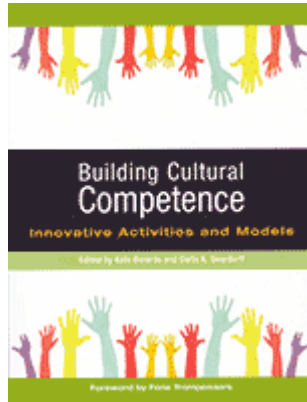


Let's start with a disclosure: the author of this review is one of 39 contributors to the 2012 book *Building Cultural Competence - Innovative Activities and Models*.

Most interculturalists agree that intercultural learning has to include strong experiential elements. Lecturing and training in this field may help some in preparing people for the learning experience, but someone who did not experience first hand some of the confusion and shock that cross-cultural interactions regularly induce inevitably resembles the proverbial 'blind man describing the sun.'

Successfully adjusting own practices and behaviors across cultures requires having learned to recognize and deal with the complex emotions that result from differing, often conflicting values and beliefs. Of equal importance is to recognize one's own cultural propensities and blind spots, which again frequently requires experiencing rather than merely understanding.

The 52 individual activities presented in this book aim to equip facilitators with a toolset designed to promote experiential learning for au-



diences large and small. They cover several aspects: core concepts, understanding differences, exploring cultural values, navigating identity, managing cultural transitions, communicating successfully, building global teams, resolving differences, and developing professionally.

Some of the activities guide participants into exploring themselves or discovering new ways of looking at complex situations, others confront individuals with stories or puzzling scenarios that force them to deal with their own feelings and those of others about the situation at hand. All of the tools and activities facilitate the development of intercultural competence, from foundational concepts to the complex challenges of resolving value conflicts across cultures.

The list of contributors to this work includes illustrious names, among them Fons Trompenaars, whose books and research work contributed significantly to the intercultural field, George Simons, creator of the *diversophy* series of learning instruments, and Margaret 'Peggy' Pusch, co-founder of Intercultural Press.

Building Cultural Competence offers a rich collection of icebreakers, tools, and activities designed for consultants, trainers and HR professionals. Not much like it has been available before. Berardo's and Deardorff's initiative to create this book resulted in a commendable contribution to the field.

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A seasoned former executive of Fortune 500 company Texas Instruments, he regularly interacted with employees, customers, outsourcing partners, and third parties in numerous countries around the world, including many parts of Asia. Mr. Katz is the author of "Negotiating International Business – The Negotiator's Reference Guide to 50 Countries Around the World".

