

HUMAN VALUES CONTINUUM

What is it?

Participants physically move in the room based on their response to statements read by the facilitator.

Why use it?

This activity gets participants physically involved in thinking about their responses to value statements and generates discussion among participants. This is a good way to introduce the cultural values framework (Hofstede, 1980). It is also a good way to gain a profile of the group.

Process:

Explain to participants that you will read a series of statements and ask them to move to the appropriate side of the room based on how they feel about the statement. Example: "Life is what happens to me. If you resonate with this statement, please move to the left side of the room. Life is what I make it. If you resonate more with this statement, please move to the right side of the room. You may also find yourself somewhere in between." Once persons have moved to their positions, ask them to discuss their thoughts on these statements with their neighbor. Debrief briefly as a group and then continue with the next pair of statements. Generally, 4-5 pairs of statements are adequate.

Materials needed: None other than a series of prepared cultural value statements such as the ones below.

Cautions: Be sensitive to participants who may not be physically able to move about the room.

CONTINUUM STATEMENTS examples:

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| 1. Life is what happens to me. | Life is what I make it. |
| 2. Competition brings out the best. | Cooperation is the way to get things done. |
| 3. Change is good. | Stick with tradition. |
| 4. People should "tell it like it is"
even if it hurts. | Maintaining harmony is critical even if it means not telling the complete truth. |
| 5. Group membership is (not) essential for my success. | |