



## How to Acculturate Groups for Effective Facilitation

It's extremely important that services be customized to the nature and needs of participants. The following questions often address the most important considerations when designing and acculturating services. It is often useful to discuss the questions with members of the culture.

1. **Assertiveness**  
Are people comfortable in being honest and direct with each other? If not, then how can participants still be as authentic as possible with each other?
2. **Body language**  
Are there any specific cues that facilitators and participants can notice in order to more fully understand each other?
3. **Communication styles and direction**  
Are communications fairly direct and specific or more indirect and general?
4. **Conflict**  
Is conflict considered to be bad and avoided? Or is conflict accepted as normal and directly addressed when it appears?
5. **Eye contact**  
Are people comfortable with sustained eye contact during communications or not?
6. **Gestures**  
Are there any specific gestures that are often misunderstood and, thus, could cause peers discomfort or confusion in their groups?
7. **Wording**  
Are there certain words or phrasings that seem to get misunderstood or cause discomfort?
8. **Humor**  
Is use of humor rather widespread? Is there anything about the use of humor about which facilitators and peers should be aware?
9. **Physical space**  
Are people quite conscious of having a minimum amount of space around them when they work or speak with others?
10. **Power**  
Are members very attuned to certain people of power when solving problems and making decisions? Is power based on authority and/or respect?
11. **Silence**  
Are members uncomfortable with silence during communications? Or is it a common aspect of communicating?
12. **Time**  
Do people value a strong sense of urgency or can activities “take as long as they need to take to get done well”?