

Overview:

This lesson plan will challenge participants to recognize the importance of observation and to step back and describe something before interpreting or evaluating it. They will learn the framework description (D), interpretation (I), and evaluation (E) and apply it to various examples.

Note: Some facilitators prefer to use description (D), analysis (A), and evaluation (E). The acronym D-I-E can be problematic because of its ominous connotation, and some individuals—particularly those from marginalized populations who may be targets of violence—might find it disturbing. The tool for D-A-E is linked on the following page under Related Tools.

Background and Information:

This activity was created by Donna M. Stringer and Patricia A. Cassidy and is available in their book, *52 Activities for Exploring Values Differences* (see citation below). There are also many versions available online. Several of those versions are linked on the following page or available in the [Downloads](#) section of this tool.

Objectives:

As a result of this activity, participants will be able to:

1. "Clarify the differences between description (D), interpretation (I), and evaluation (E)."
2. "Demonstrate that people tend to begin with interpretation and evaluation, rarely description."
3. "Demonstrate how personal experiences and cultural values influence our interpretation and evaluation."
4. "To provide practice in describing, stressing the importance of observation" (Stringer & Cassidy, 2009, p. 17).

Time:

1 hour

Group Size:

Small group

Materials:

One or two ambiguous objects, flipchart, and at least one picture from a different cultural setting, either national or workplace, for every five members.

Intercultural Development Continuum Stages:

- Denial
- Polarization
- Minimization
- Acceptance

AAC&U Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Goals:

Cultural Self-Awareness:

- To articulate insights into own cultural rules and biases (e.g., seeking complexity; aware of how their experiences have shaped these rules, and how to recognize and respond to cultural biases, resulting in a shift in self-description).

Openness:

- To initiate and develop interactions with culturally different others.
- To suspend judgment in valuing interactions with culturally different others.

Empathy

- To interpret intercultural experience from the perspectives of own and more than one worldview.
- To demonstrate ability to act in a supportive manner that recognizes the feelings of another cultural group

Other Skills:

Teamwork, Emotional Resilience

Links to Activity Instructions:

- [A version of this activity \(Observations vs. Judgments\) from AFS USA](#)
- [A version of this activity for children in grades 5-12 from the NSW Department of Education and Communities, Australia \(pp. 3-4\)](#)
- [A version of this activity designed for youths from the SALTO-Youth Cultural Diversity Resource Centre \(pp. 9-11\)](#)