

Introduction:

For this activity, participants will read a summary (in [Downloads](#)) of Philipsen's article (citation below and full article linked in [Links](#)) and discuss the case studies presented in the summary. Participants will also discuss their own experiences in "finding your feet" in unfamiliar cultural contexts. Finally, participants will explore ways in which they can apply the principles of "finding your feet" and offer their own suggestions about how to gain a better understanding of communication in specific contexts.

Objectives:

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

1. Discuss the case studies presented in the summary.
2. Share their own experiences of "finding your feet" in the cultural contexts they have encountered.
3. Apply the principles of "finding your feet" as explained in the summary.
4. Generate advice and suggestions about how to gain a better understanding of communication in specific contexts.

Time:

1 hour.

Group Size:

Small Group.

Materials:

Participant Instructions; Summary of Some Thoughts on How to Approach Finding One's Feet (both in [Downloads](#)).

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.

Activity Instructions:

1. Pass out copies or share a digital copy of the summary of the article with participants and take 15 minutes to read, either out loud as a group or encouraging participants to read silently to themselves (depending on what is best for your group).
2. In a small group discussion (15 minutes), talk about the stories of Reiko and Rachel in the summary. Ask:
 - Which case study resonated with you more? Explain.
 - What aspects of both case studies could you relate to? Why?
 - What aspects of either case study did you find it difficult to relate to? Why?
3. Instruct small groups to now discuss a time when they had to “find their feet” in a specific context (15 minutes). Ask:
 - What challenges did you face?
 - Did you feel misunderstood, or did you misunderstand others?
 - Did you find yourself using stereotypes to interpret what happened?
 - How can using observation lead to a more nuanced interpretation?
 - What are the potential risks of using observation as your primary investigative strategy?
4. Whole group discussion (15 minutes). Instruct participants to report insights they gained from their small group discussion. Ask:
 - What were your biggest take-aways from this reading?
 - When might you find Philipsen's advice useful?
 - What advice of your own do you have to add?