



Cultural Competence Model by Terry L. Cross

1. Cultural destructiveness is at the far negative end of the spectrum while cultural proficiency represents the positive end of the continuum.
2. Cultural Destructiveness: It refers to the blatant attempts to destroy the culture of a given group. There is also an assumption that one group is superior to another."¹ It acknowledges only one way of being and purposefully denies or outlaws any other cultural approaches.
3. Cultural incapacity: "An individual or organization lacks the capacity to be responsive to different groups, but this is not intentional. Ignorance and unfounded fear is often the underpinning of the problem."² Incapacity might consist of the failure to recognize when mistreatment is due to cultural differences thereby perpetuating its occurrence.
4. Cultural Blindness: "People who are culturally blind are ignorant of cultural differences and often perceive themselves as "unbiased". This is due to the fact that they believe that "culture makes no difference" in relation to the way the group acts or reacts."³ Cultural blindness fosters the assumption that people are all basically alike, so what works with members of one culture should work with members of all other cultures.
5. Cultural Pre-competence: "This implies the movement towards cultural sensitivity. In this phase individuals actively pursue knowledge about differences and attempt to integrate this information into delivery of services. There is a recognition that cultural differences exist but those differences are acknowledged as "differences" and nothing more."⁴



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Cultural pre-competence encourages learning and understanding of new ideas and solutions to improve performance or services.

6. Cultural competence:

"In this phase the organization or individual has the capacity to function in an effective manner within the context of the targeted group. Acceptance and respect of differences, continual self-assessment, attention to dynamics of differences, and continual expansion of knowledge about the target group are important factors of competency."ⁱ

Cultural competency involves actively seeking advice and consultation and a commitment to incorporating new knowledge and experiences into a wider range of practice.

7. Cultural Proficiency: Cultural proficiency is at the positive end of the continuum. It is where health and human service providers should strive to be. It involves pro-actively regarding cultural differences and promotes improved cultural relations among diverse groups. "Individuals in this category hold culture in very high esteem and they are regarded as specialist in developing culturally sensitive practices."ⁱⁱ



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