

Stages of Cultural Competence*

adapted for use by Michigan State University Extension

1. **Cultural Destructiveness:**
Attitudes, policies and practices that are destructive to other cultures: dehumanizing of other people, assumptions of superiority.
2. **Cultural Incapacity:**
This includes unintentional cultural destructiveness, bias, paternalism, ignorance and/or fear.
3. **Cultural Blindness:**
Involves the philosophy of being unbiased, belief that culture, class or color makes no difference, well-intentioned but ethnocentric
4. **Cultural Pre-competence:**
Realization of weaknesses and gaps that are missing in working with other cultures; desire for inclusion; commitment to civil rights; implementation of training; danger of sense of false accomplishment and tokenism.
5. **Basic Cultural Competence:**
Acceptance and respect for differences; continual inquiry about other cultures; expansion of knowledge; hiring of diverse staff.
6. **Advanced Cultural Competence:**
Cultures are held in high esteem; responsibility is taken for constant development of new knowledge and approaches to interaction; assumes responsibility to transfer skills to others; cultural competence is advocated with all systems and organizations.

*Competence is defined as “having requisite, adequate ability, and qualities”. Cultural Competency refers to a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes and practices that come together in a system, agency or professional that enables that unit to work effectively in interactions with populations whose cultures or language is different.