

IO3 VAMOS TRAINING COURSE

Expert in migrants' labour and social inclusion

MODULE: 1 SOCIAL COMPETENCES & COMMUNICATION

Unit 1_ Problem solving



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MODULE: 1 SOCIAL COMPETENCES & COMMUNICATION



Unit 1: Problem solving

BY the end of this Unit you should

01

Properly identify and define problems

02

Identify Intercultural conflicts

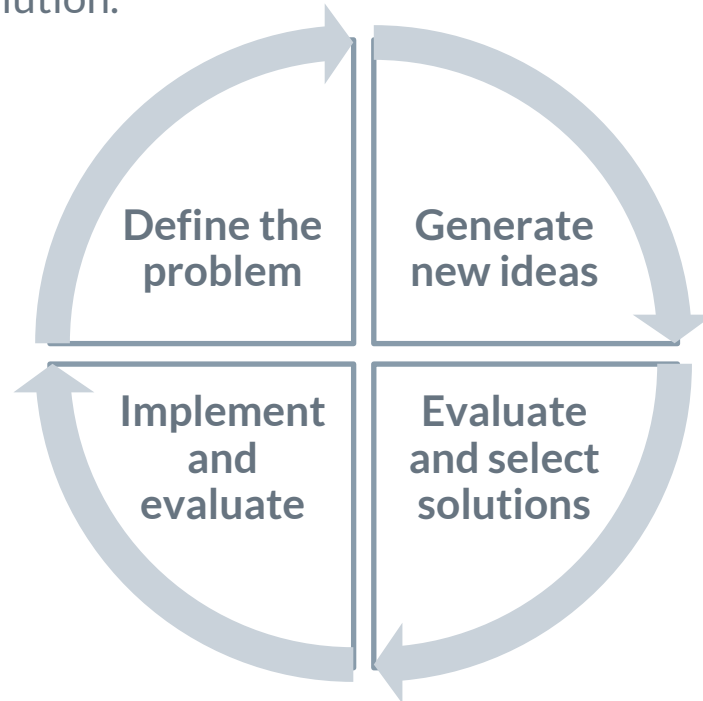
03

Understand culture shock and identity threat concepts

UNIT 1
GOALS

Problem solving

Problem solving is the act of defining a problem; determining the cause of the problem; identifying, prioritizing, and selecting alternatives for a solution; and implementing a solution.



Problem solving

Concepts and theories

Why is conflict in an intercultural situation more stressful and difficult to manage?

Understanding conflict as culture specific behaviour helps to explain why these can be handled and perceived so very differently.

Managing conflict situations is:

- understanding yourself (how you tend to react in a stressful conflict situation)
- understanding the person in front of you and being able to analyse his/her reaction.

In really stressful situations, the best of us might forget all his/her good intentions and patience and sometimes we might be surprised by our own behaviour.

Problem solving

In conflict situations:

- ✓ it is important to know the different styles of conflict behaviour that can occur in any conflict situation.
- ✓ the cultural aspect must be taken into consideration as an additional difficulty to managing conflict.
- ✓ there are strategies to manage (intercultural) conflicts that will help you to interpret, evaluate and explain what is happening in a given conflict situation and react adequately.

Intercultural conflict: Understanding culture shock and identity threat

- A person can experience **culture shock** in an interaction with another person or object from another cultural setting in a specific space and time. The interaction provokes a negative or positive cognitive and affective reaction, a negative representation of oneself, a feeling of loss of reference points and a lack of approval that can trigger uneasiness and anger.
- In a moment of culture shock, you realise your own limits of tolerance and your own cultural determinations, and this can provoke an intercultural conflict situation.
- Culture shock is a process of several cognitive steps that can take place over a period of several days or weeks when a person, for example a newcomer, arrives in the host country.

- In social the social field*, professionals often judge this kind of reaction as unprofessional and try to compensate for the uneasiness either by a very protective attitude or by adopting an authoritarian posture.
- “Migration profoundly affects people both on an individual and a collective level and is not confined merely to considerations of competing categories of identification. It may also involve palpable challenges to many of the usual bases for identity definition: interpersonal relationships, material possessions, normative beliefs, and emotions.”
- Identity threat and culture shock are human reactions to the experience of difference that questions our beliefs, values and identity in a radical and sometimes violent manner. They can be strong vectors in intercultural conflicts and understanding them can help managing intercultural conflict situations. Treating this experience in an informed way, the culture shock can even become a very effective training method.

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Activity for self-reflection:

- ▶ Think of (intercultural) situations, at workplace, that had high conflict potential and where it was necessary that you acted as a negotiator with your skills developed.
 - What was the situation?
 - What exactly was the intercultural conflict in this situation?
 - How did you solve the conflict?
 - Which skills did you use to manage the conflict situation and solve the problem?

- ▶ Note down your thoughts and reflection on these questions and think for yourself how you used your conflict solving skills, what worked out well and what you need to improve for solving future (intercultural) conflicts.



Bibliography:

- ▷ Dice Training Manual <https://cesie.org/en/resources/dice-training-manual/>
- ▷ <https://asq.org/quality-resources/problem-solving>
- ▷ Richter, H. P. (1983). Problem-solving for conflict management. Project Management Quarterly, 14(2), 82-93.



Thanks!

