Introduction:

This lesson plan will challenge participants to recognize the differences between direct and indirect communication styles. They will be provided with a list of characteristics and behaviors and asked to identify if the items in that list apply to direct or indirect styles of communication.

Background and Information:

This activity was originally created by Craig Storti and published in *Figuring Foreigners Out: A Practical Guide* (see citation below). However, a similar activity was created for the Peace Corps Cross-Cultural Workbook, which is linked on the following page. Two supplemental activities are available in Downloads, one created by CILMAR staff and the other by Dr. Aaron Lottes.

Objectives:

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

1. Identify direct and indirect communication styles in the context of particular situations or behaviors.
2. Interpret particular situations or behaviors within a continuum of direct and indirect communication.

Time:

15 minutes.

Group Size:

Small group.

Materials:

The quiz (pp. 78 - 79) and answer key (p. 239) in Culture Matters: The Peace Corps Cross-Cultural Workbook; optional supplemental activities available in Downloads.

Intercultural Development Continuum Stages:

- Denial
- Minimization
- Acceptance

AAC&U Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Goals:

Verbal and Nonverbal Communication:

- To articulate a complex understanding of cultural differences in verbal and nonverbal communication (e.g., demonstrates understanding of the degree to which people use physical contact while communicating in different cultures or use direct/indirect and explicit/implicit meanings).
- To skillfully negotiate a shared understanding based on these differences.


Other Skills:
Teamwork, Mentorship & Leadership.

Link to Quiz and Answer Key:
- Quiz and answer key (pp. 78-79, p. 239) in Culture Matters: The Peace Corps Cross-Cultural Workbook