

## Improving Intercultural Communication

- Know yourself
- Know your culture
- Know your attitudes
- Know your communication style
- Listen and observe
- Be aware of physical and human (cultural) settings (including time, customs)
- Seek to understand diverse message systems
- Try to learn the language of other cultures
- Remember that language (words) are culture-bound
- Be aware of nonverbal codes and behavior
- Develop empathy
- Stay focused on the person and situation
- Use culturally accepted behaviors
- Encourage feedback (verbal, non-verbal, and silence)
- Develop communication/behavior flexibility
- In a real or perceived conflict, be outcome oriented (practical and compromising)
- Practice skills of active listening

### Hindrances to intercultural communication:

- Constant self-focus
- Lack of motivation or interest to understand others
- Belief that one's own particular learned cultural values are universal or "the correct" values
- Using stereotypes or partial information about another person
- Judging others' cultural values (attitudes of superiority)
- Defensive behavior
- Dogmatism (rigid adherence to one's own way of viewing things; failure to focus on practical outcomes when working cross-culturally)