

Successful Communication between Mentor and Mentee



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The Intercultural Mentoring Program is unique in the way it brings people from around the globe together. It is obvious that people from different countries and cultures communicate different, act differently from one another, and see the world through different eyes. When you interact with people that have another cultural background it is important to have in mind that they decode messages different, that they might have different ways to transmit them and that the way people interpret messages might be different.

To show you an example:

In our course “Intercultural Training - How to communicate with others” we have discussed the following situation: When a German guy meets someone he knows on his way to the train, he will say “Hello” and then explain that he has to go because his train does not wait for him. But when e.g. a Brazilian guy meets someone on his way to the train he would stop, say “Hello”, ask the person about life and would catch the next train, even if he would be late at his next appointment. While it is understandable for Germans that people have to go to catch the train, for Brazilians it would be impolite not to stop for having a conversation.



“The intercultural training was excellent”

We consider it important to be aware of the fact that behaviors and patterns are not used equally in every culture. On the next page we would like to give you some helpful advice that might be important for a successful conversation between you and your mentee. Because knowing how to prepare for a meeting with your mentee and how to communicate successfully with your mentee can help to work specifically on your individual mentoring relationship.

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1) Organizational preparation

- **Place of conversation**
Choose a quiet place where you can have a conversation without disruptive factors.
- **Time**
Choose a time when a high level of attention can be paid to the topics discussed. The main thing, however, is to coordinate the timing with each others.
- **Documents**
Bring your documents with your notes that you have made in advance.

2) Conversation opening phase

- **Create a positive relationship**
Greet your mentee friendly and ask simple opening questions (e.g. Did you find the way well?).
- **Be open**
Share your personal experiences with your mentee, while speaking from your perspective ("I ...") and give as much information as needed.
- **Be yourself**
Try to be yourself and mean the things you say!

3) Core phase

- Ask specific questions
- Attentive listening
- Argue objective
- Send first person ("I...") messages
- Give feedback
- Avoid negative words (e.g. "bad" or "too difficult")

4) Final phase

Summarize what you have talked about!

- Give an outlook
- Define what you can talk about in your next meeting
- Fix a new date

5) Conversation evaluation

What went well, what can be improved? Critically reflect yourself and use the opportunity to take actions that might facilitate your next meeting or guide you into the right direction.

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Bundesministerium
für Bildung
und Forschung

This project is supported by funding from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research under the funding code 01PL16007. Responsibility for the contents of this publication rests with the author.