

**Introduction:**

This assignment has two parts: Core Qualities of a Successful Professional and Reflection Questions.

The goal of this assignment is to increase participants' ability to recognize—and even feel sympathy for—both the intellectual and the emotional aspects of a worldview other than that of their home culture. In a business context, “intercultural empathy” is the ability to understand what your client would want even when they can't really describe it to you. In other words, client-focused empathy is why Steve Jobs was considered a “design god” throughout his career.

**Facilitator Notes:**

This activity is designed for students who are studying abroad.

In the context within which this activity was first introduced, students took the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) and were assigned to a mentor during their time abroad, which is why you will see the word “mentor” listed in this lesson plan and participant instructions. In your context, if students do not take the IDI and/or are not assigned to mentors, simply leave those instruction(s) out of the assignment.

**Objectives:**

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

1. Identify the five qualities that they view as most important in their career field.
2. Discuss and compare their qualities with another person's.
3. Recognize the role cultural values play in informing and defining professional norms and practices.
4. Practice perspective-taking in considering worldviews other than their own regarding professional cultural values and acting in a supportive manner that recognizes the feelings of another cultural group.

**Time:**

1 hour 30 minutes.

**Group Size:**

Pairs.

**Materials:**

Participant Instructions; Core Qualities worksheet; Emotion wheel; Emotion list (all in [Downloads](#)); Learning Management System with a Discussion Board.

**Intercultural Development Continuum Stages:**

- Polarization

- Minimization
- Acceptance

## **AAC&U Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Goals:**

### 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:**

Friendship; Teamwork.

### **Activity Instructions:**

#### **Part 1—Core Qualities of a Successful Professional**

*Facilitator note:* This is an individual assignment you will assign to participants. Participant instructions are listed below for you to copy and paste into email/a Learning Management System and assign to participants. You will need to ensure that the “Core Qualities worksheet” is available to participants as well.

1. Download the “Core Qualities worksheet” and print three blank copies.
2. Identify the five qualities that you personally think are most important to success in a career in your chosen field. Then rank your five qualities from 1 (most important) to 5 (least important).
3. Ask two people working or studying in your field to complete a blank worksheet and participate in a group discussion. At least one of these participants must be from a culture other than your own. The more culturally diverse the group, the better. Avoid including someone from your own culture, and consider diversity in age and gender as well.
4. After each of you have completed a worksheet, spend at least 20 minutes trying to come to an honest consensus about the top three qualities that are important to the career success of someone working in your field. Ask non-judgmental questions and go out of your way to understand the viewpoint of the person or persons from another culture even if you ultimately cannot agree with them.
5. Take turns sharing what experiences helped you to decide on the field in which you are currently studying (e.g., watching a historic event on TV, meeting a hero who works in this field, being inspired by (X), etc.). Additionally, you might talk about someone you know who works in the field and who has positive qualities that you admire.
6. Spend a few moments jotting down notes about your consensus attempts and then proceed to the reflection questions. Take pictures of all three original worksheets filled

out by yourself and your group members, as well as your notes on the consensus discussion. Post these below as pictures in the discussion board, not as attachments.

## Part 2—Reflection Questions:

*Facilitator note:* This is the second part of this individual assignment you will assign to participants. Participant instructions are listed below for you to copy and paste into email/a Learning Management System and assign to participants. You will need to ensure that a discussion board of some kind is available to participants as well as access to the Emotional wheel and Emotion list.

1. Please respond to each set of questions with a short paragraph. Begin each with a description of your interviewee.
  - What core success qualities did you discuss with your cultural partner(s)? What aspect(s) of your cultural partner's explanations was/were the most meaningful for you? What aspect(s) of your cultural partner's explanations was/were hardest for you to grasp and why?
  - What emotions did you feel during your discussion with someone from another culture? What emotions did you observe in your partner? (See "Emotion\_Wheel.jpg." You are not limited to only these.) Was your partner more emotionally expressive or less emotional than you when discussing things, and what do you think accounts for this?
  - Based on your discussion, what insights did you gain or what hypotheses might you make about the cultural world view of others from your partner's home country or culture?
  - What have you learned about the way you react to the sharing of other cultural perspectives, values, and emotions?
2. After your mentor has provided you with feedback, you must take an additional two turns in the discussion to complete this assignment and receive a grade.
3. Please remember to reflect on your current IDI stage and how to move along the continuum when posting your responses and follow up posts.
4. Be sure to respond to your mentor's question about your IDI stage.
5. Be sure to respond to your mentor's question about empathy.