something, or lacking confidence. You also need to break eye contact every 4 or 5 seconds. Look up, or to the side, as if you are remembering something. Don't stare too hard too long into a person's eyes. Newcomers should take note of how other Canadians make eye contact.

- Personal Space. Touch and personal space have culturally conditioned behaviors. They are used to build rapport and trust between people. When people touch or stand close they are likely trying to engage you in the conversation more, or to show that they are listening. Alternatively, when they step away from you they are implying that you need to respect their personal space. Religion can also affect interactions between people, especially across genders e.g. handshakes, eye contact, smiles etc. This is an essential topic to discuss with a newcomer since touch and personal space can be interpreted as workplace harassment in certain scenarios.

*See the Suggested Reading List for more information.

Practical Example
Touch

Two newcomers were talking during a coffee break in a training workshop. As he talked, the newcomer from the Horn of Africa kept touching the arm of the one from Asia. The Asian kept taking a step back to regain his personal space, upon which the African took a step forward.

They "danced" from one side of the room to the other during the coffee break, not realizing cultural difference was the music they were dancing to. Asians, like Canadians, need more personal space when they don't know someone very well. Africans, on the other hand, use touch as a way to connect with people.

How we use our bodies in gesture, how we smile, make eye contact or even laugh are mostly culturally defined. Canadians are often quick to smile, even to strangers. In some European cultures, if you smile at a stranger on the street, they will think you are mad. One Asian culture has 13 different kinds of smiles each with a different meaning. Touch is an essential part of a a conversation with newcomers because, like eye contact, it is greatly affected by gender roles.

7. Read the internal clocks. You have an "internal clock" for how you use your time. It is both cultural and personal, organizational and occupational. Urban and rural contexts can also dictate the use of time. Your internal clock affects your expectations in punctuality, deadlines, scheduling, communication styles, productivity, quality, business costs and overtime. Internal clocks impact every aspect of our lives, from vacations and holidays, religion and recreation, meal times and coffee breaks, community and family commitments. These cultural concepts of time can dictate whether we multi-task or do one task at a time, whether we "live to work" or "work to live". It determines to what degree interruptions and socializing at work are acceptable, or whether work and "play" are separate realities.

In the workplace, these culturally-defined uses of time regulate the rhythms of work. Many cultures carve up the day differently. For example, practicing Muslims mentally mark the hours on a prayer schedule, while other people are marking the day through meetings and breaks. In any given day, you work with people who think "time is money" and others who feel "time is people and relationships". As a result, when people have differing views, expectations can clash. It is easy to judge people as lazy or overly ambitious, irresponsible or diligent, depending on your own internal clock.

Tip - Use compare and contrast to discuss differences

In addition to culture, personality type also influences time management. More analytical types tend to take longer to reach decisions and finish work for the sake of thoroughness and accuracy. More assertive types, with higher risk tolerances, might want immediate action to avoid missing an opportunity. Therefore, it is essential to understand both the cultural and personality dimensions of people. Becoming more familiar with the personality dimensions of the Myers-Brigs Type Indicator would be a benefit. Section 9 in the desk reference will also provide useful insights on personality types.

Essentially, all the lenses can only be considered departure points since each person is more than the dimensions that define them. As a manager or mentor, text books give you frameworks but your interactions with newcomers give you the experiences and stories that build your authenticity and expertise.

Comparing and contrasting are tools to discuss differences between the newcomer's first culture and the Canadian workplace culture. Talk about the tendencies of how time is used in their first culture, and then reflect on time in the Canadian workplace. Use the following:

- how fast people work
- what is punctual versus late
- how flexible deadlines are
- whether time is more money or relationships
- if people tend to live to work or work to live
- whether persons multi-task or do one task at a time

*See the Suggested Reading List in the appendices for more information.

Practical Example
Canadians Have the Time

Tahir had come to Canada from Central Africa. Within a few months of being employed, his work hours were cut from full to part-time. His supervisor explained the company had lost a big contract with a client. He also said something that surprised Tahir even more: "If I can be frank, you give the least effort on the team, which is why I reduced your hours, not someone else's."

Tahir was shocked. He was easy-going. He did his job. And everyone liked him. "Yes, everyone likes you," said the supervisor, "but you hold up team processes because you work too slowly. There is no effort from you to get better at your job or to learn something new. The workplace changes. Employees need to want to learn and change."

A few days later, Tahir had an interesting conversation with Lee, a coworker from Asia. He said that every culture has its own "cultural clock". Tahir thought about it. "We say in Africa that Europeans have the watches, but we have the time!" Lee laughed, and said Tahir should adjust his cultural clock to get full time hours again. Lee explained that unlike Tahir, he had to learn to work slower to stay on Canadian time. In his first country, Lee worked harder, longer, and faster. But in Canada, his team had complained that he finished too quickly, which made it difficult to work in sync with him. Lee had to change his "internal clock".

Without direct intervention from an experienced colleague, Tahir may have never realized the need to adjust to new culturally-defined ways of using time in his Canadian workplace.

8. Listen for direct and indirect communication. Consider the degree of directness in the three responses below. Each is a response to the question "Can we meet our deadline?", posed to a team whose project deadline is being challenged by bad weather conditions.

A. "It's not possible. No one has ever done it in our industry." (most direct)
B. "I am not sure, but as far as I know, it probably hasn't been done yet. I don't know. What do you guys think?" (less direct)
C. "There are many things to consider in this question." (least direct)

All three responses are essentially saying "no". The three degrees of directness could be used by anyone from any culture depending on the context. However, interculturalists suggest the three degrees of directness also represent tendencies in different cultures. These tendencies are fairly predictable, but certainly not fixed. Therefore, when working with other cultures, it is essential to be listening for cultural communication styles versus misunderstanding the message.

- Response A is an example of a more direct communication style often observed in Western Europeans such as the Dutch, Germans or French. It values explicit, strong, well-defended opinions. Other people can misunderstand it as aggressive or offensive.
- Response B is English-speaking Canadian, with its use of disclaimers (I am not sure/as far as I know) and softeners (probably/yet). It values an approach that invites others to contribute so that consensus can be reached. The more direct style views it as indecisive or having a hidden agenda.
- Response C is an example of more indirect communication, which tends to be the communication style in Asian cultures. It is concerned with "face" i.e. avoiding direct challenges and opinions that result in someone losing credibility. "It is better to die than to lose face" is the underlying value.

Tip - Raise awareness of the Canadian Communication Style

Adjusting communication styles to be fully functional in the Canadian communication style (Response B) is essential for a newcomer. Without mastering this style of well-timed "softeners" and "disclaimers", a newcomer will hit a glass ceiling in their career opportunities. The same could be said of a native-born Canadian who fails to master these. Even immigrants from the UK and US observe that Response B is distinctly Canadian and soon adapt their own communication to fit this mainstream style. Newcomers who are too direct or too indirect can inadvertently cause friction on Canadian teams. This is one of the most important conversations to have with a newcomer.

There are too many disclaimers and softeners to list. Awareness raising through comparing, contrasting and reflecting is the best strategy to support a newcomer. You could write out examples of how they do the following in their first languages: give opinion, disagree, criticize, point out and admit mistakes, show dissatisfaction, apologize, and say no. Then, suggest what a Canadian would say in the same situation, and compare responses. Once awareness is raised, newcomers will begin to hear aspects of the Canadian communication style in the workplace. Then, they can adapt more intuitively.

*See section 5 in the desk reference. Also see the Suggested Reading List for more information.

Practical Example
Giving Performance Feedback

Klaus came to Canada from Western Europe. He confided in his workplace mentor that he was frustrated with his manager. He was not receiving the kind of feedback on his work that he was used to. Klaus' mentor asked him to explain his expectations. "I expect him to tell me what I am doing wrong, not what I am doing right. Recognition is important, but to develop I need to know my gaps. He is not very professional." In Klaus' first culture, feedback is on improvement, not praise. It is explicit and to the point. Direct feedback is not meant to insult or tear down a person, but rather to avoid misunderstandings and set clear expectations. It is not personal.

Klaus' supervisor was using the Canadian style for feedback, also known as the sandwich i.e. all the great things first, then the improvement embedded somewhere inside, finished off with another round of encouragement. Klaus was unable to identify his gaps because so much attention was placed on his strengths. Klaus' supervisor needed to either adapt his communication to Klaus' cultural orientation by starting with the improvements, or explain to Klaus how feedback is given in the Canadian workplace. In that case, Klaus would adapt by understanding the "sandwich". However, neither Klaus nor his supervisor were aware of cultural differences. They assumed that "being professional" at work had universal norms, and that the other was unprofessional. On the contrary, "being professional is culturally-defined".

9. Recognize linear and circular communication. A linear communication style gets to the point quickly, and focuses on the facts. Attention goes to letting the facts speak objectively by being clear, concise and coherent. On the other hand, a more circular style repeats points, talks around the point and gets off topic, only to then return to the issue. Attention is on relationship or context, or both. When you bring linear fact-based speakers into discussion with circular relator-based speakers, intercultural conflict can occur. Both linear and circular styles are equally valuable. However, in the Canadian workplace, a linear style, measured by using softeners, is more effective, while the more circular style can work in more social interactions.

Tip - Coach towards clarity, coherence and conciseness

Many newcomers do not speak clearly, concisely and coherently in English, according to Canadian workplace norms. Being clear, coherent and concise is essential for sharing ideas, giving team updates or presenting information to clients. Even with lower English skills, a newcomer can still be clear, concise and coherent with the English they do have.

- Clarity means using simple word and sentence choices. Some newcomers believe they need to use big words, long sentences and perfect grammar to sound credible. They feel they need to speak fast to sound like a native-speaker. Coach them to simplify their language and to speak slower, using clear speech (see section 12 in the desk reference), which is valued more in the Canadian workplace.

- Conciseness means "speaking "skinny" by eliminating the unnecessary, the redundancies and repetitions. Help newcomers by asking them to think of these three questions when communicating. First, if you only had 3 seconds to speak, what would you say? This question identifies the purpose of a message, or what you want the listeners to know or do. Next, if you had another 10 seconds, what would you also say? This question identifies the key points of a message. Last, if you had 3 minutes what would you add? This question helps keep an update or presentation short and to-the-point. The three questions help to focus a person's message on the essential information (see section 6 in the desk reference).

- Coherent means frontloading your main point, and organizing your ideas in a linear order, using words like "first", "then", "next" and "finally". Many cultures don't frontload the main point. It is considered impolite or aggressive. The main point is given at the end of a presentation or update. In the Canadian workplace, unless the main point is negative news, it is frontloaded (see section 6 in the desk reference).

*See sections 4 and 6 in the desk reference. Also the Suggested Reading List for more information.

Practical Example

The Manager's Default Recourse

Some managers and mentors tend to seek quick solutions to newcomer gaps, using default tactics like Toastmasters or "learn by doing," that are usually ineffective.

One study in a Canadian company tracked the development of three newcomer employees needing stronger communication skills. All three had challenges with pronunciation, and were unable to organize their thoughts in meetings. All three had followed the standard manager recommendation: participate in Toastmasters. All three had been pressured to "learn by doing," having to either chair a team meeting or give a presentation to their teams.

They didn't improve. Their contracts were not going to be renewed. Then, the HR director intervened. She contracted a consultant to act as mentor and coach to the three. The consultant interviewed the managers and newcomers to assess needs. Each newcomer received 5 to 8 hours of one-on-one coaching in their communication and English skills.

One newcomer soon resigned from the company. The other two made significant improvements within a few weeks. One went on to receive a company award in recognition of her effort and growth. The other was later promoted into a position that leveraged the depth of skills he had brought from his first country. The ROI for the company far outweighed the cost of the consultant.

10. Shift with the degree of emotional attachment. Culture strongly influences the role of emotion in communication through tone, volume and gesture. Although everyone has emotions, not everyone uses them the same way when speaking.

- **Emotionally-detached** speakers separate themselves from the issues. They value being objective with less emotional connection. They expect the facts, not the feelings about the facts. If something is important, it shouldn't be distorted by personal feelings. The facts must speak for themselves.

- **Emotionally-attached** speakers use emotion in their voices to inform and persuade. They believe that if something is important, they should be both intellectually and emotionally engaged. If it's worth being passionate about, they need to feel it, and express those feelings. If they have an interest in the outcome, they do not separate themselves from it emotionally.

Contrasting The emotionally-detached speaker tends to assume all others are less reliable, while the emotionally-attached speaker presumes all others are cold, disengaged and unresponsive. These opposite types are both attempting to build trust, credibility and rapport with two very different strategies. When working with people who are more at the opposite end of the continuum to you, take a mental step back and suspend judgment. Remember, you want to avoid knee-jerk reactions by doing the following:

Step 1: Make the mental shift. - Recognize that other cultures take different approaches to building trust, credibility and rapport. They may have different norms for using emotion, but they are likely working towards the same goals as you. Use your cultural intelligence to interpret their motivations, instead of judging their actions too quickly.

Step 2: Make the behavioral shift - Adapt to the other culture's norm by either raising or lowering the degree of emotional attachment, depending on the demands of the situation.

Tip - Raise awareness of emotions in speaking

Newcomers need to have their awareness raised about how they use emotion in their communication, and what is effective in their new Canadian workplaces. Like many cultural norms, emotional attachment can either build or erode a person's credibility with colleagues and clients.

- Cultural Orientations. Certain cultures such as the Arabic, African and Latino peoples, tend to value emotional suasion. On the other hand, many Asian cultures may hide most emotions in workplace interactions. In some situations, revealing emotion is considered a weakness.

- The Canadian Tendency. These two opposing approaches contrast with the Canadian workplace where ***objective, fact-based arguments tend to be communicated using a tone that shows an optimistic, flexible attitude***. In the Canadian workplace, strong emotion in a voice, even if it is only used to support facts, will likely diminish the credibility of the speaker. And a flat, neutral tone will fail to hold the attention of listeners. Controlled optimism is preferred.

When you hear higher degrees of emotional-attachment in a person's communication, does it maintain or erode their credibility for you? Can you step back mentally, suspend judgement, and use your cultural intelligence to interpret the motivations?

*See the Suggested Reading List for more information.

11. Adjust for self-disclosure. Self-disclosure relates to how much of your personal life you share with others at work. Some cultures tend to open up very quickly about very personal details with most people. On the other hand, others believe their private lives are none of anybody else's business. These polar positions can be summarized as follows:

- **Low Self-Disclosure** means I keep my personal life separate from my work life. I draw a clear line between my private and public self. I may have one or two close colleagues who know a lot about me. However, I prefer to build rapport with colleagues as we work together to accomplish a task, not by sharing a lot of personal information. Building very close friendships at work usually takes time.

- **High Self-Disclosure** means I talk a lot at work about my personal life. This is meant to form a bond of mutual trust quickly. It builds a higher level of interdependence. Other people have life lessons that can help me in my life. By being more open about our lives, we build rapport together so that we work better together.

The two opposite types, high and low self-disclosure, are attempting to build trust, credibility and rapport using two very different strategies. When working with people who are more at the opposite end of the continuum, take a mental step back and suspend judgment. Remember, you want to avoid knee-jerk reactions by doing the following:

Step 1: Make the mental shift: Recognize that other cultures have different approaches to building trust, credibility and rapport. They may have different norms for using emotion, but likely for the same goals as you. Use your cultural intelligence to interpret the motivations, instead of judging the actions.

Step 2: Make the behavioral shift: adapt to the other culture's norm by either raising or lowering the degree of self-disclosure, depending on the demands of the situation.

Practical Example
Suspending Judgement

Paulo came to Canada from Central America. He sent out his resume and found a job. On the first day, he met his manager and told him that his father was a political prisoner in his first country.

The supervisor was surprised by how much personal information Paulo had shared so soon. Paulo's openness about his personal life was intended as an invitation to get to know him better. It was meant to build rapport, but it did the opposite. The manager wasn't used to knowing so much personal information about employees. He assumed Paulo was telling him to get sympathy and preferential treatment. Trust, the crucial link between supervisor and subordinate, was broken. Their relationship became awkward.

If Paulo had been more aware of how Canadians build rapport, he would have not used so much personal disclosure. If his supervisor had more intercultural skills, he would have suspended judgment. He would have suspected that Paulo was only trying to build rapport, and not trying to get sympathy and preferential treatment. Both employer and newcomer needed more cultural intelligence.

Tip - Use a continuum to explain differences

The goal is to raise awareness of self-disclosure so that newcomers can operate within the comfort levels of a particular context or workplace relationship. Controversial topics such as religion, politics, money and personal/family problems are common workplace conversations in some cultures. In the Canadian workplace, these topics are rarely discussed openly. Disclosure is low because people have strong emotional attachments to their opinions on these topics. Use a continuum like the one below as a tool to have the conversation about degrees of self-disclosure. You can each plot yourselves with an X where you believe you fit personally, and where the Canadian workplace and newcomer's cultures sit. Then give examples and guidelines to understand the boundaries of each. You could also use a continuum like this for Conversations #6 to #12, where there are contrasting opposites like direct and indirect communication.

Low
Self- Disclosure _____1_____2_____3_____4_____5_____ High
Self- Disclosure

12. Understand power. So much of cultural intelligence is grounded in your understanding of power. Our views on how power should be distributed between people will determine how we interact with them. Culture determines hierarchy and power norms. Power distribution might be very egalitarian, or at the other end of the spectrum where power is concentrated into a hierarchy with a clear chain of command. When these opposing realities have to work together, it usually results in cultural misunderstandings.

- Egalitarian - In an egalitarian power structure, supervisors and subordinates consider themselves equals. Their hierarchy is an inequality of roles, not people. It is established for convenience. Power is decentralized wherever and whenever expedient. Supervisors are approachable, accessible, resourceful democrats. Subordinates expect to be consulted on decisions and be free to use initiative. They expect to be free to contact supervisors directly.

- Hierarchical - In a strong hierarchical culture, supervisors and subordinates do not see themselves as equals. Power is centralized into a few hands. Subordinates expect to be told what to do. Supervisors are set into tall hierarchies, and report up the chain of command. Supervisors initiate contact with subordinates and make most decisions. The preferred boss assumes a more paternalistic role with subordinates.

Tip - Explain the expectations of a less hierarchical workplace

Do the newcomers you work with have the same mental models for power as you? Do any performance issues potentially have their root in cultural understandings of power? Many newcomers originate from workplaces with a much more hierarchical orientation to power. You can use the chart below to compare and contrast their former workplaces with the expectations of the less hierarchical Canadian workplace. See section 10 in the desk reference for more insights on power.

Hierarchical	Egalitarian
Supervisors	
• tell subordinates • are called by their titles. • manage people. • make the decisions.	• ask subordinates • are called by first names. • enable and resource people. • expect collaboration.
Subordinates	
• don't question those decisions. • rarely disagree, never publicly. • usually defer to supervisor. • seldom take initiative. • wait to be told what to do. • depend on technical skills and supervisors for promotion. • need to have fewer career desires and be loyal to an organization.	• have a lot of influence in decision making. • question decisions respectfully. • take initiative. • find and ask what to do next. • use strong technical and strong "enabling skills" to get promoted. • need to be flexible in career, open to new opportunities and new employers.

Practical Example
Be Persuasive, not Directive

Habib came from Central Asia to Canada. He had previously been a senior manager but found an internship as a junior manager in a fast-growing company. After a month, the company terminated his internship suddenly.

The human resources department gave the following two reasons: (1) too directive with his subordinates, and (2) ingratiating with his own supervisor. Being directive means that Habib kept telling subordinates what to do, instead of using a more persuasive management style i.e. asking, suggesting, enabling, equipping etc. His team wanted to be trusted to work without his constant supervision.

Habib was considered ingratiating. He tried to get into a position of trust with his own supervisors by giving small gifts and inviting them to dinner at his house. This would have been very difficult for his supervisors to accept. In the Canadian workplace, a supervisor doesn't show special favor to any employee. A supervisor must hold ultimate responsibility for projects, but must also release employees to work more independently. A supervisor guides, mentors, resolves difficult conflict, and supports the team whenever necessary.

*See the Suggested Reading List for more information.

13. Build your culture-specific knowledge. To pursue cultural intelligence, you start with the culture-general concepts. You build a generic framework in your head about communication, power and time etc. From this vantage point, you can move out into culture-specific knowledge. The best place to start is with your own culture. Familiarity with the desk reference will give a clear understanding of Canadian workplace culture.

Tip - Don't be so worried about offending

Deepen your knowledge of the main cultural groups you work with. For example, you might start with the Chinese or Mexican cultures and then move on to the Russians or East Indians. Read and ask about the culture.

- Read. First, read books and articles on that culture through an internet search or a visit to the library or bookstore. This is more than a country overview of climate, history or food. It's about how those culture-general concepts (communication, power, time etc.) work themselves out within a specific people group, like East Indians or Pakistanis. Those new culture-specific details will expand the generic framework already in your head.

- Ask. Next, take those culture-specific details and talk about them with people from those cultures. Get to know the people. Observe them. Listen to them. Be curious. Ask specific questions. Real people from those cultural backgrounds will be able to contextualize what you read by filling in the gaps and giving story to the textbook details. Your goal - to cultivate a more sophisticated understanding of the newcomer cultures in your workplace. You should rarely be worried about offending other cultures by asking questions. It is not asking that offends, but being indifferent to difference that can be offensive to people. It is the way you ask that matters - be open and curious.

*See the Suggested Reading List for more information on culture-specific books and websites.

Practical Example
Speaking Up

During a training workshop, the Canadian-born members of a team were confused by a new Asian team member called Huang. He was not participating in the team activities. In fact, Huang had said nothing during the training. All he did was nod in agreement with everything everyone else said. They wondered if he was too shy to contribute his ideas.

The Canadians approached the trainer and asked whether their Asian team member's lack of participation was just his personality, or perhaps because he didn't speak English very well. Huang's behavior was neither personality type nor English skills. It was cultural. When the trainer intervened to resolve the tension, everyone found out that Huang was waiting to be asked to input his ideas. In his particular Asian culture, it was polite to wait to be asked, especially since he had not been appointed to lead the team discussions. Huang had been in Canada for a year but had still not realized that participation in a discussion is voluntary.

This case study reveals two important lessons. First, it is useful to be able to distinguish between culture and personality. Second, it shows the powerful hold that our own cultural norms can have over our awareness of difference. Huang was completely unaware of the Canadian workplace communication style that was happening each day in front of him. He didn't "see" that he didn't have to wait to be asked to speak. He needed to speak up when he had something important to contribute. Huang needed to change his cultural "lens", just like people put on glasses to see more clearly.

14. Use a broader diversity lens. It is important to inform your intercultural intelligence by recognizing that a person is more than his or her culture. Don't minimize culture's extraordinary role in shaping a person, but at the same time, learn to interpret behaviors and attitudes using a broader diversity lens. A varied set of tools will give you more sophisticated insights and intuition at critical moments. At the very least, build a strong understanding of personality types, and use it together with your cultural intelligence.

Tip - Distinguish between personality and culture

Since performance issues can be rooted in cultural or personality differences or a combination of both, it is useful to combine knowledge of personality types with intercultural tools. At other times, language skills or other diversity factors such as gender, generation or stage of life can be root causes of issues. Without a broader diversity lens to interpret differences, there is a good chance you will misunderstand an issue and then recommend the wrong solutions.

The social sciences have developed tools such as Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and Strengths Development Indicator (SDI) to understand personality types. Most tools require a trainer to guide you through them, at a cost. To use either of the tools skillfully, you should participate in a workshop with a qualified trainer who can equip you to use them properly. The Globe and Mail published a short article on the SDI. The article can be accessed online through a Google search for "*Getting to the Roots of Office Conflict*" by Harvey Schachter. The SDI catalogues seven color-coded motivational drivers in human relationships. Schachter's article provides definitions for all seven. Below, is a brief introduction to the first three SDI types - Assertive, Altruistic and Analytic.

Assertive	Directs others. Competes. Likes action now. Opportunistic. High tolerance for risk. Mistakes are learning opportunities.
Altruistic	Nurtures others. Open and emotionally engaged. Responsive and helping. Accommodating. Values and supports others. Mistakes must not hurt people.
Analytical	Autonomous. Cautious and emotionally-detached. Objective and principled. Thorough. Risk averse. Mistakes are to be avoided.

Practical Example

Stages of Life

At one Canadian company, six female employees were part of a study to explore motivations for learning and career development. All were newcomers to Canada working in various professional roles in the company. All had been identified as capable of more than their current positions required. None had demonstrated any desire to grow in their careers. The leadership team needed them to develop because the scope of their roles needed to grow with the company.

The leadership team assumed their lack of willingness to grow was due to one of the following: insufficient English skills, low self-confidence, a lack of personal ambition, or cultural conditioning in the roles of women in their first cultures.

Through a series of one-on-one interviews, the consultant-coach discovered the following: English skills were not a key limitation, nor was personality or gender issues. Rather, for three of the women, stage of life was the main reason for not being more ambitious in their careers. All three were in their early thirties and had young children that needed their attention. For two of the others, culture was a contributing factor. They were ambitious to grow in their careers, but were waiting for their department heads to give them direction, instead of initiating it themselves. Only one of the interviewees was limited by English skills which had resulted in a lack of confidence.

The leadership team began to use a broader diversity lens to understand their diverse teams. They needed to have more one-on-one time with newcomers to identify issues and motivations through open discussions.

15. Appreciate the difficulty in mastering English. Upon arrival in Canada, 50% of newcomers believe mastering English will take them about 1-2 years. In a study at an Alberta college, when learners were asked this question again a year later, their responses changed to over half believing it would take at least 3-5 years. It also takes learners a minimum of 250 hours to move up one of the twelve Canadian Language Benchmark levels, and up to 450 hours at the higher levels.

Most newcomers begin learning English before immigrating. However, because they are not in a daily English-speaking context, there are very few chances to practice English and little demand to speak it. When they arrive in Canada, they suddenly encounter the extraordinary depth and breadth of the language. Many join government-funded language programs. But a sharp "learning curve" still occurs once they get into the workplace. The language now needs to be used in real time versus classroom time.

Imagine your own language "shock", if you immigrated to a country such as Brazil, Somalia or China. You would bring with you a variety of individual differences that would affect your ability to master a new language: motivation, age, educational background, perceived strengths, first language, and cultural competence.

Tip - Support workplace training initiatives for newcomers

- Explain Learning Expectations. Once newcomers are employed, their employers rarely inform them of their need to continue learning English. Employers assume a newcomer is as self-directed as a Canadian-born employee. On the contrary, many newcomers originate from workplaces where being more self-directed is not the norm. Too many newcomers with insufficient English are hired by too many employers who don't set out clear expectations for improving English skills. They enter the workplace with just enough English to perform the technical duties in their roles. Labor shortages in Canada continue to enable this reality. Within a few months or a year at most, organizational growth or a need for more stimulating work puts a demand on newcomers for better English. However, many newcomers rightly assume the following: I was hired in open competition. I passed the interview. I must have all the required skills for the job, including enough English. If a newcomer has the choice technical skills but lacks the critical English skills, assume nothing will change unless you intervene with expectations and support.

- Support Language Training. If possible, support language training for newcomers in your workplace. There are a number of educational institutes, settlement agencies and consultants that deliver language training in the workplace. The resource for newcomers that accompanies this guide, Workplace Integration - A Desk Reference for Newcomers to Canada, is designed to support English in the Workplace.

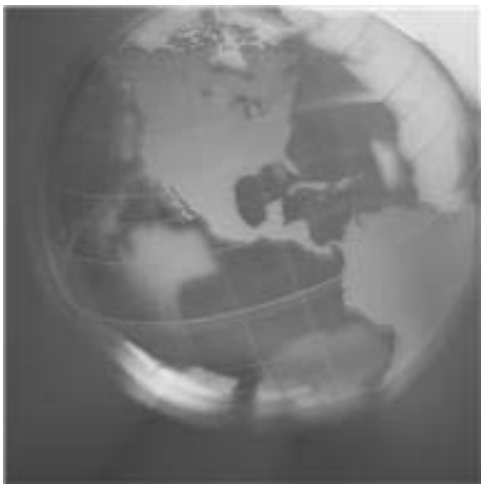
- Coach for Clear Speech. Often, the best coaching to provide a newcomer is on their pronunciation, with a focus on speed and pause. Many speak too fast because they want to sound like native speakers, or to hide their grammar mistakes. Sometimes they are speaking at the same speed as they would in their first languages. They need to speak slower, and use pause between their "thought groups", like news anchors do when reading the news on TV.

*See the Suggested Reading List for more information.

Section 3

Apply the Skills

Intercultural skills for supporting newcomers with integration will emerge as attitudes are cultivated and knowledge is built. For more information, turn to the Suggested Reading List in the appendices.



Conversation # 16 - Coach the unwritten rules.

Conversation # 17 - Take an interest from day one.

Conversation # 18 - Give direction.

16. Coach the unwritten rules. Every profession and organization has unwritten rules, or ways of thinking, speaking and behaving that live in the collective mind of the group. These norms are not written down, but are expected from every employee. For example, in most Canadian business workplaces, people are expected to figure out when to use initiative. Although rules do exist for using initiative, they are not written in a handbook. They are learned by experience. These unwritten rules are essentially the culture of the workplace.

Newcomers to Canada bring unwritten rules with them from their first cultures. Most assume the ways of thinking, speaking and behaving in their new Canadian workplaces are going to be similar. Their Canadian colleagues assume that "being professional" has universal norms. When conflict or performance issues occur, people assume someone is not "being professional" whereas in actual fact, it is the unwritten rules that need to be clarified. Whenever an issue arises, first look for the unwritten rule(s). Then raise awareness so that everyone can work towards closing those cross-cultural gaps.

Tip - Culture hides. Help newcomers find it in the unwritten rules.

In the Canadian workplace, newcomers need their awareness raised on the following unwritten rules. Even if these are similar to their first cultures, a discussion of these will at the very least confirm them. They are essential to credibility. Without them, trust is low and rapport is difficult to build with colleagues and clients. You will find a list of 18 unwritten rules in the content pages of the desk reference. Here are four of the key unwritten rules of the Canadian workplace:

1. Speak up. Newcomers need to know they are employed to speak up when they disagree with ideas, opinions and courses of action. Many newcomers originate from workplace cultures where subordinates don't disagree openly with leaders. In the Canadian workplace, team members are required to speak up. If a mistake is made because someone didn't speak up, that person will be considered part of the problem. At the same time, newcomers may need to lean "how" to speak up using softeners (section 5 in the desk reference). For example, to disagree with or challenge an idea respectfully is an advanced language skill.
2. Contribute. Newcomers need to be aware that they are often expected to contribute in meetings e.g. an idea, opinion or update, even if it's just to say "Everything is going well". Some newcomers originate from workplace cultures where they were expected to take instructions and contribute very little.
3. Bring up problems asap. Newcomers need to be made comfortable bringing up problems as soon as possible to their supervisors or teams. If they make a mistake with serious effects on a project or on the deliverables, they need to know they won't lose face. They will lose credibility if they try to fix it alone, especially if it is beyond their control. They break trust if they ignore, hide or deny it, or blame someone else. Handling mistakes often requires culturally-defined responses.
4. Ask when you don't understand. Many newcomers don't ask when they don't understand. They prefer to figure things out later than lose face, or cause someone else to lose face.

Ask when you don't know something, or if you didn't understand the English. You won't "lose face". Ask for clarification whenever you are not sure. The only stupid question is the question you don't ask, or the one you keep asking. Use a notebook to write down what you need to remember. Don't nod, laugh or shake your head if someone asks if you understood. Don't use body language or eyes to suggest you didn't understand. It won't work. You need to ask with your voice.

*See the Suggested Reading List for more information.

17. Take an interest from day one. If you are in a leadership position for newcomers, set out to build strong rapport with them from the beginning. To assume that a newcomer has the same workplace culture as you is as detrimental as assuming that everything they bring with them is an irregular fit. Your aim should be to build an open relationship of trust where you can talk through issues that come up, and coach the person through any key changes in thought, communication and behavior.

You should also be aware that many Canadians tend to take longer than many newcomers to be open and build rapport. At the same time, some newcomers try to build rapport with leaders through ineffective strategies such as gift giving, compliments or excessive deference and respect. Be conscious of the "trust-building process" as you go through it.

Tip - Set boundaries and expectations

Time is always limited in a manager/mentor role with a newcomer. Trust needs to be built quickly. Consider the following:

1. Go beyond the superficial. Take an interest in the person. Ask about family background, career history and goals, frustrations and personal interests. Be curious about culture and language. Be inclusive whenever possible. Encourage their strengths. Show you are interested and gain trust. You want to earn the freedom to be direct about changes that will positively affect their careers and work relationships. Learn the basic greeting in the newcomer's language, and use it. Remember names of kids and family members and other relevant details. This shows curiosity, respect and recognition of that person's experiences in the world.

2. Set boundaries. Newcomers may use the same terms - mentoring and coaching - but have completely different mental models of what happens in such a relationship. Culture defines the boundaries. Consider what advice you can and can't provide, which doors you might open, and who else might be able to give support to the person. Define the commitment you expect. You might need to explain what you are willing to give in time and emotional energy. Spend time up front to set boundaries for both you and the newcomer. The nature of this unique relationship can create a sense of obligation or dependence. Work together to set out roles and responsibilities. Establish clear expectations from both sides. You may need to review those guidelines together at later dates.

3. Invite mutual frankness. As a manager or mentor, you need to be able to speak frankly and ask probing questions as soon as possible. A newcomer needs to be able to do the same. Being straightforward includes everything from constructive criticism to recognition, good suggestions and strong advice.

4. Speak in plain language. Use plain language as much as possible when you are interacting with a newcomer. Plain language is the skill of adjusting your word choices and sentence structures to make it easier and quicker for listeners to understand you. Your role is not English language teacher. Rather, through your own learning and experiences, you are building capacity in the person in the other aspects of workplace integration. Keep these 18 conversations in plain language. Use these basic principles of plain language:

   - Limit idioms, slang, colloquialisms and occupational jargon whenever useful to do so.
   - Use more concrete and familiar words, and explain new terms clearly.
   - Limit complex humor.
   - Sequence ideas logically and use clear transition words between ideas.

*See the Suggested Reading List for more information.

18. Give direction. Canadians tend to be self-directed in their learning and career goals. We know how the "system" works, its hidden expectations, limits, opportunities and short cuts. Newcomers, on the other hand, don't fully understand the system yet. They often make decisions that take them the "long way round" to reach career goals.

If no one steps in to give direction, advice and rationales, leadership teams eventually have to deal with the frustrations or failings that result. Although decisions always rest with the individual, advice from a mentor or manager who knows the system is indispensable to a newcomer. If you have experience and insights to offer, don't hold back. Offer the direction, the advice and suggestions. Then ask the person to balance it with direction from other experienced people.

Tip - Bring everything back to credibility, rapport and trust

Managers and mentors can usually give strategic direction to a newcomer in the following areas:

- Career paths i.e. the common pathways to pursue in the occupation and in the company.
- Professional accreditation i.e the process, shortcuts, advantages and pitfalls.
- Graduate studies i.e. how they help careers in your profession, and when they are/are not necessary.
- Professional development choices i.e. matching company or community training opportunities with the newcomer's needs.
- Soft skills i.e. changes in communication, thinking and behaviors that build more credibility, rapport and trust.

The Challenge. As a manager or mentor, you should be aware that sometimes persuading a newcomer to believe your advice is a long process. You may know beyond a doubt that your direction is the best choice, but the person's own cultural conditioning will not release him or her into attitudes and behaviors congruent with the Canadian workplace. For example, many newcomers originate from workplace cultures where education or networks are the primary source of promotion. In Canada, some newcomers experience a "glass ceiling" in their career opportunities. They may assume more university education is the magic bullet, while the actual performance gaps are in soft skills. The 18 conversations in this guide, together with the companion desk reference for newcomers, explain these key soft skills. However, it may take effort on the part of the manager or mentor to support newcomers in shifting their core beliefs on the principles of success.

If all else fails... bring the conversation back to those three controlling principles of the workplace: credibility, rapport and trust. Anyone entering a new workplace needs to know the unwritten rules on how these are built and maintained. Keep it simple. Bring the conversation back to comparing and contrasting how credibility with colleagues, rapport with team mates, and trust with people are established. It is worth the effort.

*See the Suggested Reading List for more information.

360·Degree Feedback Development Tool

An Integration Tool to Use with Newcomers to Canada

Tool 1

PURPOSE

This 360 degree feedback tool enables managers and mentors to assist newcomers in identifying specific areas for development. Because Canadian workplaces operate within a specific culture, and since most newcomers originate from a non-Canadian workplace context, a time of development and adaptation is necessary. This tool and the accompanying training resources are intended to support newcomer adaptation, and ultimately advance their career opportunities. The tools are designed to be used in a collaborative relationship between managers/mentors and newcomers. The feedback process should enhance performance and cultivate an appreciation for differences, while enabling adaptation to the new workplace.

TERMINOLOGY

The appropriate terminology regarding performance may be incongruent with your organization, especially since much of what are defined as newcomer performance issues in this context are the preferred norms in other cultural contexts. Consequently, certain terms in this 360 tool should be adapted at the discretion of the stakeholders to fit their situation.

OUTLINE of the 360 Tool

This tool consist of the following three sections:

Section A	Section B	Section C
Performance Intervention Steps These 8 steps are a suggested approach to identifying and working through performance needs together with newcomers.	**Checklist of Preferred Competencies** This is a list of the preferred skills that newcomers need for succeeding in the Canadian workplace. They are mainstream norms in many Canadian workplaces. This list correlates with the list in Section C.	**Common Newcomer Development Needs** This is a list of development needs in newcomers, commonly identified by Canadian employers. The issues are usually rooted in cultural, language or other diversity differences. They require strong support and dialogue to cultivate adaptation. This list correlates with the list in Section B.

HOW TO USE the 360 Tool

As a manager or mentor, this tool can be used in three different ways:

Quick Search	Checklist	Full 360 Degree Review
1. If you notice a specific performance gap, check whether it is in the list of 30 Common Newcomer Development Needs (Section C). 2. Then read through the adjacent columns of common causes and suggested readings to gain further understanding. 3. Use the Performance Intervention Steps (Section A) to work with the newcomer through the issues and close the gaps.	1. Use the list of Preferred Competencies(Section B) as a checklist to identify performance gaps you have observed in a newcomer. Use the list to inform your mentoring, coaching or management of the person. 2. Turn to the corresponding numbers in Section C and follow up with the suggested solutions and readings. 3. Use the Performance Intervention Steps (Section A) to work with the newcomer through the issues and close the gaps.	1. Use the list of Preferred Competencies (Section B) as a performance review tool. 4-12 managers, mentors, peers and subordinates each receive a copy of the list and provide anonymous feedback. 2. Collect and compile the feedback. 3. Use the Performance Intervention Steps (Section A) to work with the newcomer through the issues and close the gaps.

Section A — Performance Intervention Steps

360·Degree Feedback Development Tool

These 8 steps are a suggested approach to identifying and working through performance needs together with newcomers.

1	OBSERVE	Take note of incidents that occur in the workplace. Make specific notes on gaps, issues and needs.
2	IDENTIFY	Go to Section C. Use the table to identify the gaps and issues. Read through the common causes and the suggested solutions. These are a departure point for helping a newcomer. Issues might be more layered or less complex than what is listed. At a minimum, the list in Section C will enable you eliminate some of the possible causes.
3	INQUIRE	1. Follow up with the Further Readings that correspond to the gaps in Section C (all in the same table). If necessary, do a Google search for any further insights into the cultural issues. These will be your departure point when you meet with the newcomer(s). 2. Build a network of coworkers from other cultures with whom you can talk about specific issues to gain their perspectives. This could be a formal intercultural advisory committee in your organization or an informal group of trusted peers. This network can help you determine whether issues are rooted in culture, language or other challenges, and provide culturally-sensitive ways to manage the issues.
4	STRATEGIZE	Determine the best approach for managing the issues with the newcomer(s). The strategy will depend on the sensitivity of the issues. The communication could be in a one-on-one meeting or a face-to-face meeting with a group. It might be communicated company-wide to teams through regular staff meetings. It might be through a specific memo or workplace notice. It could be with the assistance of the intercultural advisory committee or through the informal spokesperson for a cultural group. Meetings might require the presence of a third party such as a senior manager or person of same gender.
5	MEET	1. Meet with the person(s), formally or informally, depending on the need. 2. Explain the performance gaps you have observed and have concerns about. 3. Give explicit examples. Affirm strengths, but be direct on the core gaps or issues.
6	EXCHANGE	1. Ask for and exchange comments and thoughts with the newcomer. Ask the person to explain how the performance gap(s) are viewed in his or her first culture. Compare and contrast the different cultural approaches. This might help determine if the issue is rooted in cultural differences, which will enable you to eliminate or explore it further towards a solution. 2. Also, find out how performance gaps are managed in the first culture. It may inform how you supervise the person in the future. 3. In some situations, a newcomer may have a valuable way of doing something or raise a good point that will be important to the team. At the minimum, you will likely get to see issues from a different worldview, which will inform how you work with other newcomers later.
7	DESIGN	1. Agree on and set goals, expectations and timelines for closing gaps. 2. Set up accountability mechanisms to support the development process, such as regular meetings, e-mail updates, peer learning groups, in-house mentors.
8	ENLIST	1. If possible, opt for highly-targeted training workshops/courses in language and culture, preferably in-house. Enlist the services of an educational institute, immigrant serving agency or consulting specialist to develop and deliver any larger-scale integration initiative in your organization. 2. Alternatively, enlist the services of a workplace integration coach/consultant. Even ten hours with a coach can have strong results for persons. 3. In both options, the manager/mentor and newcomer can make use of the further readings in this guide and in accompanying newcomer resource, Workplace Integration - A Desk Reference for Newcomers to Canada.

Section B — Checklist of Preferred Competencies

360·Degree Feedback Development Tool

This is a list of the preferred competencies that newcomers to Canada may need for succeeding in the Canadian workplace. They are mainstream norms in many Canadian workplaces. This list corresponds in numbers with the list in Section C for easy reference.

C - "consistently"
Newcomer consistently demonstrates the preferred competency.

O - "often"
Newcomer often demonstrates the preferred competency.

S - "sometimes"
Newcomer sometimes demonstrates the preferred competency.

N - "not yet"
Newcomer is unable to demonstrate the preferred competency.

	Preferred Competency	C	O	S	N
1	Communicates and comprehends complex, job-related ideas in English.				
2	Chooses to use only English as the language of the workplace.				
3	Shows personal initiative to improve English skills.				
4	Pronunciation is clear.				
5	Communication style is positive, respectful and tactful.				
6	Presentations and updates are clear and well-organized.				
7	Presentations are to-the-point.				
8	Allows and encourages others to disagree and share their ideas.				
9	Speaks loud enough.				
10	Self-regulates the degree of emotion in voice to inform, persuade or disagree effectively.				
11	Self-regulates the degree of self-disclosure on non-work related issues effectively.				
12	Adjusts language complexity and communication style to the listener(s).				
13	Seeks clarification and ask questions when unsure.				
14	Takes the initiative on tasks whenever possible or expedient.				
15	Deals with error effectively.				

Additional Comments

Section B	Checklist of Preferred Competencies

C - "consistently"
Newcomer consistently demonstrates the preferred competency.

O - "often"
Newcomer often demonstrates the preferred competency.

S - "sometimes"
Newcomer sometimes demonstrates the preferred competency.

N - "not yet"
Newcomer is unable to demonstrate the preferred competency.

	Preferred Competency	C	O	S	N
16	Participates in company and team events. Integrates self into the wider organization to work more effectively with others.				
17	Speaks up appropriately to make suggestions, disagree or gain clarification from others.				
18	Contributes suggestions, ideas and opinions.				
19	Deals with embarrassment appropriately.				
20	Works comfortably and respectfully in a diverse team.				
21	Follows the unwritten rules for establishing respect from supervisors and peers.				
22	Respects the personal space of others.				
23	Uses appropriate eye contact.				
24	Acts with an awareness of hygiene money, political and religious sensibilities.				
25	Maintains a friendly demeanor.				
26	Meets deadlines and arrives at appointments on time.				
27	Motivated for career growth using an evolving set of expectations.				
28	Adjusts well to any early career setbacks due to starting career in a new country.				
29	Integrates new learning into current role.				
30	Motivated to learn English and/or enhance technical skills to grow professionally with the company.				

Additional Comments

Section C — Common Newcomer Development Needs

360·Degree Feedback Development Tool

This is a list of newcomer development needs commonly identified by Canadian employers. The list is organized into English Skills, Communication Skills, Interpersonal Skills and Career Management. Common causes are listed in the middle column, with suggested solutions and further readings for the manage/mentor and newcomer to follow up with.

These further readings from the Workplace Integration Desk Reference are strongly recommended for managers and mentors. These newcomer needs are usually rooted in cultural, language or other diversity differences. They require strong support and dialogue to cultivate adaptation.

This list corresponds with the list in Section B. The WI-DR abbreviation stands for Workplace Integration - A Desk Reference for Newcomers to Canada, which is freely downloadable at awes.ca as the companion resource to this guide.

ENGLISH Skills

Performance Gaps	Common Causes	Suggested Solutions	Further Reading
1. Unable to convey or understand complex, job-related ideas in English.	Listening and speaking skills in English are too low. First cultural communication style is less clear, coherent and concise compared with the Canadian style.	Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined. Strongly suggest the person join an external language training course. Run an internal language training course that can also provide 1-on-1 coaching. See #s 6 and 7 on communication styles.	WI-DR pg. 69-70
2. Speaks in another language when English is preferred.	1. No explicit English-preferred policy has been articulated on the team. 2. Worried about making grammar mistakes in English, and therefore worried about losing face in front of native-speakers. 3. Finds speaking English with same-language coworkers socially awkward - may assume others think he/she is trying to show off in front of them. 4. At times, the person may simply be recharging by using own language after speaking English all day.	Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined. Meet one-on-one with the person to explain the effects on a team of not speaking English as a common language in the presence of others. Work with team members to create an English-preferred guideline for the workplace. Set places/times where speaking a first language is possible, to recharge or relax.	WI-DR pg. 73 UR#18 pg. 69 Box 4.1 pg. 54 Box 3.4 pg. 63 UR#17
3. Lacks initiative to develop better English.	1. Self-perception: “I am not good at learning languages.” 2. Assumption 1: “I was hired for the job, therefore I must have enough English. 3. Assumption 2: Supervisors identify gaps and direct a subordinate’s learning plan and career. 4. No explicit imperative in the company for persons to learn more English once hired. 5. No incentives for putting in the effort - prepared to stay in low-level role as long as he/she stays employed.	Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined. Avoid Toastmasters as a key solution. It is not designed for non-native speakers of English. Also, don’t “throw the person into the deep-end” by making him/her do presentations or chair meetings. Rather build knowledge and skills first through resources and coaches. Set people up for small victories to build on.	WI-DR pg. 24-25 pg. 63 UR#17 pg. 65 Box 3.9 pg. 69-70
4. Pronunciation is not clear.	1. The newcomer’s awareness of his/her unclear speech has never been raised. 2. Lacks self-correction know-how. No direct personal feedback on what is unclear and how to make it clear has ever been provided.	Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined. A pronunciation coach might be useful to identify speech issues and strategies for clear speech. Alternatively, read page 72 in the WI-DR and provide some basic feedback yourself.	WI-DR pg. 71-72

COMMUNICATION Skills

Performance Gaps	Common Causes	Suggested Solutions	Further Reading
5. Blunt. Frank. Critical. Confrontational. Argumentative. Opinionated. Outspoken. Telling vs asking. Too directive. Negative. Pessimistic.	1. First culture values a direct communication style. It is not meant to offend, but to help or improve by being explicit. 2. English skills are weak - unable to find appropriate words. 3. Familiar with the less-direct forms of Canadian workplace communication, but unskilled in the actual word choices and nuances i.e. how to do it. 4. Personal factors.	Have Conversation #8. Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined.	WI-DR pg. 30 Box 2.1 pg. 32 Box 2.2 pg. 33-35 pg. 63 Box 3.6 pg. 23 UR#2 pg. 73 Box 4.3
6. Weak presentations and updates.	1. Lack of preparation before meeting. 2. Weak English skills. 3. Unaware of the preferred Canadian communication style for meetings.	Have Conversation #8. Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined.	WI-DR pg. 29-32 pg. 38-42
7. Long-winded. Rambling. Off topic.	1. First culture values a circular communication style, which may go off topic, embed main points or position them at the end. 2. Aware that Canadian workplace communication needs to take on linear organization for updates, presentations and info sharing, but not skilled at it.	Have Conversation #9. Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined.	WI-DR pg. 29-32 pg. 56
8. Interruptive. Cutting others short.	1. First culture allows for many people to talk at the same time and to interrupt each other. 2. First culture accepts that others will be cut short during disagreements, debates and discussions.	Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined.	WI-DR pg. 52 Box 3.3
9. Volume too loud or too soft.	1. First culture values speaking loudly to include everyone or to show that no one is being secretive or gossiping. 2. First culture values softly spoken language as a sign of respect.	Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined.	WI-DR pg. 52 Box 3.3
10. Too much emotion in voice to inform, persuade or disagree.	First culture values stronger emotion as a means to inform and persuade.	Have Conversation #10. Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined.	WI-DR pg. 56
11. Too much personal self-disclosure about non-work related issues.	First culture values higher personal disclosure to build rapport.	Have Conversation #11. Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined.	WI-DR pg. 56
12. Fails to adjust communication style and word choice to audience. Fails to be less or more assertive. Uses overly academic language.	1. Lacks English skills or knowledge about adjusting styles. 2. First culture values academic speak to showcase expertise and education, and to build credibility with peers, managers and clients.	Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined.	WI-DR pg. 51-56 pg. 63 Box 3.6

Section C Common Newcomer Development Needs

COMMUNICATION Skills

Performance Gaps	Common Causes	Suggested Solutions	Further Reading
13. Fails to seek clarification and ask questions. Silent at unusual or inappropriate moments.	In first culture, one "loses face" by revealing one doesn't understand. Instead, lack of understanding might be shared by indirect communication in voice or gesture. The person may choose to figure things out alone or by asking a peer.	Have Conversation #8. Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined.	WI-DR pg. 54 Box 3.4 pg. 36 UR #4
14. Defers decisions to leadership.	In first culture, initiative is not as important. Senior leader makes decisions.	Have Conversation #12. Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined.	WI-DR pg. 65 Box 3.9 pg. 55 UR #14 pg. 61-65
15. Denies, hides or blames others for mistakes.	Worried about losing credibility with Canadian employer. Worried about job security.	Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined.	WI-DR pg. 36 -37 UR #s 4-7
16. Doesn't participate in company or team events. Tends to isolate self, preferring to work alone.	1. Might assume that a strong org hierarchy, and lower level employees are not included in social events. 2. Might be personality type. See Myers Briggs Type I - Introversion (online search). 3. Weak English skills - feels self-conscious and embarrassed. 4. Homesick for first country. 5. Experiencing culture shock.	Talk with the person in an informal setting. Ask a co-worker from same language, culture and gender to talk with the person. Make effort to include the person more in low-risk informal interactions like coffee with the team.	WI-DR pg. 43 UR #11 pg. 60 UR #15
17. Doesn't speak up at meetings. Silent at unusual or inappropriate moments.	1. Aware that the style for communicating disagreement, giving opinion, and persuading is different, but unsure what words to use and how adapt. 2. Waiting to be asked. In first culture, subordinates are silent until asked to speak up. 3. Weak English skills - feels self-conscious and embarrassed.	Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined.	WI-DR pg. 54 Box 3.4 pg. 43 UR #9 pg. 33-35 pg. 30 Box 2.1 Pg. 31 Box 2.2 pg. 40 Box 2.3 pg. 69 Box 4.2 pg. 17 UR #17
18. Doesn't contribute at meetings. Silent at unusual or inappropriate moments.	1. Aware that the style for communicating info such as updates is different, but unsure how adapt organization and focus of a talk. 2. Weak English skills - feels self-conscious and embarrassed. 3. Waiting to be asked. In first culture, subordinates are silent until asked to contribute.	Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined.	WI-DR pg. 54 Box 3.4 pg. 43 UR #10 pg. 38-42 pg. 29-32
19. Laughs, becomes silent or makes unusual sounds at unusual or inappropriate moments.	Concerned about losing face. The behavior is a way to communicate feelings or preferences indirectly.	Have Conversations #6 and #8. Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined.	WI-DR pg. 54 Box 3.4 pg. 52 Box 3.3

Section C Common Newcomer Development Needs

Interpersonal Skills

Performance Gaps	Common Causes	Suggested Solutions	Further Reading
20. Antagonistic to people from other cultures, genders etc.	1. Comes from a culture with little or no human diversity, which might make it difficult to adapt to multiculturalism. 2. In first culture, one gender or visible minorities are not given equal status and opportunity. This might make it difficult to get used to being supervised by or to respect certain coworkers. 3. In some scenarios, people that have experienced discrimination before, in previous workplaces, are highly sensitive and can misattribute coworker behaviors to discrimination.	Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined. Traditional respect in the workplace workshops or resources might be ineffective. The English level of content might be too high and/or abstract to grasp at a transformative level. Instead, a mentor or integration coach might be necessary.	
21. Doesn't recognize the unwritten rules for establishing credibility and rapport with supervisors and peers. Ingratiating. Gives gifts. Seeks special favors.	1. In some first cultures, one builds strong personal networks with seniors and peers through favors and gifts. Without these, it is difficult to get ahead in career. It creates reciprocal binding relationships of trust and favor in countries where life is tough. 2. In some first cultures, it is essential to say thank you to someone for helping out by giving a gift. 3. In many cultures credibility comes from level of education, title or age.	If you do receive a gift, or an invitation to dinner, or request for special favors, approach the situation based on its unique factors. This is a balance of being sensitive and not embarrassing a person, while being explicit about the Canadian norms for getting ahead in career. You may need to consider how credibility is built on your team or in the organization.	WI-DR pg. 24-25 pg. 26 UR #3 pg. 63 Box 3.6 pg. 64 Box 3.8
22. Invades personal space. Uses unfitting gesture or touch.	Many cultures use gesture and touch in very different ways to build rapport and emphasize ideas during communication.	Have Conversation #6. Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined.	WI-DR pg. 49 Box 3.2
23. No eye contact.	1. This can be a culturally-determined form of respect, especially to senior co-workers. 2. It could also be a personal habit, or due to self-confidence issues.	Have Conversation #6. Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined.	WI-DR pg. 64 Box 3.7
24. Unfitting sensibilities.	1. Political correctness on politics, religion and money differ between cultures. 2. Washroom and hygiene sensibilities can vary greatly between cultures.	Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined.	WI-DR pg. 60 Box 3.5 pg. 66 Box 3.10
25. Unfriendly demeanor.	1. In some cultures it is not polite to greet people one doesn't know or to smile at strangers, even acquaintances. 2. In some cultures it is rude to say "how are you doing?" to a stranger, or to not stop to listen to the response of someone you know. 3. In some religions, men and women don't touch, such as shaking hands.	Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined.	WI-DR pg.23 UR #2
26. Misses deadlines and appointments.	1. Some newcomers are culturally wired to work and interact on a different cultural clock. 2. Some people are more detailed oriented in personality type and take longer to finish.	Have Conversation #7. Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined.	WI-DR pg.49 UR #13

CAREER MANAGEMENT Skills

Performance Gaps	Common Causes	Suggested Solutions	Further Reading
27. Low career expectations.	1. Feels defeated in the process of adapting to a new culture. 2. Dealing with personal issues at home or abroad. 3. Stage of life e.g. mother with young children. 4. Waiting for his/her leader to give direction. In first culture, career planning is not as self-determined. Managers have more of a paternal role in lives of subordinates.	Have Conversations #17 and 18. Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined.	WI-DR pg. 20-23
28. Unrealistic career expectations.	Due to language, cultural or skill limitations, the newcomer is in a lower position than in previous country. The person feels underutilized. This can create frustration, boredom and low self-esteem.	Have Conversations #17 and 18. Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined. Work with the newcomer to map out a path to work more commensurate with experience. Articulate the specific learning curve that must first occur. Set a timeline. Once the newcomer has a path out of their present situation, it is easier to manage his/her current role and responsibilities.	WI-DR pg. 20-25
29. Not integrating new learning into current role.	1. Waiting for his/her leader to give direction. In first culture, career planning is not as self-determined. Managers have a more paternal role in the lives of subordinates. 2. Has not made the connection of using a notebook to record learning to apply it later.	Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined.	WI-DR pg. 61-62 pg.22 Box 1.5 pg. 65 Box 3.9
30. No apparent motivation to learn English and/or enhance technical skills in order to grow professionally with the company.	1. Believes he/she is not a natural or strong language learner, which makes mastering English for work seem impossible, and career advancement out of reach. The person resigns to a career of mundane work that pays the bills. 2. In some cultures, professional development is only for senior employees 3. In other cultures, career learning is not self-determined, but rather by one's senior manager.	Have Conversations # 17 and 18. Use Performance Intervention Steps as outlined.	WI-DR pg. 24-25 pg. 26 UR #3

Integration Training Strategies for Organizations | Tool 3

The following is a list of training strategies used by various organizations to support newcomers with English skills and integration. Each strategy is a suggestion with advantages and disadvantages. An organization would need to choose the option that best meets their specific circumstances. Most options would benefit from using the desk-reference and this guide as core resources in any training situation.

SOURCE	DETAILS	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Educational Institutes	Various local colleges and universities provide language, intercultural and integration training. These are offered onsite at a campus or through online delivery. Often these courses are offered through the continuous education, ESL or Essential Skills departments at the institutes.	If your org has few newcomers with these learning needs, this might be a good option. Make a list of local offerings for newcomers to use. The company could offer to pay a percentage of course costs at completion. Courses could range from $500 to $1000 etc.	Local institutes may not specialize in integration and workplace language training. Courses might be cancelled. The learning is generic i.e. not tailored to your org or to the needs of your employee. Studying after work hours can be tiring and clash with family commitments.
Internal Programs	Educational institutes might offer customized integration training onsite, at your org. These courses can be offered throughout the year. Your org's leadership team approaches the educational institute to set the initiative in motion.	The training is customized to your org and industry. This strategy is popular for orgs with many newcomers, with a large annual training budget. Courses can be at lunch, after hours, or split 50-50 between personal and company time.	With only a few newcomers, this might be too costly. A needs assessment might cost between $4 000 to $10 000. A 25-hour course might cost between $5 to $10 000 depending on overheads, teacher prep and course development time etc. Your newcomers may need two or three different courses e.g. speaking, culture, writing.
Training Consultant	Instead of using an educational institute, private consultants offer specialized training in integration, as a series of courses delivered onsite.	Consultants can often respond quickly to an org and might be more familiar with the bottom line business issues. They usually don't have the embedded overhead costs of large educational institutes.	Sometimes the consultants costs are comparable to the educational institute. Consultants charge higher because there is less consistency in the inflow of work for them. Consultants who charge too little may be less experienced.
External Coach	Hire an external consultant to provide 1-on-1 coaching to specific employees.	A good option for orgs with few newcomers, or if you want to provide support to specific employees. 1-on-1 coaching can achieve more in a short time than in a classroom with other learners.	It is often difficult to find a person who provides this service. Quality coaches may charge high fees for coaching. Alternatively, this service might be combined with the training consultant. Costs p/h could range from $85 to $200. Newcomer may need between 12 to 25 hrs.
Internal Position	Hire to a full-time (or part-time) position in your org for an integration/language training specialist.	Perhaps the most long-term effective option for orgs with lots of newcomers. The desk reference and this guide could be used as core resources.	If you have too few newcomers, this is not a good long-term option. Alternatively, the position could be combined with related training or perhaps HR or safety duties.
Leadership Team Capacity	Build the basic integration knowledge and skills in your org's leadership team, mentors or an advisory committee.	Leaders and mentors who have a specific interest in integration-related needs could become competent in providing fundamental support to newcomers.	The specialization would likely remain at the basic level in most managers and mentors e.g. language training is a distinct skill that takes time to build. However, just the info in this guide is enough to equip a manager or mentor to make a significant positive impact in a newcomer's integration journey.
Self-Directed Learning	Encourage self-directed learning in newcomers. Suggest using the desk reference and its workbook.	Self-directed learning is essential for growth, even if there is face-to-face training.	If English skills (versus communication or culture) are needed, the face-to-face training is the better solution. A trainer or coach could also give direction to independent learning.

Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity Tool 3

People experience difference when they enter a new cultural context, whether its a new country, profession, company or even a new team. The principles in the DMIS can help manage the change. The DMIS explains five stages that a person can transition through as they come to terms with and adapt to differences.

Using the DMIS with Newcomers: Once you familiarize yourself with the five stages of the DMIS, you will be able to understand what stage a newcomer is in, and how to support them transition into new stages.

For example, you might hear someone in Canada say "People are people - as long as you treat others the way you want to be treated, everything will be fine." That comes out of a Stage 3 worldview. Everyone wants to be treated with respect, but culture dictates what is respectful in one group but not in another. You need to treat people as they want to be treated, and not assume its the same as your own preferences. Somewhere, someone has to adapt.

For example, a newcomer may say "Why don't Canadians say what they mean?" That comes out of a Stage 2 position. It is defensive. The person has experienced a clash of values (direct communication versus the Canadian's more consensus-building approach). To move them into stage 3 or 4, you need to focus on qualities shared by all people, not on differences.

Do a Google search for The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI): An Approach for Assessing and Building Intercultural Competence. A good understanding of the DMIS will enable you to assess your own intercultural sensitivity, as well as the newcomers you are working with. A preview of the DMIS stages can be found below.

Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

Denial	Defense	Minimization	Acceptance	Adaptation
Comfortable with the familiar. Disinterest or avoidance of cultures, even unaware.	Strong commitment to own worldview and distrust of other cultural behaviors or ideas. Polarize "us" and "them", or even see them as a threat.	Recognize but minimize difference by overemphasizing similarities, which projects that culture onto other people's experience, even reinforcing privilege.	Recognize and respect alternative cultural behaviors. You are aware of own culture as only one way of seeing and being in the world.	Able to take the perspective of another culture to understand or evaluate situations. Able to adapt your behaviors accordingly.
STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	STAGE 4	STAGE 5
People at this stage need to recognize differences.	People at this stage need to see our common humanity, despite differences.	People at this stage need to grow in cultural self-awareness, and stop projecting your own cultural experience onto others by saying culture is not that important.	People at this stage need to develop deeper and more sophisticated cultural lenses.	People at this stage need to enhance ability to "behavior shift" to the cultural context.

Suggested Reading List — Tool 4

Cultivate the Attitude

1. Be aware of culture.
2. Avoid knee-jerk reactions.
3. Deepen your understanding of your own culture.
4. Experience others as both different yet equally human.
5. Make the necessary shifts.

- Do a Google search for *The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI): An Approach for Assessing and Building Intercultural Competence*.
- *Cultures and Organizations - Software of the Mind*; Geert Hofstede and Gert Jan Hofstede; McGraw-Hill Books, 2005. Chapters 1 and 3.
- *Coaching Across Cultures*; Phillipe Rosinski; Intercultural Publishing - Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2003. Chapter 3.
- *Managing Cultural Diversity in Technical Professions*; Lionel Laroche; Butterworth-Heinemann, 2003. Chapter 1.
- *Figuring Foreigners Out*; Craig Storti; Intercultural Publishing - Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 1999. Chapter 1. Chapter 2: Building Block 1.

Build the Knowledge

6. Be mindful of the non-verbals.

- *Figuring Foreigners Out*; Craig Storti; Intercultural Publishing - Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 1999. Chapter 3.

7. Read the internal clocks.

- *Cultures and Organizations - Software of the Mind*; Geert Hofstede and Gert Jan Hofstede; McGraw-Hill Books, 2005. Chapter 6
- *Coaching Across Cultures*; Phillipe Rosinski; Intercultural Publishing - Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2003. Chapter 5.
- *Figuring Foreigners Out*; Craig Storti; Intercultural Publishing - Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 1999. Chapter 2: Building Block 3.
- *When Cultures Collide*; Richard D. Lewis; Intercultural Publishing - Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 1999. Chapter 4.

8. Listen for direct and indirect communication. 9. Navigate linear and circular communication. 10. Calibrate the degree of emotional attachment. 11. Adjust for self-disclosure.	Read Principle 2 in the companion resource, "Workplace Integration: A Desk-Reference for Newcomers to Canada", available on the AWES website, www.awes.ca • *Coaching Across Cultures*; Phillipe Rosinski; Intercultural Publishing - Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2003. Chapters 8, 9 and 10. • *Managing Cultural Diversity in Technical Professions*; Lionel Laroche; Butterworth-Heinemann, 2003. Chapter 4. • *Figuring Foreigners Out*; Craig Storti; Intercultural Publishing - Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 1999. Chapter 3. • *When Cultures Collide*; Richard D. Lewis; Intercultural Publishing - Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 1999. Chapter 7. • *Communicating Across Cultures*; Stella Ting-Toomey; The Guildford Press, 1999.
12. Understand power.	Read Principle 3, Section 3, in the companion resource, "Workplace Integration: A Desk-Reference for Newcomers to Canada", available on the AWES website, www.awes.ca • *Cultures and Organizations - Software of the Mind*; Geert Hofstede and Gert Jan Hofstede; McGraw-Hill Books, 2005. Chapter 2 • *Coaching Across Cultures*; Phillipe Rosinski; Intercultural Publishing - Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2003. Chapters 4 and 7. • *Figuring Foreigners Out*; Craig Storti; Intercultural Publishing - Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 1999. Chapter 2: Building Block 4. • *When Cultures Collide*; Richard D. Lewis; Intercultural Publishing - Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 1999. Chapter 5.
13. Build your culture-specific knowledge.	• *Latino Culture*; Nilda Chong and Francia Baez; Intercultural Publishing - Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2005. • *Understanding Arabs*; Margaret K. Nydell; Intercultural Publishing - Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2006. • *Speaking of India*; Craig Storti; Intercultural Publishing - Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2007. • *Encountering the Chinese*; Hu Wenzhong and Cornelius Grove; Intercultural Publishing - Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 1999. • *When Cultures Collide*; Richard D. Lewis; Intercultural Publishing - Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 1999. Part 3. • Website: Culture Detective

13. Build your culture-specific knowledge.	• *Latino Culture*; Nilda Chong and Francia Baez; Intercultural Publishing - Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2005. • *Understanding Arabs*; Margaret K. Nydell; Intercultural Publishing - Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2006. • *Speaking of India*; Craig Storti; Intercultural Publishing - Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2007. • *Encountering the Chinese*; Hu Wenzhong and Cornelius Grove; Intercultural Publishing - Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 1999. • *When Cultures Collide*; Richard D. Lewis; Intercultural Publishing - Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 1999. Part 3. • Website: Culture Detective
14. Use a broader diversity lens.	• *Cultures and Organizations - Software of the Mind*; Geert Hofstede and Gert Jan Hofstede; McGraw-Hill Books, 2005. Chapter 4
15. Appreciate the difficulty in mastering English.	• Read Principle 4, Section 1, in the companion resource, "Workplace Integration: A Desk-Reference for Newcomers to Canada", available on the AWES website, www.awes.ca • Read the four "Myth Busting" articles at the end of each Principle, in the companion resource, "Workplace Integration: A Desk-Reference for Newcomers to Canada", available on the AWES website, www.awes.ca

Apply the Skills

18. Coach the unwritten rules.	Read from the list of Unwritten Rules in the Contents Page of the companion resource, "Workplace Integration: A Desk-Reference for Newcomers to Canada", available on the AWES website, www.awes.ca • *Coaching Across Cultures*; Phillipe Rosinski; Intercultural Publishing - Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2003. Chapters 1 and 2. • *Managing Cultural Diversity in Technical Professions*; Lionel Laroche; Butterworth-Heinemann, 2003. Chapter 2.
17. Take an interest from day one.	Read through the companion resource to this guide, "Workplace Integration: A Desk-Reference for Newcomers to Canada", available on the AWES website, www.awes.ca
18. Give direction.	Read Principle 1 in the companion resource, "Workplace Integration: A Desk-Reference for Newcomers to Canada", available on the AWES website, www.awes.ca • *Managing Cultural Diversity in Technical Professions*; Lionel Laroche; Butterworth-Heinemann, 2003. Chapter 5.