

INTRODUCTION

Someone who is interculturally effective has three main attributes:

- an ability to communicate with people of another culture in a way that earns their respect and trust, thereby encouraging a cooperative and productive workplace that is conducive to the achievement of professional or assignment goals;
- the capacity to adapt his/her professional skills (both technical and managerial) to fit local conditions and constraints; and
- the capacity to adjust personally so that s/he is content and generally at ease in the host culture.

The first two elements apply to any intercultural situation, including multicultural relations in Canada, but the third is unique to the international situation – a principal focus of the current document.

This IEP profile has been made as universal as possible to serve the needs of a variety of organizations and individuals working abroad, such as business, diplomatic and government personnel, international development workers, foreign students and the military, including peacekeepers. The demands of intercultural situations can vary considerably and to arrive at a truly behaviour-based and universally applicable profile has been a challenge. Most existing research on intercultural competency has relied on survey-type questionnaires and self-assessments of success at adapting and working effectively overseas. Very little has involved actual behavioural observation of people in the field.

