Intercultural Learning through Journaling

The 3R Tool (v.3)

Developing **Sensitivity** & **Insights** into Intercultural Encounters

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This template can be used freely with acknowledgement. Please reference:

Intercultural Learning through Journaling

Introduction to the 3R Tool

It is very widely accepted in the intercultural field that people benefit from reflecting on intercultural encounters. A number of different reflective steps, with associated acronyms, have been proposed to aid this process, including the following:


O.S.E.E. [Observe and listen to what is happening; State objectively what is happening; Explore different explanations for what is happening; Evaluate which explanations are the most likely ones]: Proposed by Darla Deardorff and available in K. Berardo and D. Deardoff (eds.) (2012) Building Cultural Competence. Innovative Activities and Models, Activity 3 (Stylus Publishing)

However, in our experience at the University of Warwick, people typically need fuller guidance and explanations for the various steps, at least until they have become familiar with the process. Our 3R Tool offers this more detailed guidance through a template with prompts. It can be used repeatedly to help people develop evaluative sensitivity in their reactions to unexpected intercultural encounters.
Intercultural Learning through Journaling

The 3R Tool

Developing Sensitivity & Insights
into intercultural encounters

To help you develop intercultural sensitivity & insights, i.e. to help you deal with unexpected intercultural encounters, we recommend you to do the following:

- Keep a record each week of an experience that:
  (a) affected you emotionally in some way, e.g. something that you found annoying, upsetting, embarrassing, or very pleasing; or that
  (b) seemed unusual, surprising or puzzling to you; or that
  (c) made you confused or uncertain as to what to do or say;

- Explain as best you can why you felt as you did;

- Discuss your experience with a ‘Culture Learning Colleague’ (a chosen partner who is, if possible, from a different cultural background to you);

This 3R 3-step tool should help structure your thinking on your experience(s) and help you deepen your intercultural sensitivity and competence.

To help you develop behavioural flexibility in your intercultural encounters, we recommend that you use our complementary tool, the DIARY tool.

On the following pages, you will find a template which you can use when recording your 3R accounts.

Remember the 3R prompts!

- Report the facts of what happened.
- Reflect on why it happened.
- Re-evaluate after discussing with others.
The 3R Tool

1. **Report** the facts of your experience

**Factual Report**
Remember to give as much detail as possible:

- Describe the setting
- Identify who was involved
- Explain step by step what you experienced
- Describe your reaction

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1 Use this template for writing about your intercultural experiences.
2 e.g., date, time, place.
3 For each person, note as much detail as possible such as gender, age (older, similar, younger), nationality, relationship to you.
4 Record the facts of what happened or what challenging situation you faced.
5 Record the emotions you felt and how strongly you felt (e.g. extremely offended, very happy, excited, a little irritated, pleased, etc.).
2. **Reflect** on what happened/your concerns

**Personal Reflections**
Note down:
- Reasons for your reaction or your concerns
- Possible underlying influences
- Alternative influences/explanations

**Colleague’s Comments/Interpretations**
Now note down:
- Your colleague’s comments/interpretations of what happened/your concerns

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6 Explain why you reacted as you did.
7 What typical patterns of behaviour (i.e. behavioural conventions) and/or underlying assumptions, values or beliefs might be influencing your reactions?
8 What alternative (different) behavioural conventions and/or underlying assumptions, values or beliefs might be influencing the other person’s behaviour? Remember – behaviour is influenced by (idiosyncratic) personal and situational factors, not just cultural factors.
9 Discuss your experience with your colleague and ask them to give their thoughts about what happened, including possible differences in the behavioural conventions and/or underlying assumptions, values or beliefs of the participant(s) involved in your intercultural experience.
3. **Re-evaluate your experience**

**Personal Learning**
- Revised understanding(s) of your experience

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10 Explain how you now interpret and evaluate the experience. Please note that your interpretation may develop and change over time. As your knowledge of interculturality develops and deepens, you may want to revisit earlier experiences and add to your reflections.