

CIVET Intercultural training of trainers

Role playing scenarios

Following below you can find proposed scenarios for role playing activities to try out during the workshop as well as with your trainees during training activities you are involved in.

Scenario 1

In this role play the key issue is religion. More specifically it is a case in which an important religious habit of an immigrant may prove to be a restriction in his sociability and cause problems between him and his colleagues. Target of this role play is to examine ways in order to handle the problem.

Raul is a 22 years old man from Syria. The last 4 months he lives as an immigrant in the Italian city Bari. After looking hard for a job, he finally made it and for the last 2 weeks he works in a construction company as a builder. He is very pleased with his job and his supervisor, Giovanni, is also very satisfied. He is trying to bond with his co-workers, although it is not very easy due to language difficulties.

In a few days a big construction that they have been working on is going to be completed and as the supervisor has informed them they are going to have a party at work at the end of their shift. The problem is that for Raul, who is Muslim it is Ramadan (a period of fasting in the Muslim religion, during which people are restraining from food and drink from dawn till sunset). The party is going to be held at 16:00 and therefore Raul is not allowed to eat or drink anything. He is in a dilemma because he wants to be friendly to his co-workers and also stick to his religious habits

(The instructor has to choose two volunteers to perform a dialogue. One should be Raul and the other his supervisor Giovanni. The volunteers should be given the role play script to read for 5 minutes **in order to prepare their dialogue** and then perform the dialogue. After the dialogue all the attendants **should** make their comments and statements. If the target of the role play is not met, the instructor can assist the procedure.)

There follows an example of a possible dialogue:

Raul: Excuse me Giovanni...I want to talk to you about something important.

Giovanni: Ok Raul tell me.

Raul: You see...you know...I am Muslim...

Giovanni: I know Raul, but I don't see why this is a problem.

Raul: No, you don't understand. I am Muslim and this period for us it is Ramadan.

Giovanni: Ah! Ramadan! I think I have heard about it. Is it about lent?

Raul: Yes Ramadan is a period that we are not allowed to eat or drink anything from the morning until the sun sets and because of that...I cannot come to the party

Giovanni: I see...

Raul: I don't want anyone to misunderstand me...I really want to come but it is not proper.

Giovanni: But it is not fair. You and the other guys have worked very hard for this construction and you deserve a party. Are you sure you cannot make an exception?

Raul: Please don't put me in such a difficult position. I want to come to the party and I want to get to know the other guys better but religion is very important to me.

Giovanni: Let me ask you something...you said that you are not allowed to eat or drink until the sun sets correct?

Raul: Yes.

Giovanni: Then there is no problem!

Raul: What do you mean?

Giovanni: I mean that we can easily solve the problem. I can arrange for the party to start at 6 in the afternoon. By that time the sun has set and you can also enjoy!

Raul: Are you sure? Can you so that?

Giovanni: Of course I can. We can work it out.

Raul: Thank you Giovanni. You are very kind.

Through this possible dialogue we can observe that a problem is solved. Raul does not hesitate to share with his supervisor his problem. On the other hand Giovanni, the supervisor, listens to Raul, tries to understand and respects his religious habit. **The dialogue might not conclude into the solution of the problem. In any case trainees have to discuss and analyse the situation.**

Scenario 2

In this role play the key issue is racism and prejudice. It is a case in which the fact that someone looks different keeps other people in a distance. Target of this role play is to understand the root of the problem and work towards its solution.

Abosedede is from Nigeria and has recently moved to the city Patras in Greece. She is 28 years old and a mother of two. She has visited the immigrants office of the municipality of Patras in order to find programs of Greek lessons. She discovered that there are available cooking classes and she got very excited as she likes cooking very much. She figured that even though she does not speak Greek very well, if she gets a certification on cooking she can get a job as well. The cooking classes started and Abosedede is the only African woman in the class. She does not understand Greek very well but she is very willing to learn everything about Greek cooking.

During the classes the students taste each other's food. The class teacher notices that a lot of the other students hesitate to taste Abosedede's food. He wants to create a good atmosphere among the students and so he always tries to set a good example and tastes Abosedede's food first. With every opportunity given he tries to boost her confidence and congratulates her efforts.

(The instructor has to choose two or more volunteers to perform a dialogue. One should be the teacher and others the students of the class. The teacher asks the students to a conversation in order to find out why they are avoiding Abosedede and try to find a solution. The volunteers should be given the role play script to read for 5 minutes **in order to prepare their dialogue** and then perform the dialogue. After the dialogue all the attendants can make their comments and statements. If the target of the role play is not met, the instructor can assist the procedure.

Another possible combination could be to perform a dialogue among the teacher and Abosedede. In this dialogue Abosedede wonders why other students avoid her and asks her teacher to help her).

Scenario 3

In this role play the key issues are habits and tradition. It is a case in which one person's habit is not necessarily known and understood by others of different cultures and can cause problems and misunderstandings. Target of this role play is to understand and overcome the inter cultural differences.

Katerina comes from Greece. She is 28 years old and recently married. Two months ago she and her husband moved to Germany. Her husband speaks German fluently and got easily a job as an electric engineer. She had more difficulties in finding a job. Fortunately she got a job that she really likes in a pastry shop. She is very happy and she is trying to work hard and prove that she can do it.

The last 3 weeks she is in a very difficult position. On the one hand she is very happy as she has figured out she is pregnant. On the other hand her job involves lifting heavy objects and standing up for many hours and she is afraid she might jeopardize her pregnancy. She does not know what to do as in the Greek culture there is a big prejudice in revealing a pregnancy before the 3rd month and so she cannot ask permission to avoid heavy work. From all the people at work Katerina is closer to Gerta because they do exactly the same job and they work very closely. The last few days Gerta seems annoyed because Katerina is avoiding to do specific hard jobs and thus she is doing them. Gerta does not know about the pregnancy and thinks that Katerina is lazy. One day Gerta decides to complain to Katerina.

(The instructor has to choose two volunteers to perform a dialogue. One should be Gerta and the other Katerina. The volunteers should be given the role play script to read for 5 minutes **in order to prepare their dialogue** and then perform the dialogue. After the dialogue all the attendants can make their comments and statements. If the target of the role play is not met, the instructor can assist the procedure.

Another possible combination could be a dialogue between Gerta, Katerina and their supervisor. Gerta is angry with Katerina and complains to the supervisor. The supervisor calls Katerina and the three of them discuss about the problem)

Scenario 4

In this role play the key issue is the meaning and the use of politeness rules among people of different cultures. It is a case in which the lack of knowledge of others politeness rules can be a problem. The target of this role play is to face these differences and find a way of common understanding and respect.

Thomas is British. He is 23 years old. He has just finished his job as a civil engineer and got a job in a construction company. His company has sent him to supervise a big construction in Jiangsu region in China. He has to work very close to a lot of Chinese and therefore his employer arranges for him to attend a Chinese language class.

From the beginning of the lessons he has problems socializing with his classmates and especially his teachers. They act as if they are not comfortable by the way he is referring to them, using their first names, as he would have done among other adult British people. They keep referring to him with his last name and he feels that they are trying to keep a distance. Mr Xie, one of Thomas' teachers is particularly annoyed by this situation and decides to talk to Thomas and ask him to be more polite. At the same time Thomas is very disappointed and sad because he thinks that he cannot fit in.

(The instructor has to choose two volunteers to perform a dialogue. One should be Mr Xie and the other Thomas. The volunteers should be given the role play script to read for 5 minutes **in order to prepare their dialogue** and then perform the dialogue. After the dialogue all the attendants can make their comments and statements. If the target of the role play is not met, the instructor can assist the procedure.

Another possible dialogue can be among Thomas and one of his classmates. Thomas is worried and approaches one of his classmates in his effort to understand why his teacher seems offended and asks for advice)

Scenario 5

In this role play the key issue is terminology. The use of specific professional language can be very hard for an immigrant that does not speak the language fluently. Target of this role play is to investigate ways to minimize this problem.

Fatou is 19 years old and he is from Senegal. His parents have moved to France 2 years ago and as soon as he finished his basic education in Senegal he joined his family in Paris. It is very important for his family to get a job. With the help of a friend he get to work as the assistant of a plumber, a French man called Gerard. His employer gives him a week's trial period in order to decide whether he will hire him or not. Fatou really wants to make it and works very hard.

The problem is that he is not familiar with the jobs technical terminology and he finds it very difficult to understand what his boss tells him to do. He does not even recognize the names of the tools and that makes Gerard angry. He complains to Fatou all the time. Fatou really needs the job and he believes that there should be a way that they can work with Gerard if only they find a way of communication. He decides to talk to his boss before it is too late.

(The instructor has to choose two volunteers to perform a dialogue. One should be Fatou and the other Gerard. The volunteers should be given the role play script to read for 5 minutes **in order to prepare their dialogue** and then perform the dialogue. After the dialogue all the attendants can make their comments and statements. If the target of the role play is not met, the instructor can assist the procedure.

Another possible dialogue could be among Gerard and his friend who introduced Fatou to him. Gerard tells to his friends that he is disappointed with Fatou's work and his friend who has experience in working with immigrants suggests ways to solve this communication problem).

Some extra ideas to create role playing activities:

You can create your own role **playing activities** based on many different issues that can occur. Some interesting issues **could be:**

1. **differences** in the sense of time and punctuality
2. **differences** between family relations among different cultures
3. **different** use of body language
4. **stereotypes** that follow some cultures
5. **differences** in understanding health and hygiene matters