

Introduction:

This activity challenges participants to build empathy and a sense of team identity by listening and sharing. They will ask and answer some questions that help them better understand each other as both individuals and cultural beings.

Note: You can do this activity with any number of participants, but an even number is preferred. It is best done with pairs who will be working together afterwards, for example: lab partners or project teammates.

Background and Information:

This activity was adapted by Kris Acheson-Clair, PhD, CILMAR, from Shelley Prevost's "25 Revealing Questions that Build Better Relationships at Work" (see citation below).

Objectives:

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

1. Develop awareness of others as both individuals and cultural beings.
2. Build empathy and a sense of team identity by listening and sharing.

Time:

15 minutes.

Group Size:

Pairs.

Materials:

Five Nosy Questions Participant Instructions (in [Downloads](#)).

Intercultural Development Continuum Stages:

- Denial
- Minimization
- Acceptance

AAC&U Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Goals:

Openness:

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

Curiosity:

- To ask complex questions about other cultures.
- To seek out and articulate answers to these questions that reflect multiple cultural perspectives.

Other Skills:

Friendship, Teamwork

Activity Instructions:

1. Divide students into pairs and present Participant Instructions to each pair. Tell students that in a recent study of Purdue Engineering students, one complaint students made was that they were given no time to get to know people they were expected to work with in teams. This activity is a rare opportunity for partners to do just that. Explain that they will have 10 minutes to ask each other the questions on the Participant Instructions (and are expected to use all this time for this purpose).
2. After 10 minutes have elapsed, debrief students on their conversations with questions such as the following:
 - What was this experience of getting to know your partner like? How did it make you feel?
 - What did you learn about your partner and/or yourself from this activity?
 - How might your teamwork in this lab be impacted by knowing these things about your partner?
3. If they don't come up naturally in the debriefing, emphasize the following learning points:
 - In institutional settings, we often don't get the opportunity to and/or feel comfortable talking to colleagues about things that really matter.
 - Getting to know our teammates both as individuals and as members of cultural groups can help teams function more effectively.

Related Tools:

Similar tools:

- [25 Questions](#)
- [Beach Ball Icebreaker](#)
- [Conversation Starters](#)
- [Cultural Question Jar](#)
- [Different Similarities](#)
- [Digging Deeper Diversity Questions](#)
- [Effective Listening Inventory](#)
- [Life Without Questions or No Questions, Please!, A](#)
- [Listening Deeply for Values](#)
- [Similarities and Differences](#)