

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP LUNCH: "Ethnicity in Our Community"

April 20 - Intercultural Competency

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Annique's presentation assisted the audience in understanding culture and intercultural and her belief that it all starts with self.

The cultural iceberg visually demonstrated what makes up a person's cultural identity:

- The top part of the iceberg that can be seen represents characteristics which are apparent to the casual observer
- The iceberg portion that is just below the surface represents how attitudes are reflected in specific situations in daily life such as working or socializing
- The most submerged part of the iceberg are the core values which are learned ideas of what is considered good or bad, desirable and undesirable, acceptable and unacceptable

Cultural means aspects of identity, including language, socio-economic status, gender, attitudes and core values. Intercultural is the interface between two or more individuals with differing cultural maps.

To develop interculturality, a person needs to identify their own cultural patterns, acknowledge cultural patterns of others and learn to adapt across cultures. This is important because in today's world there is more and more contact with people who are culturally different. We navigate differences and communicate across cultures in order to enhance effectiveness of interactions. This enhances productivity in teams and it is becoming a survival issue.

There are stages along the intercultural development continuum. These include and are defined as follows:

- Monocultural Mindset – There is a certain denial in that a person may recognize observable cultural differences but may not notice deeper ones. "As long as they all speak English there will be no problem."
- Polarization means that people view differences in terms of "us" and "them".
- Minimization highlights cultural commonality and universal values and principles that may mask deeper recognition/appreciation of differences. "I don't see differences in people, whether it be color, gender, etc. We are all just people."

- Intercultural Mindsets begin with acceptance, “Where can I learn about other cultural groups that exist in my community?”
- The final step is adaptation which is a shifting of cultural perspectives and changing behavior in culturally appropriate and authentic ways.

Annique closed the presentation with a list of “What Can I Do?”

- Who am I as a cultural being? How do I identify?
- Seek out opportunities for meaningful interactions with other cultural partners
- Participate in facilitated multicultural group discussions
- Participate in activities that relate to real-life situations
- “Prep and Process”
- Reflect and Grow
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She works to make a difference by insuring that Drake is the most inclusive community that it can be.

Portions of the presentation were from training created by Dr. Janet Bennett, the executive director and co-founder of the Intercultural Communication Institute (ICI) and the ICI director of the Master of Arts in Intercultural Relations program at Portland State University.