

OBSERVING THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

Assessment

In this exercise you will build awareness by using your senses to observe the local environment. Listen carefully to what the local nationals say and take note on how you feel. Observe differences between what you would expect to see in your own culture and what you are actually seeing in your new location.

COMMUNICATION

- How do people greet each other in the morning/evening? How do they dress?
- What is the protocol for going in and out of someone's space, home or office?
- Do people maintain eye contact when they talk?
- How far apart do people stand when having a conversation?

BEHAVIORS

- Do people come to work on time? Who does and who doesn't?
- What happens when someone who is talking to someone else gets a telephone call, an email or is interrupted?
- What does a third person do when approaching two others who are already in conversation?
- Do meetings start on time, go as planned, is there an agenda, how long do meetings last?
- How long do people with appointments have to wait?

POWER

- How do subordinates treat their superiors?
- How do superiors treat subordinates?
- Do you see evidence of delegating authority or holding on to it?
- Do you see evidence of taking initiative, or just waiting for instruction?
- Whom do people dine with or gather with? Do they eat with their peers, or do manager and leaders mix with everyone?

CONFLICT

- How is conflict handled?
- How is disagreement expressed?
- How is bad news or a negative concern communicated?
- How important does saving face seem to be?
- Are people generally direct or indirect in their conversations?
- Is communication face-to-face?



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NORMS

- When people interact, do they get to the task right away or follow general friendly discussions prior to getting to the thought or business?
- Do people work closely together or independently?
- Are women treated differently from men? If so, in what way?
- What kind of behaviors seem to be rewarded? What are people praised for?
- What does the prevailing attitude seem to be about rules and procedures and the need to follow them?

WHAT MAJOR DIFFERENCES DO YOU SEE THAT ARE DIFFERENT THAN WHAT YOU MAY BE USED TO?

There is no good, bad, or wrong here, just differences.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



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