

Learn By Doing: Diversity:  
Inspiring a Multicultural Mindset

Kevin Jenson  
Colorado State University  
August, 2015

Diversity training for the corporation has the potential to transcend the few moments of awkward silence that usually accompany a presentation of corporate policy covering political correctness and expected behaviour. Those who do not experience a negative response to their identity expressions often find such issues to be invisible, unrecognizable, and even irrelevant. Thus the time spent learning about multiculturalism often does little more than alienate those who don't consider themselves to be racist and demonstrate to minorities that they truly face an impossible situation. The resources and ideas that follow suggest a more effective method inspiring a multicultural work place.

Instead of a passive transfer of knowledge from an expert to the student, the Learn By Doing: Diversity seminar experience requires active participation in the process of creating (Bloom et. al., 1956), testing, applying, and reflecting on the foundational thought processes that either empower or hinder the growth of a multicultural mindset. The fundamental theories guiding this experience are diversity self-efficacy and the transtheoretical model of personal transformation set in a context of relationships and practice to maximize learning accessibility and transfer.

Multiculturalism is not a set of information, but an evolving way of life. Through active participation in this training program, individuals develop tools, incentives, and experiences that will launch their own journeys toward multicultural ways of thinking and acting. It is this kind of mindset shift that has the potential to empower corporate policies around diversity to actually have an effect on the people they were meant to address.

### **Target Audience**

Lasting change begins and ends with the individual. According to critical race theory as outlined by Ladson-Billings (1995) every person is racist or at least participates in racism on some level. Therefore every individual has the responsibility as well as the potential to end it. This idea can be extended to multiple aspects of social injustice in which most leaders are neither willing nor knowing participants. As Scheurich and Young have pointed out, most levels of racism are invisible (1997). Racism at the individual level like slurs and stereotypes is easy to reject, but few people recognize that they participate in other types of racism through institutional policies, expectation of norms and habits, or even ways of viewing the world. Because these grow from underlying thought patterns and beliefs (Spradley, 1997), the solution to the problem must begin with an internal shift in the thought processes of people who can influence their environment.

Learn By Doing: Diversity builds on this idea to provide a new model of diversity training for mid- to high-level leaders in medium to large companies with at least 200 employees. This population is already aware that there may be benefits to diversity, but Kochan et al (2003) has warned that without developing "leadership and process skills that can facilitate effective group functioning" the benefits of diversity may never show themselves. In fact without proper guidance, diversity may turn into an uncomfortable source of tension. A positive perspective

toward diversity is irrelevant if there are no processes in place to train individuals how to recognize and manage it. For this reason, the seminar outlined here does not attempt to sell the idea of diversity, but assumes that everyone will encounter diversity and should know how to deal with it effectively.

Currently, the way many leaders deal with diversity is through the dangerous method of colorblindness. They refuse to notice the difference in race, gender, socio-economic status and any other characteristic that differentiates one individual from another. As Nieto and Bode pointed out (2008), colorblindness is not always a bad thing. However, a failure to notice differences is not the same thing as valuing all of the differences the same, and this will not happen without an intentional confrontation of invisible institutional, social, and civilizational levels of cultural bias. Though their efforts may be misdirected, the theoretical value that these individuals and their organizations have for diversity puts them in a favorable place to encounter a more effective means of turning theory into practice.

### **Objectives of the Program**

Learn By Doing: Diversity was designed to teach leaders how to communicate and collaborate across cultural boundaries and help others do the same. The goal of the seminar at the heart of this program is to inspire the process of multiculturalism. It doesn't have to produce a drastic change, just a subtle shift in mindset that opens the individual to recognize and embrace multicultural differences. Over time, this change in thinking will lead to noticing, caring about, and addressing institutional barriers and creating an environment in which those around them begin to recognize and value the benefits of diversity. This can create a trickle-down effect where more individuals begin to value the development and expression of individuality in unique ways both inside and outside the workplace.

Because the approach is built around developing solutions for thought processes rather than behaviours, it has the potential to disrupt the current cultural dialogue by speaking to the heart of the issue: how people think about diversity. Differences will always exist, but the way that people respond to them determines whether a diverse culture is harmful or beneficial to its members. deMello-e-Souza Wildermuth & Wildermuth (2011) have suggested that individuals are primed to notice the differences between each other, but have a much more difficult time finding the commonalities. This program takes advantage of this natural tendency by equipping people to appreciate and remain open to these different ways of knowing, encountering, and relating (Scheurich & Young, 1997) to the world around them. It is the first step in the process of personal transformation for diversity.

### **Theoretical Framework.**

In order to understand diversity training as a process of personal transformation, the five stages of Prochaska & Diclemente's 2005 Transtheoretical Model of Transformation were chosen as a framework for the program: pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, and maintenance (pp. 149,150). Most of the individuals participating in this seminar will not be aware of what the

issue of diversity actually is. Distracted by external overt behaviour, they fail to recognize that they might actually be endorsing the mindsets that lead to such behaviour (precontemplation). The first goal of this program is to solve this problem by raising awareness that differences exist and have a profound impact on the way that people experience the world (contemplation).

This prepares them for the second part of the process: developing a plan for valuing and collaborating with these differences in a way that is positive (preparation), and then actively testing the effectiveness of their strategies (action). Kochan et al, 2003, reported that diversity training programs which outline the issues seldom lead to long term changes in attitudes or behavior. A 2007 study by Combs and Luthans explained this by showing how good intentions without the ability to act stops the growth of encouraged behavior. They borrowed from Bandura's concept of self-efficacy to show that people will be more likely to embrace ideas they can execute than ones they can do nothing about. Nothing is accomplished by raising awareness of the differences if people cannot figure out how to engage with them on a personal level.

According to the theory of diversity self-efficacy, individuals who are equipped to engage through the application of some process or tool will be more confident in their ability to achieve the objectives of diversity. Once they know how they can respond to the differences, they will be ready to recognize that they exist (Combs & Luthans, 2007). Individuals fear what they don't know or understand (deMello-e-Souza Wildermuth & Wildermuth, 2011). When they become familiar with both differences and the process of working with them, the practice of diversity becomes less intimidating.

An emphasis on reflection accompanies each stage in the process of transformation to solidify the value of the process (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). In this way the process is abstracted into a cycle that can continue once they are removed from the artificial environment of the training setting (maintenance). Thus, the guiding feature of this program is its emphasis on developing a process that can be maintained. By equipping individuals with a process to manage their encounter with diversity, they will be more likely to let themselves recognize and confront the issues that exist. In this way, multiculturalism transcends the realm of abstract thought to become a way of viewing and interacting with the world.

### **Preparing to Facilitate**

The seminar facilitator must prepare to demonstrate this multicultural mindset through the design and facilitation of the learning experience. "Learning cannot take place in a setting where students cultures...are devalued and rejected," said Nieto and Bode (2008). Thus it will be vital to incorporate the values and experiences of the participants into the learning experience. Banks (2007) offered 3 approaches whereby the individual members of the learning community suggest what aspects of learning reflect their experience. His additive approach allows contributions from students within the structure of the experience. This is facilitated by the structure and design of the seminar. Banks' transformative

approach allows individuals to share their various perspectives and recognize the value of the differences. For this, the learning facilitator must be prepared to create space for sharing the diversity of experience represented within the seminar. Finally, the seminar incorporates Banks' social action approach by having students actually engage around the differences and through this build the foundational principles of an action plan. They then have the opportunity to turn this into abstract principles they can transfer to other settings.

Another important aspect of preparation for the seminar is designing the physical space to maximize the collaborative learning experience. Students will need to have access to viewing a screen and contributing answers via text message to a software platform that displays these. Individuals will need the freedom to move about and adjust chairs to sit together as teams of 2. They will also need to have access to tables and writing materials to fully engage in the reflective process. A microphone will be needed for feedback and sharing opportunities, and a playlist must be ready to provide relaxing music as a quiet relaxing backdrop for conversation and discussion. Lastly, because the teams require an even number of people, an unidentified staff member should be available in case there are an odd number of students.

### **Proposed Timeframe**

Another important practicality to consider is the timeframe for implementing the Learn By Doing: Diversity program. Nieto and Bode have said that multiculturalism is an ongoing process that is built on relationships (2008). The growth never ends. Though the actual seminar time should last between 2 and 3 hours, the application of the tools presented in the seminar will be most significant in the months and years that follow. A study by Leberman and Martin (2004) showed the benefits of reflection after the training experience for facilitating transfer of learning to other environments. Immediately after the seminar, the attendees will be added to an online forum where they can continue this process of reflection, application, community development, and support. To insure a dynamic and diverse online community, training seminars will support between 15 and 120 participants that can begin the pursuit of multiculturalism together.

In addition to the timeframe for the seminar and ongoing growth, there will be time requirements for selling the training program, arranging details of the seminar, and then following up with participants and hosts throughout the year to measure effectiveness. Overall, the program should fall within a 1-2 year timeframe. Outside of this, it is expected that individuals will continue to apply the mindsets and methods they developed through the seminar on a lifelong basis with the support of their new relationship network.

### **Implementation Activities**

The first place where this network comes together is the learning experience of the seminar. The theoretical foundations, objectives, and practical details of the

seminar are outlined in the seminar facilitation guide (Appendix). This includes step by step instructions for activities, the rationale behind each one, and collections of questions to guide the reflection process of participants. As mentioned already, once the seminar is complete, participants are invited to join an ongoing discussion community for additional resources, stories, and help with applying the process to their own environments. A high level outline of the 2-3 hour seminar follows.

Introduction: video clips about diversity expression and cooperation

Step 1 – Outline your culture, then meet someone different than you.

Step 2 – Explore your differences and commonalities

Step 3 – Find someone the same as you

Step 4 – Create a plan for engaging with diversity

Step 5 – Practice your plan with the first person

Step 6 – Reflect on the experience and revise your plan

Step 7 – Create a plan for the future

Step 8 – Share what you've learned

Step 9 – Learn about additional steps and resources

Step 10 – Provide feedback through a survey

### **Opportunities and Limitations**

It should be obvious from this outline that the seminar is designed to meet two objectives. The first is to make people aware that differences exist and have an impact on the way that others experience the world (pre-contemplation - contemplation). The seminar meets this goal by making cultural differences tangible and giving individuals the chance to consider these and the ways of interacting with them. The second goal is to give individuals experience with figuring out how to work with these differences in a way that is positive (preparation), and then testing their effectiveness in practice (action). Because individuals are not simply testing a theory, but using the plan that they have developed in the context of a relationship with someone else, their experience is much more concrete and the feedback is instantaneous. It moves the realm of diversity from the theoretical to the practical and gives individuals the tools and attitudes they need to continue their pursuit (maintenance) of a multicultural lifestyle.

Jennings and Smith (2002) in their model of critical inquiry for transformative practice showed another perspective on how the seminar is able to meet the goals set for it. The experience gives individuals the chance to examine their existing assumptions, gain and create new information, gain new perspectives, critically analyse these, share what was learned, and take action. The seminar walks participants through the first iteration of a personalized cycle of critical inquiry, then empowers and encourages them to repeat the process ad infinitum.

Despite this demonstrated potential, there are two limitations to the seminar. These come from the exceedingly difficult goal of changing the way that people see and interact with the world. First, there is the challenge of helping individuals

transfer what they learn back to their everyday settings. "Just because employees attend diversity training does not necessarily mean that they will implement the knowledge, skills, and attitudes into their work environment," said Cunningham (2012). The learning environment is sterile and safe and attempts to help individuals abstract their plan and develop the self-efficacy to use it, but the application to one's old work environment is always difficult. Second, the training gives people tools and mindsets to apply and take action, however it does nothing to make the process of confronting social injustice any less uncomfortable. It may be easier to just pretend that multiculturalism is someone else's problem and forget about the training. The focus on diversity through self-efficacy and the ongoing relationship network should help to counteract this limitation, but it can still be difficult.

### **Potential Obstacles to Implementation**

In addition to the limitations, there are several obstacles that could prevent the success of this program. First, diversity training may actually make some people less inclined to pursue a multicultural way of thinking. deMello-e-Souza Wildermuth & Wildermuth (2011) cite Bennett's model of diversity (denial, defense, minimization, acceptance, adaptation, and integration) to show how the movement through various stages includes some points (defense, minimization) that might drive learners to overlook or even attack the validity of other viewpoints in order to protect their own sense of cultural identity. For this reason, the seminar attempts to move people to at least stage 4 or 5 of Bennett's model where they no longer have to deal with hostile feelings.

A second obstacle to implementing this plan will be found in the dismissive or apathetic response that some decision makers will display when approached with the opportunity of purchasing this training experience. Cunningham (2012) highlights this problem by asking the question: how do you design a program that does not alienate those who need it the most? The participation of the majority culture is essential for the success of multiculturalism, but these are often the people who see no need for the training. It may be helpful to employ some of the research from this article showing the benefits of diversity for those who seek to understand it and the hazard that diversity can become for those who do not.

A third challenge to this program will come from engaging a diverse group of people in the same seminar experience. Although a great deal of room has been left for individuals to insert their needs, cultures, and perspectives (Banks, 2007), this relies on their willingness to speak up and participate. Many people will not be expecting to do more than listen in a diversity training program and may not have experience with the process of communication or reflection. Furthermore, some cultures may display communication patterns that don't align with the needs of the seminar (Nieto & Bode, 2008). None of these challenges are certain, but can be met in three ways. First, if individuals seem unsure of how to proceed with the seminar action steps like reflection, the facilitator can provide additional information and guidance to make the process more accessible. It may also be necessary to reveal the purpose or rationale for some of the steps to encourage people to step out of their

comfort zones and participate. Thirdly, the process is mostly self-directed, so the facilitator and assistants can spend time one on one supporting those who find participation difficult.

### **Sustainability**

This kind of relational support is recognized by Nieto and Bode (2008) as key to the sustainability of the process of multiculturalism. Jennings and Smith (2002) have also linked the ongoing development of a multicultural perspective to ongoing engagement with a network of other individuals. For this reason, a key part of Learn By Doing: Diversity is a digital network of individuals and information that participants will be able to access after the seminar. With permission, copies of the letters summarizing participants' thoughts about the benefits of diversity and suggestions for implementation will be compiled, organized and shared with other participants. After this, online discussions, invitations to events, success stories, and requests for help can provide a continual source of inspiration, interaction and practical ideas to encourage the process of developing multiculturalism.

From another perspective of sustainability, this seminar is designed to be a profitable educational business. Yet in the interest of promoting its concepts, the materials for facilitating this training will be freely available to anyone who attends the seminar and wants to bring the concepts to their home community. Additional training for facilitation will be offered to these future facilitators and ongoing consultation services are available for implementing and applying the strategies from the seminar in particular circumstances. Thus, the sustainability of this plan comes both from the spread of its ideas and the profitability of its business model.

### **Assessment**

Because it operates within a demand driven business market, the seminar will be able to assess its tangible value on the basis of requests for details and purchases of the training experience. To specifically understand the value of the seminar, surveys are given to individuals in the last step and follow-up survey requests are emailed in the coming weeks. These will reveal what's working and what can be improved with the seminar. Ongoing monitoring of the online discussion channels will reveal whether people are continuing to use the process and take advantage of their learning communities to develop their multiculturalism.

Finally, the companies that purchase the training likely have certain goals and metrics for diversity that they track regularly. In addition to taking measurements before the training and again one year later, it would be helpful to provide them with Chavez and Wesinger's (2008) three goals by which to measure the success of diversity training. These are first, a culture that identifies itself as a collection of unique and valuable differences, second, a self-motivated pursuit of the process of multiculturalism, and third, a corporate strategy that incorporates the benefits of multiple diverse perspectives. Each one of these measures provides a unique insight into the benefit of the plan, its design, implementation, and potential for future improvement.



### **Conclusion**

In summary, multiculturalism is not a set of facts, but a way of thinking and viewing the world that continues to evolve in the context of relationships and experience. Because the problems of diversity do not necessarily exist in expression, but in the institutional, social, and civilizational mindsets that empower them, the journey toward a multicultural mindset must begin with a shift in perspective. This shift in perspective takes place through the development of confidence and a plan of action that empowers the individual to recognize and respond to diversity in ways that are profitable. The seminar outlined here employs the transtheoretical model of transformation to move individuals from a state of unawareness to a position of maintaining and repeating a process of critical inquiry. Along the way, they are equipped with the mindsets, tools, skills, and relationships to develop a context that both values and maximizes the potential of a culturally diverse organization.

## References

- Banks, J. (2007). Approaches to multicultural curriculum reform. In J. Banks & C. M. Banks (Eds.), *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives* (8th ed., pp. 242-263). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley.
- Bloom, B.S. (Ed.), Engelhart, M.D., Furst, E.J., Hill, W.H., & Krathwohl, D.R. (1956). *Taxonomy of educational objectives: The classification of educational goals. Handbook 1: Cognitive domain*. New York: David McKay.
- Chavez, C. I., & Weisinger, J. Y. (2008). Beyond diversity training: A social infusion for cultural inclusion. *Human Resource Management*, 47(2), 331-350.
- Combs, G. M., & Luthans, F. (2007). Diversity training: Analysis of the impact of self-efficacy. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 18(1), 91-120.
- Cunningham, G. B. (2012). Diversity training in intercollegiate athletics. *Journal of Sport Management*, 26(5), 391-403.
- deMello-e-Souza Wildermuth, C., & Wildermuth, M. O. (2011). Seeking common ground: an alternative diversity training paradigm. *Industrial and Commercial Training*, 43(5), 283-290.
- DiAngelo, R., & Sensoy, O. (2010). "OK, I Get It! Now Tell Me How To Do It!": Why We Can't Just Tell You How To Do Critical Multicultural Education. *Multicultural Perspectives*, 12(2), 97-102.
- Jennings, L., & Smith, C. (2002) Examining the Role of Critical Inquiry for Transformative Practices: Two Joint Case Studies of Multicultural Teacher Education. *Teachers College Record Teachers College Rec*, 104(3) 456-481.
- Kluckhorn, C. (2011). Culture definition [Class hand out]. Department of Education, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado.
- Kochan, T., Bezrukova, K., Ely, R., Jackson, S., Joshi, A., Jehn, K., Leonard, J., Levine, D. and Thomas, D. (2003), The effects of diversity on business performance: Report of the diversity research network. *Hum. Resour. Manage.*, 42: 3-21. doi: 10.1002/hrm.10061
- Kolb, A. Y., & Kolb, D. A. (2005). Learning styles and learning spaces: Enhancing experiential learning in higher education. *Academy of management learning & education*, 4(2), 193-212.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). But That's Just Good Teaching! The Case For Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. *Theory Into Practice*, 34(3), 159-165.
- Leberman, S. I., & Martin, A. J. (2004). Enhancing transfer of learning through post-course reflection. *Journal of Adventure Education & Outdoor Learning*, 4(2), 173-184.
- Nieto, S., & Bode, P. (2008). *Affirming Diversity: The Sociopolitical Context of Multicultural Education* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston. Pearson.
- Prochaska, J. O., & Diclemente, C. C.. The Transtheoretical Approach. In (Norcross, J. (2005). *Handbook of psychotherapy integration* (2nd ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Scheurich, J., & Young, M. (1997). Coloring Epistemologies: Are Our Research Epistemologies Racially Biased? *Educational Researcher*, 26(4), 4-16.
- Spradley, J. P. (1997). "Culture and Ethnography." From Conformity and conflict readings in cultural anthropology. (9th ed.) Boston: Little, Brown, pp. 18-25.

## Appendix

### Seminar Outline (Activities, Rationale, Reflection Questions).

#### Introduction

The seminar opens with a sequence of videos clips from well-known films that show people speaking about or representing unique ways of thinking, interacting, and viewing the world. Some of these are funny showing surprising examples of subtle cultural differences that create awkward situations or of people who came together finding a single commonality. These clips are interspersed with other well-known movie scenes in which differences and similarities are highlighted, ignored, leveraged, or overcome. The final set of clips show people who changed as a result of the multicultural experience. One or two will be for worse, but the last ones shown will be for better to provide inspiration and hope to the attendees that the process they are about to begin can be amazing.

When the video has finished, music will continue to play while individuals are encouraged to reflect for a few minutes on which one of these examples best represents themselves and who they would like to be. (This music should play softly throughout the entire event.) Then the learning activities begin.

#### Activity Guide

##### Step 1 – Outline Your Culture, Then Meet Someone Different

- Activity A: Write down your answers to Kluckhorn's (2011) cultural circles: gender, sex, age, exceptionality, urban suburban, geographical region, socio-economic level, ethnic or national origin, religion, and political affiliation.
- Activity B: Find the person in this room who is most different than you without using any of Kluckhorn's categories
  - This is a timed event of 5-10 minutes that gets people familiar with seeking out differences.
  - Rationale: The use of nontraditional categories is recommended by deMello-e-Souza Wildermuth & Wildermuth (2011) as a means of forcing individuals to break beyond their usual categories to include differences like shirt color, hairstyle, etc. which are not usually recognized as problematic.
  - Rationale: This is the beginning of the process by which individuals will come to recognize differences as a non-threatening commonality shared by all.
- Group Reflection: What categories did you use to determine your differences?

- As a team, record these to be used for the third step in which each individual tries to complete a project that will appeal to the other group member's differences.
  - Use digital submissions to collect these responses and facilitate Activity C
- Activity C: Each team submits one difference between its members. If no one else shares this difference, the team keeps it. Otherwise, everyone who used that category crosses it off. Those tables with the greatest number or most unique categories remaining are recognized for their success.
  - Rationale: This positions the differences as something to be desired and also shows the diversity of categories available for measuring these. The public recognition of diversity creates a supra-commonality that includes everyone in the room (deMello-e-Souza Wildermuth & Wildermuth, 2011). People are all a uniquely different hybridity of different identities.
- Personal Reflection: How did you feel about finding someone different than you? What challenges did you have to overcome? What questions did you ask to find them? What might this person know about that you don't? What will you disagree on?
  - Rationale: This is part of the process of raising awareness of the differences without judging them good or bad. Spradley (1997) identifies this as the fourth stage of transition from ethnocentrism to multiculturalism. Ideally, this training session moves individuals from an ethnocentric background to becoming stage 4 ethno-relativists who perceive the differences, but do not necessarily consider these traits better or worse than any others.

## **Step 2 – Explore Your Differences and Commonalities**

- Activity A: Now share your answers to Kluckhorn's model with your partner to find your commonalities
  - Rationale: this produces a commonality of trust and relationship through which the differences will be transcended in a later step. It also builds on step one as the differences here are usually harder to accept.
- Activity B: Here is another supra-commonality for you all. Each team is going to work on a single project. This project should reflect something that is related to both of your work environments.
  - The two team members create two versions of the same project. Each of them must try to design it in a way that will appeal to the other person.
  - Cunningham (2012) recommends making this a project or case study that everyone can relate to from their various environments and roles. The project may be defined by the facilitator or chosen by the groups, but it should not be too large to complete within 15 minutes.
  - Rationale: the purpose behind the use of a project is to give individuals experience with the way that differences effect the individual's experience of life. No matter how hard they try to make the project in a way that meets the other person's differences, they will come short in some way. This provides a concrete opportunity to prepare and test

methods of collaboration to engage and incorporate the strengths and weaknesses of each team member.

### **Step 3 – Find Someone the Same as You**

- Activity A: Within 5-10 minutes find the person in the room who is most like you.
  - Rationale: this provides a contrast in which the idea of differences becomes more clearly defined. Individuals must reverse their use of categories and will find that even the similar people are also very different. This is part of the process of “alternative categorization” defined by deMello-e-Souza Wildermuth & Wildermuth (2011) that “may cause the blurring of traditional group lines.” The goal here is to manipulate the person’s perceptions of sameness and difference in order to understand that there is nothing to be afraid of.
- Reflect: What was different about this than the first activity? Which one did you feel you accomplished more successfully? Do you expect to be able to relate to this person better or worse than the first? Why?

### **Step 4 – Create a Plan for Engaging with Diversity**

- Activity A: Using this “similar” person as a sounding board and discussion partner, design your project with the other person in mind.
  - Rationale: This should take about 15 minutes and clearly reveal the challenges of crossing cultural boundaries as well as the benefits of having a diverse team. The more alike these two discussion partners are, the more difficulty they will have designing a project that will appeal to their project partners who are different.
- Reflect: What are the difficulties in creating a plan that the other person will appreciate? Do you feel like this plan reflects your own interests more than theirs? Will it work? How will you feel if you have guessed wrong about how to meet your partners needs?
  - Rationale: there are two sides to the plan for engagement. The project provides the starting point for a conversation about how well the person can consider the needs of someone else or see the world like them. What are the challenges to crossing the cultural boundaries?
- Reflect: When your partner presents their plan, how can you respond in a way that makes them feel valued and helps them understand where they succeeded or failed?
  - Rationale: this set of reflections helps the individual develop a plan to making it easier for other individuals to make an attempt at multicultural thinking. The entire project is an opportunity to engage with the challenges of diversity in a concrete and relational setting. Having this tool and experience is the first step to diversity self-efficacy.

### **Step 5 – Practice your Plan with the First Person**

- Activity A: Take your project back to your initial partner. Present it to them and see what their reaction is. Then they will do the same for you.
  - Rationale: This gives participants the chance to see how they feel when others respond to their level of cultural insights into the differences. Each person has the chance to experience being part of the minority culture and the dominant culture through this exercise.
- Reflection: What did your partner do to respond that made your opinions feel valued even when you got things wrong?
  - Rationale: even if the other person's response was negative or uncomfortable, this reflection will help the individual understand how to do things differently themselves.
- Activity B: Collaborate to make changes to your initial idea so that it incorporates the other person's ideas and feedback.
  - Rationale: This exercise helps individuals to move beyond the concept of valuing diversity to developing methods of inclusion that incorporate and collaborate with diverse ideas. In this case it could mean letting go of one's own ideas to include the ideas of the other person.
- Reflection: What was it like to collaborate with this person on the project? How was it the same or different than working with your similar partner? How do you feel about the potential impact of your plan? Would you need to change it again to believe it is good?
  - Rationale: There is an intentional search for connections and empathy throughout the process similar to the design by deMello-de-Souza and Wildermuth (2011). The objective is honestly analyzing the situation.

### **Step 6 – Reflect on the Experience and Revise your Plan**

- Activity: Find your discussion partner (the person who is similar to you). Discuss your answers to these questions: What did you learn from the people who were different? What was difficult about the process of collaboration? What changed about your project? Do you like the changes? What surprised you? What would you do differently next time?
  - Rationale: this clearly highlights the challenges and opportunities, successes and failures of the plan individuals had created and tested in the previous step. The reflection finalizes Nieto and Bode's process of recognizing the difference, recognize the way these differences effect experiences, and then accept the differences by making provision for them (2008).
  - Rationale: the reflective process allows individuals to explore their thought patterns and values, which influence their beliefs and behavior. By exploring the possibility of changes to the action plan, individuals recognize that multiculturalism is an iterative process, not a single event. If one method doesn't work, try another one.

### **Step 7 – Create a Plan for the Future**

- Activity A: Pretend you will be working with your first partner again. Write a letter to them expressing your appreciation for their help with your project. Tell them what you enjoyed about working together and anything that surprised you. Comment on the quality of what you produced and how it changed because of your collaboration. Secondly, talk about what you appreciated about their efforts to connect with you through their project. Tell them what they did that made you feel like you could speak up. Suggest one or two things they could improve on for next time and mention why you look forward to working together in the future. Do not put any names on these letters.
  - Rationale: deMello-e-Souza Wildermuth & Wildermuth, (2011) said, "Fortunately, positive perceptions can take place very quickly (Gazzaniga, 2008)." The outcome of this seminar depends on this being the case.
  - Rationale: This letter helps the individuals conceptualize their experience, think about it, and communicate it in writing. It becomes abstracted enough for them to transfer to another setting.
- Activity B: Explain the rationale behind the letters to the group – it abstracts the ideas and helps you understand what is going on in the minds of everyone who learned to appreciate and collaborate across the differences. It also includes suggestions on how to do it better. Then ask for people to submit these letters for collection to be shared with the rest of the group anonymously after the session.
  - Rationale: each individual who participated in the seminar has a different perspective on the value and challenges that the diversity of their team brought to the project. These letters make the idea clearly visible and sharing them provides an important diversity of perspectives.

### **Step 8 – Share what You’ve Learned**

- Activity: Open the floor for questions and comments by individuals
  - Rationale: this will help to provide some sense of closure for individuals who had difficulty and also give individuals the chance to publicly reflect or encourage each other. It is the chance to share success stories and struggles.

### **Step 9 – Learn About Additional Steps and Resources**

- Outline the steps for going forward. This may be incorporated into the sharing activity of step 8, but several important details will be added here about the support provided to individuals in applying the ideas they learned through the seminar.
  - Rationale: Culture is process, not a product (Nieto & Bode, 2008), so transformation will never occur immediately. The purpose of the seminar was to walk people through a mindset shift and give them the tools to participate in an ongoing development of a multicultural mindset and work environment. By giving them specific action steps, they are encouraged to continue the process.

**Step 10 – Provide Feedback Through a Survey**

- Ask the participants to complete anonymous surveys about their experience in the seminar and recommendations for the future. If they do not complete these during the seminar, they will be sent follow-up emails requesting feedback.