
INTRODUCTION

The Canadian Development Cooperation Program in India reaches beyond bilateral aid to broader relationships based on private initiatives and institutional partnerships. Development assistance programs and joint ventures increasingly involve Canadians and their Indian partners. Today, cross-cultural sensitivity is a prerequisite for successful partnerships and the cornerstone of productive relationships. Canadians who want to promote understanding and build long-term relationships must learn to manage cultural diversity.

Culture has a strong influence on the way people behave. Every culture has its own characteristics which provide a framework for day-to-day conduct at home and at work. Traditions, beliefs, values, language, religion, family and more are part of a people's culture. India comprises a kaleidoscope of cultures as diverse as its landscape,

some dating back to the dawn of civilization.

Canadians working in India must be sensitive to its cultural diversity and guard against over-generalizations and snap judgments. Canadians should learn as much as possible about India and its people before they come. They must learn to treat each culture as distinct, and avoid judging one better or worse than another. Cultural awareness, tolerance, open-mindedness, empathy and a willingness to socialize with Indian partners will help Canadians adjust to their new environment (Kealey 1990). Cultural sensitivity will help Canadians develop the attitudes essential for cross-cultural interaction and effective working relationships. Understanding Indian behaviour and management styles will greatly increase their effectiveness and improve Indo-Canadian cooperation.