

Diversity:

Overview Awareness

Presentation Guide

**Patreese D. Ingram
Department of Agricultural and Extension Education
The Pennsylvania State University**

Diversity: Overview Awareness is designed for human service professionals who are interested in facilitating training on understanding diversity and improving intergroup relations. This packet is intended to provide an introductory overview presentation of the concept of cultural diversity in a “ready to pick up and use” format. The materials are suitable for adults, but may, with adjustment, be used with teens.

Although a suggested “script” is provided, you should change the wording to more appropriately fit your particular audience. Adjust use of the activities to fit your time frame. Handouts and transparency masters are ready for duplication. Additional handouts are included to use either as take-home handouts or as workshop discussion pieces.

Please direct any suggestions or comments regarding use of these materials to Patreese D. Ingram at (814) 863-7439 or to the address listed below.

*Department of Agricultural and Extension Education
412 Agricultural Administration Building,
University Park, PA 16803*

*Patreese D. Ingram, Ed.D
Assistant Professor, Agricultural & Extension Education
The Pennsylvania State University*

Presentation Objectives

- To increase awareness of the various dimensions of diversity.
- To examine one's own cultural identity and how that identity impacts relationships with others.
- To heighten awareness of one's own attitudes, perceptions and feelings regarding various aspects of diversity.
- To make a commitment to increase understanding of diversity issues.

Suggestions for the Presenter:

1. Adapt the script to fit the age and background of your audience.
2. Consider the suggestions and instructions included in boxed format throughout the guide.
3. Acknowledge all responses from participants, even if you personally disagree with the response.
4. Share personal examples of the concepts when possible.

What Is Diversity?

“Just what is diversity?” Let’s start with the short answer - differences. Human diversity means differences in people. It’s all of us in our rich and infinite variety.

Why Do We Need To Be Concerned About Diversity?

During recent years, diversity has become a popular topic. Starting in the 1980’s Fortune 500 corporations, government agencies at the local, county, state and national levels, and large and small non-profit organizations have all been doing “diversity work.” (National Multicultural Institute, 1994) Today units on diversity are being added to elementary and secondary school curricula, and courses which focus on diversity are being offered on college campuses. On some campuses, diversity-related courses are a requirement for graduation.

Diversity became an issue with the development of three powerful trends in our society:

- TREND 1.** The global market in which American corporations must now do business became highly competitive.
- TREND 2.** The makeup of the United States population began changing dramatically.
- TREND 3.** Individuals began to celebrate their differences instead of compromising their uniqueness to “fit in.”

TREND 1: THE GLOBAL MARKET

We have all heard the expression that our world is shrinking. The strength of our economy depends, to a large extent, on our ability to do business with countries in other parts of the world. To stay competitive in the world market, the United States must design products which meet the needs of people from other cultures. In addition, we must develop strategies for marketing those products to other countries. Such activities bring diverse peoples to the planning and negotiating table. If we want to sell our products and make profitable business deals with people from other countries, it only makes good business sense to develop an understanding and appreciation of their cultures - language, needs, wants, and customs.

We cannot afford to make mistakes like Chevrolet made when it first tried to sell the Chevy Nova in Spanish speaking countries. "No Va" means "It does not go" in Spanish. Needless to say, the Nova never sold well in Spanish speaking countries. And when Pepsi started marketing its products in China a few years back, the Chinese translated the slogan, "Pepsi brings you back to life" pretty literally. The slogan in Chinese really meant, "Pepsi brings your ancestors back from the grave."

Currently countries with the biggest growth potential are the developing nations of Asia. We have RJR Nabisco and Eli Lilly putting up plants in China; Owens-Corning Fiberglass and IBM in India; and AT&T in Indonesia, to name a few. Other Asian countries with growing economies include Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand.

Additionally, United States corporations increasingly see Mexico, our neighbor to the South, as an attractive production base for sales to the rest of Latin America.

Note: Today, 4 out of every 5 new jobs are generated as a direct result of foreign trade.

96% of the world's consumers live outside of the United States!

TREND 2: CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

If Current Trends Continue:

By the Year 2,000

- 1 in every 3 Americans will be a person of color.

This is primarily due to trends in immigration and birth rates. Currently in California, Whites account for only 58% of the state's population. And in San Jose, the Vietnamese surname Nguyen outnumbers Jones in the telephone directory 14 columns to 8. The *fastest* growing race groups will continue to be the Asian and Pacific Islander population. The Hispanic/Latino population will be the *largest* growing group.

(New York Times Education Review, Spring 1990; Time, April 9, 1990)

- 85% of new entrants into the labor force will be women and "people of color."

50% will be women; 12% will be African Americans; 10% will be Hispanics/Latinos; 4% will be Asians.

(Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1989; Handbook of Labor Statistics, Bulletin 2340, 1989; Workforce 2000, U. S. Department of Labor, 1987)

- Public school population will be more than one-third minority (while 92% of teachers will be White.)

(New York Times Education Review, Spring, 1990; Reiff, J. C. & Cannella, G. S., 1992)

Note: The Los Angeles Schools alone encompass students who speak more than 100 languages. Report cards are printed in English, Spanish, Japanese, Chinese, Korean, and Armenian

- African Americans and Hispanic/Latinos will be the majority population in nearly one-third of the nation's 50 largest cities.

Show Overhead # 3

Between 1990 and 2030

- The Hispanic/Latino population in the U.S. will increase by 187%
- The Asian American population will increase by 79%
- The African American population will increase by 68%
- The Caucasian population will increase by 25%
(Souser, 1993)

By the year 2050

- Less than 53% of the population is expected to be White.
16% would be African American, 23% of Hispanic origin, 10% Asian and Pacific Islander; and 1% American Indian, Eskimo, and Aleut.
- By 2056 people of color are expected to become the new majority.

Show Overhead # 4

Currently

- There are 45 million physically challenged individuals in this nation, making them the largest minority group. More are entering the workplace than in the past.
(Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, 1998)
- It is estimated that 10% of the population are gay/lesbians.
(Dr. Ellen Abell, Ed.D., of Abell Training and Consultation)
- One-fourth of the population is over 50 with those 65 and older outnumbering teenagers. Those 75 and older are the fastest growing age group.
The median age of the population will continue to rise, driven by aging of the population born during the Baby Boom after World War II (1946 to 1964).

- 1 in every 7 Americans speaks a language other than English at home.

(Associated Press, 1993)

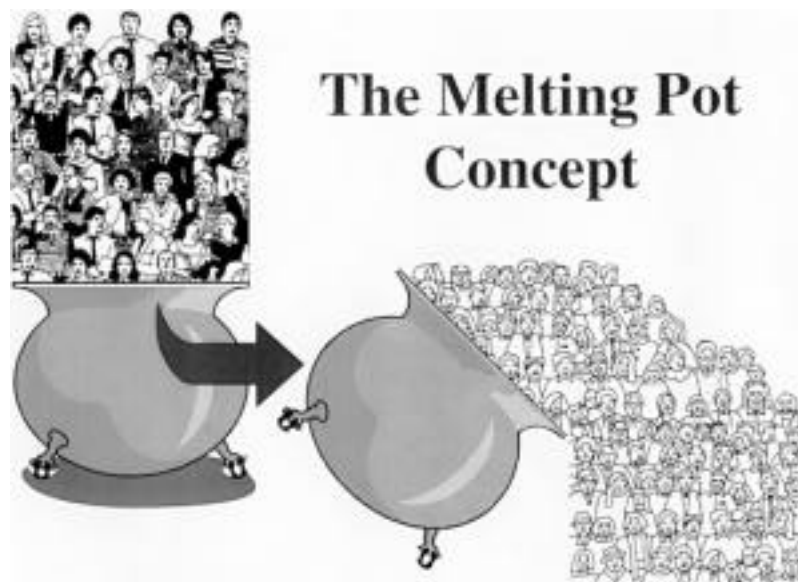
- People of color as a group now buy more than any of the countries with which the U.S. trades.

(Population Reference Bureau)

TREND 3: CHANGING CONCEPT OF AMERICA

Show Overhead # 5

Traditionally, the American approach to diversity has been assimilation. The United States has been called the “melting pot” society. Newcomers to this country were expected to adapt their “old world” values and culture in exchange for the values and lifestyles of the “new world.” Cultural differences were metaphorically placed into a big pot where they were “melted” together and homogenized. It was assumed that the result of the “melting pot” would be one culture, language, and lifestyle for everyone in this country.



The problem with the “melting pot” approach is that it equates *difference* with *deficiency*.

TREND 3: CHANGING CONCEPT OF AMERICA

Show Overhead # 6

Today, the terms “mosaic” society, “tossed salad” and "symphony orchestra" are replacing the “melting pot” concept. In a “mosaic” society individuals maintain their own cultural patterns, such as language, lifestyle, and religious practices. Differences are valued and appreciated, as when countless colored stones join together to form a mosaic, or when carrots, lettuce, cucumbers, green pepper and tomatoes maintain their shapes, color, and taste in a tossed salad. As a result, individuals can be proud of their cultural heritage and uniqueness, instead of being ashamed of their differences.

In fact, with the wide variety of people now living in this country, it is difficult to identify a single distinctive American culture. It may be more appropriate to think of the United States as having a giant *multiculture*.

A TOSSED SALAD

- not a melting pot



Dimensions Of Diversity

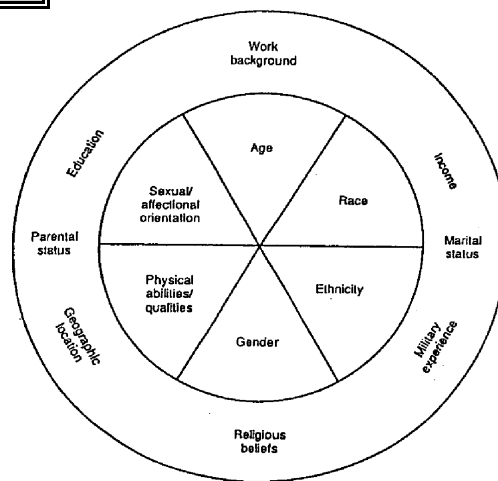
Diversity includes everyone. There are many ways in which people differ from one another. In other words, there are many ***Dimensions of Diversity***. What are some dimensions of diversity? Let's create a list.

Responses might include the following:

Gender	Geographic Location	Sexual Orientation
Race	Ableness	Veteran Status
Ethnicity	Religious Beliefs	Education
Age	Marital Status	Occupation
Income	Parental Status	Language
Family Structure		

As we can see, diversity is very broad in scope. However, some dimensions of diversity have a more important impact than others on the opportunities which people have. The major dimensions of diversity can be categorized as ***primary*** and ***secondary*** dimensions.

Show Overhead # 7



Primary and Secondary Dimensions of Diversity

*Workforce America!
Managing Employee Diversity
as a Vital Resource

Overhead # 6

The ***primary*** dimensions are either unalterable or very difficult to change and are extremely powerful in their effect. The ***secondary*** dimensions are important in shaping us, but we have some measure of control over them.

How Important Are Various Dimensions of Diversity?

Jane Elsea in her book *The 4 Minute Sell*, lists the nine most important things noticed about people in our society. What would you think those nine things are?

Entertain responses

Show Overhead #8

Jane Elsea, in her book *The 4 Minute Sell*, tells us that the nine most important things noticed about people in our society, in order of importance, are the following:

1. Skin color
2. Gender
3. Age
4. Appearance
5. Facial Expressions
6. Eye contact
7. Movement
8. Personal Space
9. Touch

Upon encountering one another, we notice, make assessments, and make decisions about how to interact with that individual based on these nine factors. These reactions, based on split-second assessments of others, influence our relationships.

Distribute Handout # 1

Now consider your own community or workplace. How important are these differences? Take a few minutes to complete the Dimensions of Diversity handout and rate how important you think these differences are to people in your community or workplace.

Entertain some examples of why participants gave the ratings they gave. Discuss briefly. Encourage each participant to again rate the list, at a later time, according to his/her membership in the different groups of which he or she is affiliated.

The Past/The Future

We generally tend to have a natural affinity to those people with whom we have many dimensions in common. Likewise, we tend to feel less comfortable with people with whom we have few dimensions in common. When you think about your closest friends, are they similar to you or very different from you?

In the past, it was pretty likely that the people who lived in our neighborhoods, the children we went to school with, the people we worked and did business with, and the people we worshipped with were people who shared many of the same dimensions of diversity as our own. In most aspects of our lives, the people we interacted with were very similar to ourselves.

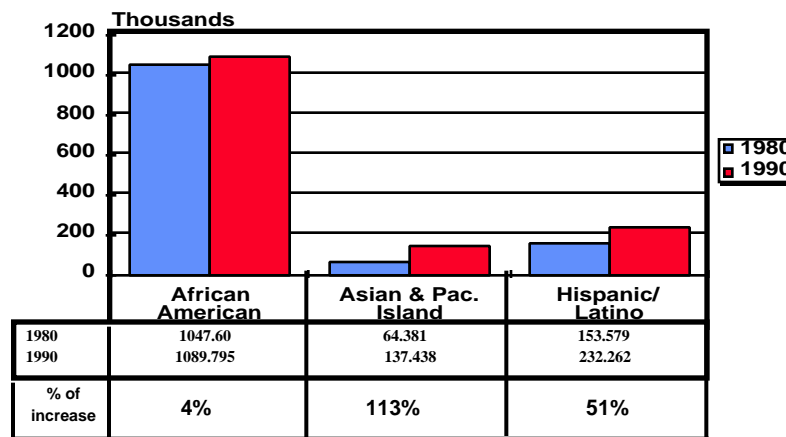
However, as our communities and workplaces become increasingly more diverse, understanding the perspectives of diversity will be an important requirement for relating to, and implementing effective programs that meet the needs of, diverse community members. Your community may or may not be currently experiencing changes in its population. However, our youth are more likely today than in the past, to face the challenges of interacting with and working with people different than themselves. We must help ourselves, our community members and our youth understand, accept and value human differences.

The following summarize some of the changing demographics in Pennsylvania:

Show Overhead # 9

Changing Pennsylvania Demographics - (One Dimension of Diversity)

Ethnic Population in Pennsylvania 1980 and 1990



Note: The white non-Hispanic population in PA was 10,575,827 in 1980 and 10,422,058 in 1990 - representing a decrease of 1.5%.

Between 1980 and 1990:

The African American population in PA increased by 4%

The Hispanic/Latino population increased by 51%

The Asian/Pacific Islander population more than doubled

Culture

It is difficult to have a discussion about human diversity without including the concept of culture.

Show Overhead # 10

What Is Culture?

Culture is the totality of values, beliefs, and behaviors common to a large group of people. A culture may include shared language and folklore, ideas and thinking patterns, and communication styles - the “truths” accepted by members of the group. Members of a culture have similar expectations of life.

(Tiedt & Tiedt (1995). *Multicultural Teaching*, 4th ed., Boston: Allyn & Bacon).

Show Overhead # 11

Further, **Culture** can be defined as the body of learned beliefs, traditions, principles and guides for behavior that are shared among members of a particular group. Culture serves as a road map for both perceiving and interacting with the world.

Show Overhead # 12

Another way we can define culture is to say that culture is the behavioral software “that programs us all.”

- Culture determines our behavior and attitudes
- No one is culture free
- Most cultural rules are never written
- We interpret other people’s behavior through our own cultural software

Psychologists say we are, to a large extent, “culturally programmed” by the age of 3!

Culture Influences Our Lives

Let's take some time to engage in an activity called, "*What Do You Know or What Have You Heard?*" (Refer to directions included in the Pennsylvania State University Extension publication, Diversity Activities for Youth and Adults).

Where Did We Receive Our Cultural Programming?

Where did we learn our values, beliefs, attitudes, patterns of thinking, and acting? Each of us is born into a culture. Our beliefs begin with those of our family, but they continue to be shaped by all of our experiences after birth. For the most part, family attitudes, beliefs, languages, and other behaviors are accepted without question.

Distribute Handout # 2
Show Overhead # 13

Take a minute or so to list on the handout some of the influences on your cultural programming? In the outside circles, write various influences on your cultural programming.

YOUR CULTURAL PROGRAMMING

Directions: In each circle write one of the sources of your cultural programming. Then next to each circle write the most important rules, norms, and values you learned from that source.

1. Which sources were most important in your cultural programming?
2. Were there other sources you could have listed?

Adapted from Gardenswartz, L. & Rowe, A. (1993). *Managing Diversity: A Complete Desk Reference and Planning Guide*. New York: Irwin.

Overhead #12

Responses may include the following:

family	economic status	ethnicity	neighbors
church	media	travel	age
education	work	spouse	
friends	geographic location	other relatives	

Examples of Cultural Programming

One example of my cultural programming is

Share a personal/family example - a belief, value, attitude, or behavior that is a part of your cultural programming.

What are some examples of your cultural programming?

Entertain responses from several participants. Some examples may include:

Cutting hair on the full moon

Getting married while the clock is on the upside of the hour, not while it is on the downside of the hour

How many of you can finish these statements?

You can't teach an old dog *(new tricks)*

Big boys don't *(don't cry)*

You can lead a horse to water, but ... *(you can't make him drink)*

If you lay down with dogs, *(you will get up with flies)*

These represent cultural attitudes which are, in some cases, inaccurate.

Cultural Filters - "On Automatic"

Because each of us is different, we see and interpret behavior through our own cultural filter. One effect of our cultural programming is that it puts us "on automatic."

Show Overhead # 14

When we were children learning about the world, some of the messages we received about people who are different from us were misinformation. Some of these messages came from our parents, friends, teachers, and others. These people did not *intend* to feed us misinformation. They were simply passing on the messages that had been passed down to them. Some of the messages we received came from people. Some of the messages came from the media - such as TV and textbooks.

Some of the misinformation constituted stereotypes - like the sentences we finished a few minutes ago (You can't teach an old dog new tricks) and the lists we made earlier. The stereotypes became "mental tapes" that affected what we thought and how we felt about people who were different from ourselves. Those tapes also affected how we responded to people who were different from us. Those responses became automatic. And as adults, most of us are still on automatic.

Show Overhead # 15

When we stereotype, we place a person in a particular "mental file," not based on information gained through knowledge about or personal experience of the particular person. Rather, we assign the person to a "mental file" based on what we believe about a group to which the person belongs.

Show Overhead # 16

Once learned, those stereotypes are called up instantly by our brain's Reticular Activating System (RAS). Stereotypes exist for every group of people imaginable. Even though we may not like to admit that we stereotype people, we *all* do it. Stereotyping makes it easier to function in a world filled with unknowns. Stereotypes help us organize our thinking and manage massive amounts of information. We classify the infinite variety of human beings into a convenient handful of "types." Once in place, stereotypes are difficult to undo. It's hard to get off "automatic".

Developing Diversity Competence

To help us move “off automatic” and begin to value differences, we need to develop Diversity Competence. Diversity Competence consists of three areas:

Show Overhead # 17

Awareness

Knowledge

Skills

Awareness

- Recognizing differences as diversity rather than abnormal behavior or inappropriate responses to the environment
- Respecting the benefits of diverse values and behaviors to people and to the organization
- Accepting that each culture finds some values more important and some behaviors more desirable than others
- Understanding the effect that historic distrust has on present-day interactions
- Having a clear sense of your individual culture
- Understanding how the culture of your organization impacts those whose culture is different
- Recognizing the similarities that are shared across the “human culture,” regardless as to the differences that exist among individual cultures and groups. These include, but are not limited to: desire for safety, good health, education and well-being of our children, love and belongingness, self esteem (feeling of worthiness), and the ability to pursue and achieve our potential.

Knowledge

- Learning factual information about other cultures and groups with different backgrounds

Skills

- Developing skills for cross-cultural communication
- Developing skills in working effectively with people from different backgrounds
- Developing problem-solving abilities
- Developing skills in conflict management
- Identifying effective outreach strategies to culturally diverse communities

Commitment To Diversity

Developing Diversity Competence is not a short term venture. But you can get started today (tonight) by making a commitment to do one thing within the next 30 days to increase your understanding of diversity.

Distribute Handout # 3

Review the steps listed on the handout with participants and facilitate their completion of this activity.