



CULTURE IN EVALUATION # 10: CULTURALLY COMPETENT TRAINING OBSERVATION

Introduction

Many programs for tobacco control and other causes use educational sessions and training as a valuable tool to move their projects forward. Since the audiences in our trainings represent many cultures, the training will be more effective if a special effort is made to train with this diversity in mind. But how do we know that we succeed in being culturally competent in our training? The “Culturally Competent Training Evaluation Tool” was developed with this question in mind.

TCEC studied the literature on cultural competence and translated the recommendations of the Center for Cultural Competence at Georgetown University into indicators of cultural competence and developed an observation tool that allows projects to measure the degree to which cultural competence was applied in the training. In addition, the “Specifications” help the observer understand the items that are being observed and reported on. This tool can be used by one observer or by multiple observers in one event.

TCEC field tested the observation tool during a series of its own trainings, using three different observers at four different events. It also presented the tool for feedback at a demonstration session of the American Evaluation Association conference. TCEC feels confident that the tool adequately measures cultural competency in training. Some have commented that the tool does more than that – it measures not just cultural competence but the degree to which the training reflects principles of adult learning techniques in general. TCEC agrees with this. Teachers of adult learners have long been asked to meet their learners where they come from rather than to assume that they are a unified group. Many of the techniques applied in adult learning methods are also reflected in this observation. Culture, whether it is ethnic background, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, or other, is part of the learner’s fabric. Learning is facilitated when these cultures are taken into consideration in the content and format of a training or teaching situation.

The observation is meant to be a feedback tool that the observer gives to the trainer. Since not all training situations will also provide an opportunity for observation, TCEC has in addition developed a checklist for trainers that they can use as they prepare their training event, and survey times that can be used in a training satisfaction survey. These two instruments are published separately and may be used instead of the observation to measure cultural competence, or they may be used concurrently.

As always, TCEC welcomes feedback on our tools. If you have comments, please contact us at tobaccoeval@ucdavis.edu.

Culturally Competent Training Observation Tool

Ratings: 1 = good 2 = adequate 3 = needs work 0 = not applicable

#	Value	Rating	Observations
1	The training was tailored to the audience (no disconnect; participants felt comfortable with training content and style)		
2	Trainers showed awareness of differences among participants and were non-judgmental (made sure participants followed content; encouraged questions, made participants feel safe, etc.)		
3	Training content reflected diversity (e.g. examples came from diverse contexts and groups and from diverse situations; language was appropriate)		
4	A multiplicity of viewpoints was encouraged during training		
5	Trainers acted as cultural brokers (facilitated bridging and interacting among individuals with different cultural backgrounds)		
6	Trainers managed the dynamics of differences well (found ways of dealing with challenges that were a result of participants' cultural differences from each other and from the trainers)		
7	A reciprocal transfer of knowledge among participants took place		
8	Cultural competence was part of the training content (cultural awareness and cultural difference were pointed out)		

Culturally Competent Training Observation Tool / Specifications

Ratings: 1 = good 2 = adequate 3 = needs work 0 = not applicable

#	Value	Rating	Specifications
1	The training was tailored to the audience (no disconnect; participants felt comfortable with training content and style)		Tailoring stands for content and style. Trainers do not talk over participants' heads, Participants' body language such as facial expression and attentiveness shows comfort rather than bewilderment or boredom.
2	Trainers showed awareness of differences among participants and were non-judgmental (made sure participants followed content; encouraged questions; etc.)		Trainers make sure all participants follow the training and are involved. They "work with" different participants' styles. Different cultural backgrounds are brought to the forefront, for instance by encouraging questions about the way in which participants' ethnic or organizational culture may influence aspects of the training content; similarities among cultures are also pointed out.
3	Training content reflected diversity (e.g. examples came from diverse contexts and groups and from diverse situations)		
4	A multiplicity of viewpoints was encouraged during training		Disagreement is accepted. Trainers encourage discussion and sharing of different experiences. There is no emphasis on doctrine. Training content is delivered as suggestion and discussion is invited.
5	Trainers acted as cultural brokers (facilitated bridging and interacting among individuals with different cultural backgrounds)		Whenever there is occasion, trainers help negotiate differences among participants, for instance by helping to explain a participant's point of view when other participants disagree or do not understand. Mutual understanding is fostered.
6	Trainers managed the dynamics of differences well (found ways of dealing with challenges that were a result of participants' cultural differences from each other and from the trainers)		When differences among participants lead to conflict, misunderstanding, or disruption, trainers are acting as mediators.
7	A reciprocal transfer of knowledge among participants took place		Participants get a chance to share their experiences, knowledge, and skills. Participants learn from each other, not only from trainers. Trainers learn from participants.
8	Cultural competence was part of the training content (cultural awareness and cultural difference were pointed out)		