Intercultural Competency

1. What do we mean by intercultural competency or effectiveness (adapted from Dodd, <u>Dynamics</u>, p. 273)? It is a composite of:

    a. Ability to carry out one's assigned task; that is, professional competency and actual job performance.

    b. Ability to interact well, such as with appropriateness, friendliness, and clarity when transferring technical information.

    c. Ability to adjust well by coping effectively with culture stress and dealing with adaptation.

    d. Ability to facilitate adjustment and manage stress for family and significant others.

2. Why do we want to be effective in intercultural communication?

    a. Our ultimate desire is to communicate Christ, and to do so in a cross-cultural setting, we must be effective in intercultural communication.

    b. In the long run, it will also enable us to enjoy our cross-cultural setting, leading to less missionary burn-out and greater longevity in the field.

3. Understanding the process of cultural adjustment as a precursor to understanding success in the process (Furnham and Bochner, <u>Culture Shock</u>, chapters 7-9):

    There have been a number of attempts to explain the stress of psychological adjustment (often referred to as **culture shock**) needed in moving from one culture to another. These can be grouped under two categories:

Model	Theme	Description
Traditional	Grief and Bereavement	Movement as a loss: **grief and bereavement**, which sees migration as the experience of loss; though the theory allows wide variations in the intensity duration and stages of grief it seems unable to account for individuals who experience no negative consequences of grief (p. 175; evaluation on p. 166)
	Fatalism	Movement as loss of personal control over the environment: **fatalism**, which implies that as opposed to people with fatalistic beliefs, those with instrumental beliefs adapt better when migrating. Evidence for this theory is highly equivo-cal, as other cross-cultural studies have shown (p. 175; evaluation on pp. 170-1)
	Selective Migration	Movement as Darwinian evolutionism: **selective migration**, which suggests that the more rigorous and salient the selection procedure for migrants, the better they will be at adapting to the new environment. The theory tends to be non-specific, tautological and very difficult to test (pp. 175-6; evaluation on pp. 172-3)

Model	Theme	Description
	Expectancy-Value	Movement as hoped-for-desires: **expectancy-value**, which suggests that accuracy of a migrant's expectations of life in the new country are directly related to his/her adjustment. However, the theory does not specify which or whether expectations about particular features are more or less important than others. Nor does it explain how unfulfilled expectations lead to poor adjustment (p. 176; evaluation on p. 175)
Recent	Negative Life Events	Culture shock as **negative life-events**, which suggests that it is the experience of *change* and adaptation to new conditions that is stressful and a possible cause of ill health--the greater the change, the more likely or vulnerable is the person to illness. . . . A number of concepts in this literature are important for the theme of culture shock. First, both positive and negative events can cause stress: it is the adjustment to these events that is important. Second, there may be various dimensions of change such as control, desirability and threat which need to be distinguished and which may lead to quite different consequences. Third, the consequences of stress are quite different for different people and it is virtually impossible to predict which person will suffer from precisely which mental or physical illness. Fourth, the effects of change and life-events may be modified, ameliorated or reduced by other factors. (pp. 197-8)
	Reduction in Social Support	Culture shock as **reduction in social support**: the focus of this area is . . . on the provision of various forms of support from established social networks. The idea is simply that support from other people had direct, protective or compensatory effects on mental health and well-being. (p. 198)
	Value Differences	Culture shock as **value differences**: It has often been suggested that a clash of values causes stress which in turn leads to mental illness. However, because of the subtlety and complexity of values, much more work has gone into the description and taxonomizing of these values than in explaining the mechanism whereby clash leads to illness. The descriptive studies are, however, very useful as they provide a 'map' of the major differences, which allows one to get some idea of the amount or degree of difference in values in different migrant or sojourning groups. (pp. 198-99)
	Social Skills Approach	Cross-cultural problems arise because sojourners have **trouble negotiating certain everyday social encounters**. . . . Therefore, it seems necessary to identify the specific social situations which bother a particular sojourner, and then train the person in the skills that are appropriate for effective interaction in those situations.

N.B. Kealey's 1989 study indicates "**that at least some of the individuals who will be ultimately the most successful can also be expected to undergo the most severe acculturative stress.**" (Kealey, "A Study of Cross-Cultural Effectiveness," p. 408; emphasis mine) The rationale: Someone who is finely tuned to his/her context has greater potential to become finely tuned to a new context, but will undergo greater stress in changing their internal "tuning" than someone who is not finely tuned to his/her original context.

4.   There are at least four approaches to understanding intercultural competence:

Factors	Description
Cognitive Aware-ness	Typically stressed in the academic arena, the idea is to prepare the intercultural communicator by giving him/her the theoretical background and cognitive skills necessary to intercultural communication. The focus tends to be on what makes up a culture (in the broadest theoretical sense), and how we should think about the process of communicating in any new culture.

Character Traits	Typically stressed in missionary preparation programs, the idea is centered on developing a model of the character traits of an effective intercultural communicator. This is combined with a program designed to discover of the actual traits of the prospective missionary and see where changes need to be made. As with the cognitive model, the focus is very general, intended to apply across a variety of cultures.
Social Skills	Developed by Furnham and Bochner, this model has as the core idea that the intercultural communicator in the new setting is similar to someone with poorly developed social skills. The focus is on identifying the necessary basic social skills in the particular target context, and then developing a training program which will enable the communicator to gain these skills.
Interactionist	Competency in intercultural communication is related to a cluster of traits and skills, not just to knowledge, character traits, or social skills. It is not just the sum of each skill, but the total interactive complex which accounts for the observed competency.

a. The **cognitive awareness** model:

    i.   Intercultural communication in this model is more or less mental puzzle to be solved. It assumes that any person able to "solve" the puzzle is capable of being a successful intercultural communicator.

    ii.   On the macro level, it is assumed that we need a general awareness of cultural dynamics as well as some type of model of the communication process.

    iii.   On the micro level, it is assumed that we need specific awareness of the specific aspects of cultural dynamics and specific knowledge of the target culture.

    iv.   It is recognized that this must be more than mere academic knowledge--it must be personalized, integrated, and consciously utilized so as to facilitate better intercultural communication.

b. The **character traits** model: This model assumes that the key to intercultural communication is the character traits of the communicator. Several listings of necessary traits (and attitudes) have been proposed. The following chart is a summary of both positive traits to emulate and negative traits to avoid (developed from Dodd, Dynamics, p. 279; Elmer, ; Ruben, "Human Communication"; Barna, "Stumbling Blocks"; Dinges, "Intercultural Competence"; Kealey and Ruben, "Cross-Cultural Personnel Selection"):

Traits for **Effectiveness** (Things to **Emulate**)	Traits for **Ineffectiveness** (Things to **Avoid**)
Higher emphasis on people; less on task; approachable: establishes contact with others easily; intercultural receptivity: interested in people; especially people from other cultures	Insistence on task behavior; self-oriented behavior (many self statements)
Ability to not criticize the host people; shows respect: treats others in ways that make them feel valued; capacity to communicate respect	Ethnocentrism; preconceptions and stereo-types
Tolerance of ambiguity	Intolerance for ambiguity; high anxiety

Traits for **Effectiveness** (Things to **Emulate**)	Traits for **Ineffectiveness** (Things to **Avoid**)
Flexibility; open to culture learning	Rigidity; insistence of adherence to "comfortable" monocultural rules.
Empathy (seen through culturally appropriate means of listening and accurate perceiving of the other's point of view); cultural perspectivism: the capacity to imaginatively enter into another cultural viewpoint; capacity to display empathy	Low empathy; poor listening skills; assuming similarity instead of difference
Openness in communication style; non dogmatic; social openness; the inclination to interact with people regardless of their differences	Less openness, more dogmatism in communication
High cognitive complexity (not quickly judging in black and white terminology; not accepting simplistic stereotypes); capacity to be nonjudgmental	Cognitive simplicity; tendency to evaluate
Good personal relational skills in the home culture; ability to trust others; capacity for turn-taking	Discomfort with personal relations; mistrust
Maintaining a sense of personal control; positive orientation: the expectation that one can be a success living and working in another culture	Feeling out of control; highly fatalistic
Innovativeness; enterprise: the tendency to approach tasks and activities in new and creative ways; venturesome: inclined towards that which is novel or different	Stodginess; lack of innovation
Proper self-esteem, including confidence in our communication skills; forthrightness: acts and speaks out readily; social confidence: tends to be self-assured	Wrong self-esteem (in either direction)
Perseverance: the tendency to remain in a situation and feel positive about it even in the face of some difficulties	Giving up when difficulties arise
Capacity to personalize one's knowledge and perceptions	Not integrating knowledge into the local scene

Key in both columns is how the host culture communicates the attitudes or values presented. For example, in Japan you should not try to make excuses for why something did not work, as that is self-centered behavior. Rather, a simply apology is better.

c. The **social skills** model (Furnham and Bochner, Culture Shock, pp. 7-15):

The basic thesis of the book is that learning to live in a new culture should be considered the same as learning how to live in one's own culture (e.g., socialization), and that preparing people to live in another culture should be thought of along socialization lines:

i. It was Argyle and Kendon (1967) who first suggested that the behavior of people interacting with one another can be regarded as a mutually organized, skilled

performance. Interpersonal difficulties arise when this performance breaks down or cannot be initiated in the first place. Subsequent empirical research has identified some of the interpersonal skills that socially incompetent persons lack or perform unsatisfactorily. These include expressing attitudes, feelings and emotions, adopting the appropriate proxemic posture; understanding the gaze patterns of the people they are interacting with; carrying out ritualized routines such as greetings, leave-taking, self-disclosure, making or refusing request; and asserting themselves (Trower, Bryant and Argyle, 1978). In sum, socially inadequate individuals have not mastered the social conventions of their society; they may be unaware of the rules of social behavior that regulate interpersonal conduct in their culture or, if aware of the rules, unable or unwilling to put them into practice.
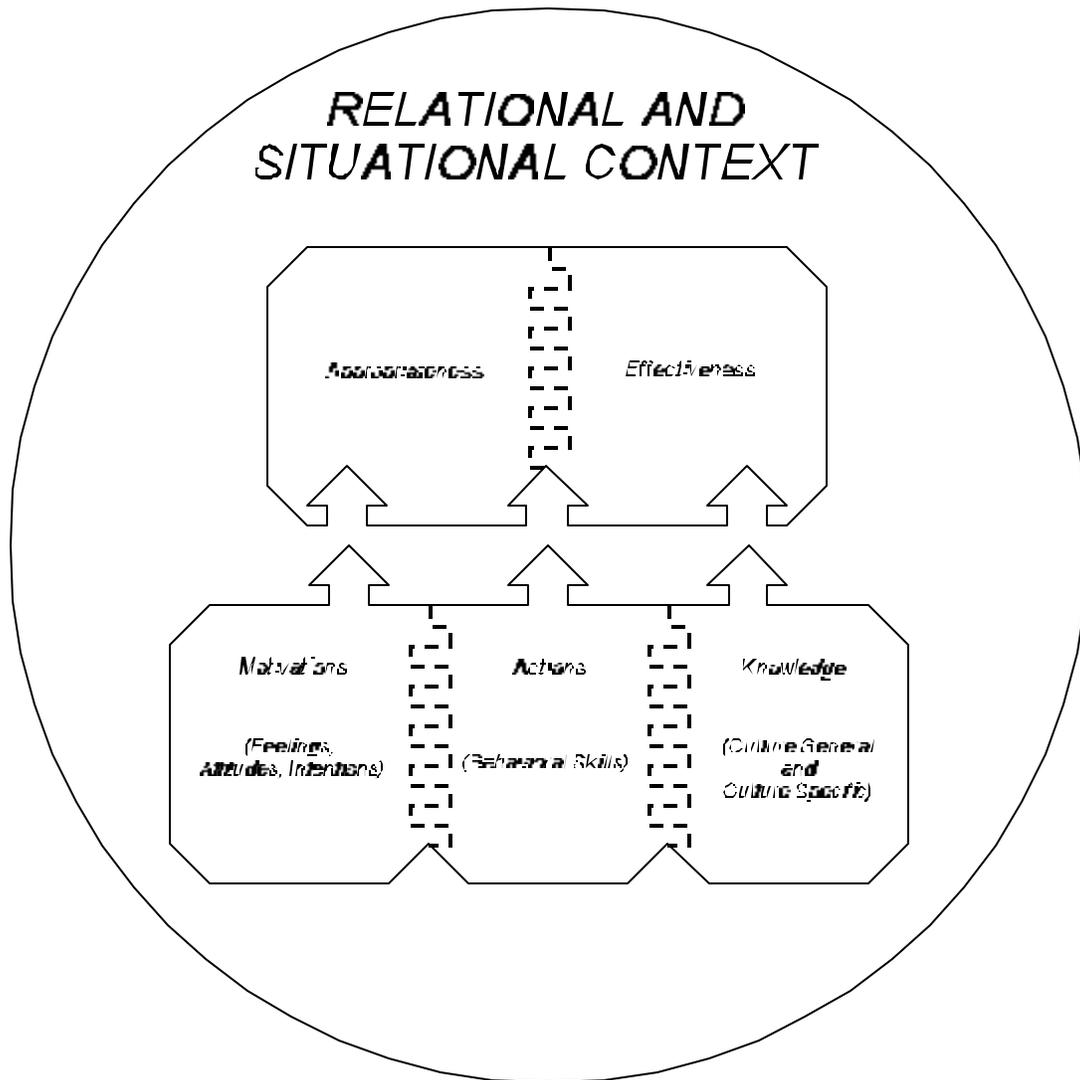
Thus it could be said that socially unskilled persons are often like strangers in their own land. This perspective leads to the idea that people newly arrived in an alien culture or subculture will be in exactly the same position as the socially inadequate individuals referred to earlier, . . . (p. 15).

ii. The critical idea is not that we *adjust* to a new culture as much as that we *learn the important techniques of social behavior* of the new culture.

iii. In Chapter 9 there is offered a model which overcomes some conceptual and practical problems by combining the notion of culture shock with that of social skills. The core idea is that a sojourner can be regarded as a person who is lacking or deficient in the social skills of the new society. This formulation provides a very precise and definable account of the sojourn experience; it places the problem of the sojourn squarely where it belongs (i.e. in the interpersonal sphere); it emphasizes social difficulties of the everyday, mundane sort and de-emphasizes the exotic that is so often associated with other formulations of culture shock thereby heightening the anxiety of the sojourner; it removes the stigma attached to traditional accounts, with their implications of personal inadequacy, by emphasizing that coping with another culture is just a skill, rather like playing tennis, which can be learnt under appropriate circumstances and where no blame attaches to a person ignorant of the game. In short, this formulation takes culture shock out of the clinical field into the area of education and learning. Finally, the model provides quite specific guidelines for preventative and remedial action, based on the procedures developed for social-skills training, a method that has been used successfully in a variety of areas." (p. 7; see chapter 9 and p. 250 for another summary)

iv. The weakness of this approach is that a person without relevant personal traits or good interpersonal attitudes can be trained in the correct social skills and still not adjust well in the new cultural setting (see Kealey, "A Study of Cross-Cultural Effectiveness, p. 423).

d. The **interactionist** model envisions intercultural competence as an interaction of character traits, social skills, and situational factors (see Klemp, "Identifying, Measuring, and Integrating Competence" as summarized in Dinges, "Intercultural Competence", pp. 192-4; also Kealey, "A Study of Cross-Cultural Effectiveness"):

i. "Klemp's view is that inferring ability from content knowledge or possession of a self-reported trait considered important in human interactions actually reverses the order of prediction *[of success in intercultural communication]*. In his view, a competence is more appropriately inferred from a demonstrated behavior rather than the potential for behavior being inferred from a reported trait, knowledge area, or skill. Consequently, a good test of future performance should allow inferences about both competencies of knowledge and competencies of performance." (Dinges, "Intercultural Competence", p. 193).

ii. An overall model of this approach may be suggested:

The Complex of Competencies for Intercultural Communication		
General	Cognitive Awareness A basic knowledge of cultures and cultural dynamics is important, but how well we are able to personalize and apply what we know is even more important for success in intercultural communication.	Personal Character Traits and Attitudes Flexibility, a non-judgmental attitude, the ability to tolerate ambiguity, a high cognitive complexity, etc. (see the full listings in the table above) are all important.
Skills	Social/Interpersonal Skills Our ability not only to socialize but also to feel comfortable in the social settings in the intercultural situation are important.	Job/Ministry Related Skills How trained and capable are we in our job/ministry? Are we secure or insecure with the responsibilities we have been given and the position we hold?

5. A model of intercultural competence (adapted from Lustig and Koester, <u>Intercultural Competence</u>)

RELATIONAL AND
SITUATIONAL CONTEXT

Appropriateness   Effectiveness

Motivations   Actions   Knowledge

(Feelings,   (Behavioral Skills)   (Culture General
Attitudes, Intentions)   and
                                    Culture Specific)

a.   Foundational base

i.   Knowledge: Though a basic knowledge of cultures and cultural dynamics is important, it is not just what we know, but how well we are able to personalize and apply the knowledge we have in the intercultural setting that are important in determining our competency in intercultural communication.

(1)   Culture general, including the components of all cultural maps such as world view, values, social structures, cognitive processes, decision-making strategies, contextuality and temporality, verbal and non-verbal communication codes and styles, and media

(2)   Culture specific:

(a) What is the actual cultural map of the people among whom I am living?

(b) What is **my** cultural map?

ii. Motivations

(1) Feelings: the emotional or affective states I experience when communicating interculturally. How do I experience and express my emotion, and what role(s) do they play in my communication patterns?

(2) Personal character traits and attitudes: Flexibility, a non-judgmental attitude, the ability to tolerate ambiguity, a high cognitive complexity, etc., are all important. We should note, however, that Kealey's 1989 study indicates:

(a) Established psychological self-report inventories **are not very useful** in predicting outcome overseas.

(b) However, the use of behaviorally anchored scales specifically developed for use in intercultural communication skills is supported.

For example, field-dependent people show a somewhat better chance of demonstrating competence in transferring technical skills (Kealey, "A Study of Cross-Cultural Effectiveness," p. 410)

(c) Others' perceptions of us are of greater predictive power than our own self-assessment (Ibid., p. 422)

(3) Intentions: What guides the choices I make in developing strategies of communicating with strangers? What are the goals, plans, objectives, and desires through which I focus and direct my behavior? (E.g., stereotypes can short circuit other positive skills by reducing the number of choices and interpretations I may make of others' actions)

iii. Actions (behavioral/social skills):

(1) Considering behavioral or social skills, two things should be noted (Furnham and Bochner, Culture Shock, 201-3):

(a) Cross-cultural learning can be like learning a new game where the game and its rules are known intimately to the host (who expects other people to already know them), and the guest must learn them)

(b) ". . . the actual list of skills *[in any particular context]* will depend on the demographic characteristics of the clients (their age, sex, social class, culture of origin, and so forth); the new culture whose skills they will be learning; and on the purpose of their sojourn."

(2) Social skills that are particularly important in intercultural communication

include the following areas of culturally governed rules and conventions (adapted in part from discussion in Furnham and Bochner, "Social Difficulty in a Foreign Culture"; Furnham and Bochner, Culture Shock, 216; and Lustig and Koester, Intercultural Competence, 297-302):

Synchrony	Coordinating verbal and non-verbal behavior, encouraging the communication partner, giving appropriate feedback
Conversation	Appropriate speaker exchanges (timing, volume, clarity), topics, and self-disclosure
Assertiveness	Appropriate amount of assertion on behalf of self or group
Emotional expression	Ability to express the full range of appropriate emotional expressions in various situations; includes skills to appropriately express feelings of warmth, affection, and sexuality.
Trust	Ability to generate and display trust, including skills in empathy, respect, and toleration for personal differences
Humor	Understanding and being able to use humor appropriately
Public Performance	Skills at handling being the focus of public attention
Public Rituals	Skills in appropriate behavior in public rituals (including formal and informal greetings, leave takings, awareness of personal social status and/or role, appropriate control of bodily functions, etc.)
Anxiety management	Coping with social anxiety during moments of stress or ambiguity.
Decision-Making, Negotiation and Conflict Management	Skills in handling the interchange of ideas during conflict so as to lead towards culturally appropriate resolution

b.   Appropriateness **and** effectiveness:

   i.   Appropriateness: If our communication methods are inappropriate, we may lose our audience before they even understand what we seek to communicate.

   ii.   Effectiveness: Even if our methods are culturally appropriate, they may not be effective in helping us reach our goals, whatever those goals may be.

c.   Context (no one is uniformly competent in all areas; everyone has strengths and weaknesses which will be reflected in our varying degrees of competence as seen in different contexts)

   i.   Relationship context:

   ii.   Situational context:

6.   Based on our understanding of cultural adjustment and success in adjustment, what training models can be developed for facilitating good adjustment?

Factors	Resulting Focus of Training Model
Cognitive Awareness	Identify the knowledge of the person, evaluating this in terms of suitability for a cross-cultural setting, and then developing a program in which the knowledge is enhanced to enable the person to understand the new context.
Character Traits	Identifying character traits (can include skills and attitudes; see those listed above), evaluating them in terms of suitability for cross-cultural setting, and then developing a program in which the unsuitable traits may be changed.
Social Skills	Identify the social skills; evaluating them in terms of suitability for the new setting, and then developing a program in which skills needing improvement are brought up to the minimum standard level.
Interactionist	Rather than seeking to develop a single set of factors, we identify the competency of people in the complex of factors listed above. Thus, we develop a program in which all factors (knowledge, character traits, social skills, and job/ministry skills) may be noted, evaluated, and improved to help ensure success in the intercultural setting.

a. Suggestions to consider from the **social skills** model (all page numbers are from Furnham and Bochner, Culture Shock):

i. Four things should be noted:

(1) . . . the actual list of skills will depend on the demographic characteristics of the clients (their age, sex, social class, culture of origin, and so forth); the new culture whose skills they will be learning; and on the purpose of their sojourn. (p. 201)

(2) Cross-cultural learning can be like learning a new game where the game and its rules are known intimately to the host (who expects other people to already know them), and the guest must learn them (see pp. 202-3)

(3) ". . . effective intercultural orientation programs must deal with the three components of conflict in an integrated way, taking political, economic, 'moral' (i.e. value judgment) and psychological factors into account as part of an overall approach to the problem" (p. 204)

(4) Aspects of interpersonal communication that are known to differ cross-culturally include:

(a) **Polite usage (etiquette)**: Cultures differ in the extent to which people are direct or indirect, how requests are made, and more importantly, how requests are denied or refused. . . . Furthermore, rules surrounding invitations, and how these are to be extended and accepted, are highly culture-bound. (pp. 205-6)

(b) **Non-verbal communication**: Non-verbal signals play an important role in communicating attitudes and affect, in expressing emotions, in supporting speech by elaborating on what is said, by providing feedback from listener to sender and by synchronizing verbal

interactions so that the participants know when it is their turn to speak and when it is their turn to listen, when it is appropriate to interrupt, and so on (Argyle, 1975, 1980)" (p. 206)

  (i)   Levels of mutual gaze vary across cultures;
  (ii) They also vary in the extent to which they allow bodily contact;
  (iii) Gestures and their meaning vary widely between cultures.

(c) **Rules and conventions**: Finally, cross-cultural differences in the rules that govern interpersonal behavior are a major source of difficulty in intercultural communication. For instance, rules about punctuality vary from culture to culture.

  (i)   Furnham and Bochner have identified forty routine social situations which give problems in crossing cultural boundaries. These forty factors revealed six factors (p. 216):

    1) Formal relations/focus of attention
    2) Managing intimate relations
    3) Public rituals
    4) Initiating contact/introductions
    5) Public decision-making
    6) Assertiveness.

  (ii) Another study identified ten social skills that were difficult for socially maladjusted Britons to learn, and "All of these situations to some extent involve establishing and maintaining personal relationships with host nationals, thereby providing empirical justification for giving a high priority to teaching interpersonal skills in cross-cultural training curricula". (p. 216)

ii. The basic training strategy proposed involves three phases (p. 8; see chapter 11) built on a core idea: "Cross-cultural problems arise because sojourners have trouble negotiating certain social situations. Therefore it is necessary to identify the specific social situations which trouble a particular sojourner and then train the person in those specific skills that are lacking." (p. 15)

  (1) A diagnostic phase in which the specific skills that the cross-cultural traveller will need are identified.

  (2) A training phase in which the particular skills identified in the first phase are imparted, using a variety of techniques by a trainer familiar with both cultures.

  (3) An evaluation phase in which the effectiveness of the training is seen in light of the performance of the person in real-life situations that had previously given difficulty.

b.   The **competency skills** model:

    i.   Four complexes of factors were noted as important in developing intercultural competency:

        (1)   Cognitive awareness: Though a basic knowledge of cultures and cultural dynamics is important, it is not just what we know, but how well we are able to personalize and apply the knowledge we have in the intercultural setting that are important in determining our success in intercultural communication.

        (2)   Personal character traits and attitudes (described on p. 7 above)

        (3)   Social/interpersonal skills: How well do we relate to people (even in our own culture)? How well are we able to socialize in the intercultural setting?

        (4)   Job/ministry related skills: How trained and capable are we in our job/ministry? Are we secure or insecure with the responsibilities we have been given and the position we hold?

    ii.   For each factor (knowledge, character traits, social/interpersonal skills, job/ministry related skills), we should:

        (1)   Develop criteria for appropriate skills-level competency standards.

        (2)   Discover the person's own perception of their competencies in these areas.

        (3)   Evaluate the self-perceptions in light of external constraints.

        (4)   Develop a program to increase competency standards, though we must be careful not to foster a purely behaviorist framework in our program.

    iii.   A 1979 CIDA study indicated the following model of intercultural effectiveness (Hawes and Kealey; "An Empirical Study of Canadian Technical Assistance")

       From the Abstract: There was evidence of at least two categories of adaptation and two categories of effectiveness. It was found that the best predictor of overseas effectiveness was "Interpersonal Skills," followed by "Identity" and "Realistic pre-departure expectations." Regarding transfer of skills to nationals, it was found that technical assistance personnel were likely ineffective because of their inability to engage in intercultural interaction.

Factor	Description	How it Helps
Very significant in adjustment:		
People orientation	The social skills which enable basic social adjustment. The specific skills found helpful include interpersonal flexibility, respect, listening skill, relationship building, self-control under stress, and sensitivity to host culture	It lends a certain curiosity and respect towards others. The person is ready to listen to others, get to know them, and seeks to understand their world view.
Helpful, but not as significant in adjustment:		
Sense of identity	A strong sense of self, but this should be expressed with due regard to cultural factors.	Lends confidence in interaction with nationals. The person can remain open to experiencing local people and culture without feeling threatened by the differences, nor desiring to abandon his own identity in favor of theirs.
Positive realistic expectation	Akin to saying, "I know this won't be easy, in fact it's probably going to be difficult for me and the family, but we intend to do the best we can, and we'll be OK."	Maintains a positive framework while avoiding the frustration of false expectations not being met.
Required in setting, but not very significant in adjustment rating:		
Job competency	The technical expertise necessary to perform the task(s) assigned.	A bottom line: you cannot transfer skills that you do not have!

iv.   The combined results of the 1989 and 1991 CIDA studies indicates the following model of determining factors for success in skill transfer in the intercultural setting (adapted from Kealey, "A Study of Cross-Cultural Effectiveness," p. 421 and Kealey, *Cross-Cultural Effectiveness*, p. 53):

The Person
* Professional commitment and technical skills
* Action orienation
* Low security needs
* Low upward mobility
* Caring behavior
* Other centeredness
* High self-monitoring
* Social adroitness
* Positive expectations

The Outcome
* Satisfaction and effectiveness at transfer of skills and knowledge
* May experience difficulty or stress in adapting to the new culture
* Makes contact; learns language and derives satisfaction from taking part in the local culture.

The Situation
* Assesses environment as non-constraining
* Assesses environment as comfortable

7.   Assessing our interpersonal communication skills: some questions (taken, with my own *italic* parenthetical additions, from Dodd, Intercultural Communication, p. 297):

a.   Do I check contextual variables?

i.   With whom are lines of communication (networks) open or closed in various groups?

ii.   Why are these networks open or closed? Am I 'turned off' to someone's personality?

iii.   What is the frequency of communication among various group members? Do clique groups deny access to the group to others who could benefit from group participation?

iv.   Are hierarchical lines of communication within a formal group, such as an organization, open? How can those communication links be improved?

b.   What intercultural relationships are operating an any given interpersonal context?

i.   Do I emphasize overlap of experience in communicating with others?

ii.   Do I emphasize areas that will build credibility?

iii.   Am I open in reception of information?

iv.   Is my verbal message consistent with my nonverbal message? Do my actions match my words *(as defined by those from within my current context)*?

v.   Do I look for the what and the why of a message--what a person says and why that person is saying it?

vi.   Do I find myself dominating most conversations? Do only I make statements or do I periodically ask questions in conversation?

vii.   Do threatening or nonstatus quo messages that affect me cause me to 'screen out' such messages?

c.   Am I aware of the listener as I engage in communication?

        i.   Do I consider the knowledge, education, and background of the listener and speak in terms the listener understands? Do I use jargon and slang?

        ii.   Is it easy for others to tell me what is on their minds *(when it is culturally acceptable)*? Why or why not?

        iii.   Do I work considerately with others who fear rejection? Do I provide *(appropriate)* reassuring and positive feedback in my communication?

        iv.   Do I 'stay with' problems and work *(in culturally appropriate ways)* toward solutions or do I avoid working out problems?

        v.   Do I periodically *(and in a culturally-sensitive fashion)* compliment others? Do I separate an issue under consideration from the person?

8.   Four phases of developing intercultural communication competence (Gudykunst and Kim, <u>Communicating with Strangers</u>, p. 26; originally from Howell, <u>The Empathetic Communicator</u>):

    a.   Unconscious incompetence
    b.   Conscious incompetence
    c.   Conscious competence
    d.   Unconscious competence