Cultural Competence Development

Cultural Incapacity (Pre-Contemplation): *Sees no need to change.*

At this stage, the person has not even contemplated having an issue with cultural sensitivity nor needing to make a change. The system remains biased, disproportionately allocates resources and maintains stereotypes. The person lacks capacity or willingness to help target groups. This is the stage where denial, minimization, blaming, and resistance are most commonly present.

Cultural Relative Unawareness (Contemplation): *Considers change, but also rejects it.*

At this stage, there is some awareness that a problem exists. This stage is characterized by ambivalence: wanting to change, but also not wanting to. The person or system will go back and forth between reasons for concern and justification for unconcern. Sees differences among groups but does not consider them an important aspect of life. Ignores cultural strengths and believes that the helping approaches traditionally used by mainstream culture are universally applicable. This is the stage where a person feels stuck.

Cultural Pre-Competence (Determination): *Wants to do something about the problem.*

At this stage, there is a window of opportunity for change: the person or system has decided to change and needs realistic and achievable steps to change but often lacks information on possibilities and how to proceed. Has an emerging awareness of multiple cultures and their significance. Attempts to improve some aspects of services but may believe that the accomplishment of one goal or activity fulfills their obligation to diverse communities. Has a beginning understanding of the need for fair and unbiased treatment of all people.

Cultural Sensitivity (Action): *Takes steps to change.*

At this stage, the person or system engages in specific actions to bring about change. The goal during this stage is to produce change in a particular area or areas. Seeks advice and consultation from diverse communities. Expands cultural knowledge and resources. Actively engaged in defining their own cultural identity and recognizing it as an essential component of life, which may result in loyalty conflicts between one's own group and other groups. Pays attention to dynamics of differences to better meet consumer needs and explores how to serve diverse people more effectively.

The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center

543: Supervisor Training Series: Module 4:
Managing Diversity Through the Employment Process
Handout #16, Page 1 of 2

Cultural Competence Development

Cultural Competence (Maintenance): *Maintains goal achievement.*

At this stage, the person or system seeks to maintain the change accomplished by previous action, which may require a different set of skills. The person or system accepts and respects differences, engages in continuous self-assessment and commits to policies that enhance services to diverse clients. Seeks to prevent relapse, while recognizing that relapse is part of the cycle of change. Affiliates with members of his/her own group and has a generally positive attitude about that group while accepting people from other groups. Recognizes both the strengths and challenges of all groups. Listens to and understands others' perspectives. Strives to serve diverse people and communities effectively.

Cultural Proficiency (Sustainability): *Change becomes a habit.*

At this stage, the organization or person advocates for cultural competence throughout the system, seeks to add to the knowledge base and strives to make change permanent. The person or system holds culture in high esteem. Able to cope successfully with perceived or real discrimination and has some effective strategies for dealing with it. Capable of having courageous conversation regarding culture and diversity while staying engaged, speaking truth, allowing discomfort and accepting non-closure in order to promote multicultural competence in others.

Sources: Adapted from Prochaska, J.O., and DiClemente, C.C. 1984. *The Transtheoretical Approach: Crossing Traditional Boundaries of Therapy*. Homewood, IL: Dow Jones-Irwin; The Cultural Competence Continuum, *AAOP Journal,* Summer 1990; CWLA and the Juvenile Law Center, *Models for* Change, 2008; and Casey Family Programs, *Knowing Who You Are*, 2009.

The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center

543: Supervisor Training Series: Module 4:
Managing Diversity Through the Employment Process
Handout #16, Page 2 of 2