

Application of Cultural Humility as a Proposal Professional

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David Luong is a seasoned Proposal Development Writer currently contributing his expertise to Centene. With over 17 years of experience in the proposal preparation industry, David has cultivated a wealth of knowledge across diverse sectors such as GovTech, biometrics, and health care. His professional journey reflects a commitment to collaboration, having engaged with a variety of colleagues and workforces. Leveraging his extensive background, David skillfully applies Cultural Humility practices to enhance proposal team management, fostering an inclusive and dynamic work environment.

How do you define yourself?

Chinese American
American Born Chinese (ABC), First Generation

Californian
(San Gabriel Valley 4 Life!)

Trekkie

A group of five diverse professionals (three men and two women) are gathered around a table in a modern office setting, engaged in a collaborative meeting. They are looking at documents and talking. The entire image has a blue color overlay.

Cultural Humility

The lifelong commitment to self-evaluation and critique, whereby the individual not only learns about another's culture, but also starts with an examination of their own beliefs and cultural identities.

Cultural humility also recognizes power dynamics and imbalances and includes a desire to fix those power imbalances to develop partnerships with people and groups who advocate for others.

Cultural Humility: Application for Proposal Professionals

Why do I need it?

- ▶ Encourages critical thinking about one's own interactions
- ▶ Articulates one's own thoughts by creating a cultural framework
- ▶ Allows for the exploration of different viewpoints

When will I need it?

- ▶ At the workplace
- ▶ At home
- ▶ Among friends and strangers
- ▶ In any social situation

How do I apply it?

- ▶ Identifying relevant social situations
- ▶ Identifying differences within a framework of cultural differences
- ▶ Identifying one's own unconscious bias

Scenario

You are interacting with a group of coworkers on a large project. As a part of the project, you are providing mutual feedback.

All but one of your coworkers looks you in the eye as they express their concerns and feedback on the project.

Questions

- ▶ How would you feel in this scenario?
- ▶ What would you do in this scenario?

Identifying Opportunities for Cultural Humility

How did bias factor into how you felt? How did it factor into how you reacted?

- ▶ Everyone brings bias into their social interactions (customs, protocol, and other things we call “normal” behavior).
- ▶ Not a matter of which values are “right” or “wrong”

Identifying Opportunities for Cultural Humility (continued)

- ▶ Value Differences vs. Cultural Differences
 - ▶ My values are what I believe in; my culture is how I express it.
 - ▶ Example: Respect is a shared value across multiple cultures; expression of respect varies from culture-to-culture.

- ▶ Identifying our own bias helps us approach complex social situations with openness and adaptability.



How would you approach the previous scenario differently?

You are interacting with a group of coworkers on a large project. As a part of the project, you are providing mutual feedback.

All but one of your coworkers looks you in the eye as they express their concerns and feedback on the project.

A photograph of three business professionals in an office setting, overlaid with a blue tint. A man in a suit is on the left, a man in a suit and vest is in the center, and a woman in a blazer is on the right. They appear to be in a conversation. The text 'Personal Experiences?' is centered over the image.

Personal Experiences?

Key Attributes of Cultural Humility*

- ▶ Openness
- ▶ Self-Reflection/Awareness
- ▶ Lifelong learning
- ▶ Institutional accountability
- ▶ Empathy and compassion
- ▶ To be “other-oriented”
- ▶ Acknowledging power imbalances and balancing power imbalances

*Wheeler, Michael. “Cultural Competence and Cultural Humility A Literature Review for Understanding and Action.” tripartners.com, March 20, 2018.

Cultural humility is more than just self-awareness, but requires one to step back to understand one's own assumptions, biases and values (Kumagai & Lypson, 2009).





Summary

- All of us have bias that we carry with us from the cultures we identify with/come from.
- Cultural Humility is the practice of self-reflection and identification of those bias.
- In identifying our bias, we can approach future interactions with openness and adaptability.
- This is especially important for proposal professionals since our role means we deal with a diverse group of colleagues and collaborators.

Questions?
