



Problem-Based Learning,  
Intercultural Communications  
and STEM in Higher Education

# Problem- Based Toolkit on Intercultural Communications



*For students*

*For educators*

*For you*

*For me*

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Crossing Borders



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## Introduction to the Toolkit

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide some best practices and methodologies in the form of tools that can address the challenges present in multicultural PBL classrooms. The tools will be correlated to the main challenges as those where defined by the preliminary research of the PISH project.

### Tools to address language barriers related challenges

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#### 1/ Language café

##### Description of the tool

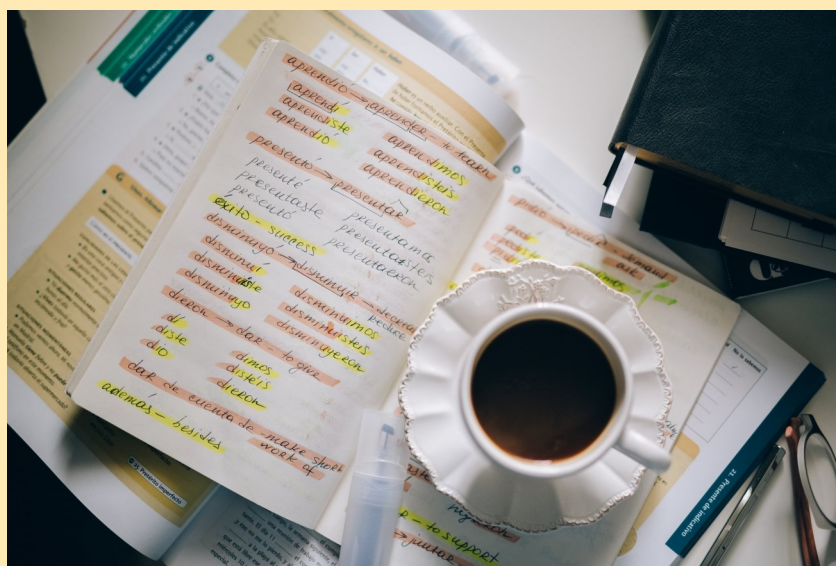


Language café is an initiative of volunteers that organize gatherings of students in multinational groups in a place to have social interactions and discussions. The method's overall strength is in its empowerment of students: It provides a place for international and domestic students to show off their skills or to start a new hobby. There is no requirement to be a native speaker. There is not any cost for the participants. Little organizational burden on the institution - they usually organize the kick-off session and then the groups figure out the rest.

Participants can learn basic phrases in another language, learn something about countries where the language is spoken. Group leaders can promote their cultural and linguistic capital.

##### Methodology

Volunteers provide open informal language training free of charge. There is a 'kick-off' meeting during which participants get to know the 'offer' of language cafes and choose the one they like best. Then, the group decides the time and place for subsequent meetings. Usually, the groups meet off-campus every week or every other week. Language cafes are more effective as social events than courses. However, language cafe organizers may not have any language teaching background.



##### Materials and resources

This is up to the group leader. Sometimes they can prepare handouts or other aids.



You can find more information about the tool on <https://www.isyy.fi/en/recreation/language-cafes-2.html>





## Tools to address language barriers related challenges

### 2/ Role play

#### Description of the tool

The methodology was proposed as a way to teach a language to a group of non native speakers by M. Kodotchigova. It focuses on teaching a language to foreigners. But the same method can be adopted to simulate and overcome most intercultural communication barriers. Specifically teaching Business English to students studying "Business Administration and Management". The results were a meaningful, entertaining way to teach the subject and engage the students to the topic. What's special about the method is the fact that it has endless possibilities and different scenarios according to the skills and the level of the participants. Moreover, it can be adapted to many other topics besides language teaching. Role playing simulated situations where the students were going to face in their business and everyday life and were called to use their skills and knowledge in English language. The scenarios were chosen according to the student's skills and expectations.



#### Methodology

##### Step 1 - A Situation for a Role Play

To begin with, choose a situation for a role play, keeping in mind students' needs and interests

##### Step 2 - Role Play Design

After choosing a context for a role play, the next step is to come up with ideas on how this situation may develop. Students' level of language proficiency should be taken into consideration

##### Step 3 - Linguistic Preparation

Once you have selected a suitable role play, predict the language needed for it. It is recommended to introduce any new vocabulary before the role play

##### Step 4 - Factual Preparation

This step implies providing the students with concrete information and clear role descriptions so that they could play their roles with confi-

#### Materials and resources

It depends on the topic and chosen scenario

 You can find more information about the tool on <http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Kodotchigova-RolePlay.html>



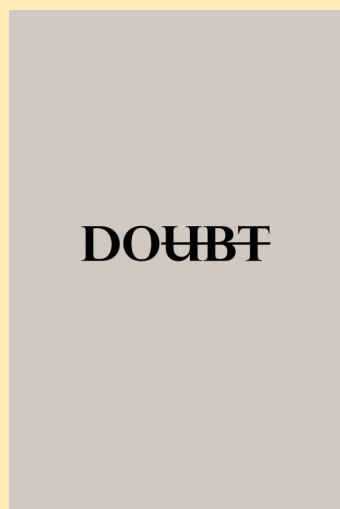
## Tools to address language barriers related challenges

### 3/ See the good

#### Description of the tool

The method “See the good” was initially designed for the school environment (especially early childhood education and primary schools). It can also be used in social work or higher education.

The method represents the framework of positive psychology. The books are a self-study resource. No certification is mandatory. Positiivinen Akatemia, which is the publisher, also provides training courses for different target groups. There are other authors who write about positive psychology so interested facilitators have a choice when it comes to resources.



#### Methodology

The cards can be used to introduce new vocabulary or to talk about students' identities when they speak different languages. Thus, the method targets language barriers. As the method's objective is eliminating negative judgement, it can be effective in facilitating group work and in solving conflicts. The cards are useful in situations when someone dislikes someone or the conflict results from misunderstandings.

The method helps widen the participant's vocabulary, get to know oneself and develop empathy. The purpose is to increase individuals' well being and to avoid judgemental language that fuels conflict and hurts other people's feelings. By practicing the method, people learn to concentrate on the positive aspects of life, be more tolerant, open-minded and accepting of others 'as they are'.

This is a multi-method approach, though reflection is one of the main tools. Strategies depend on exercise used.

#### Materials and resources

Materials are optional but the main resource is the list of 26 character strengths (e.g. curiosity, kindness, perseverance). Recommended: a set of cards with positive psychology strengths. Cards are commercially available but facilitators and participants can make their own set. There is an English-language version:

<https://www.opettajantietopalvelu.fi/tuotteet/121473040.html>

The books include materials for facilitators, such as introduction to positive psychology, introduction to strengths, exercise ideas, exercise templates



You can find more information about the tool on <https://positive.fi/huomaa-hyvaa-tuotteet/huomaa-hyvaa-kirjat-ja-kortit/>

In English: <https://positivepsychology.com/classification-character-strengths-virtues/>

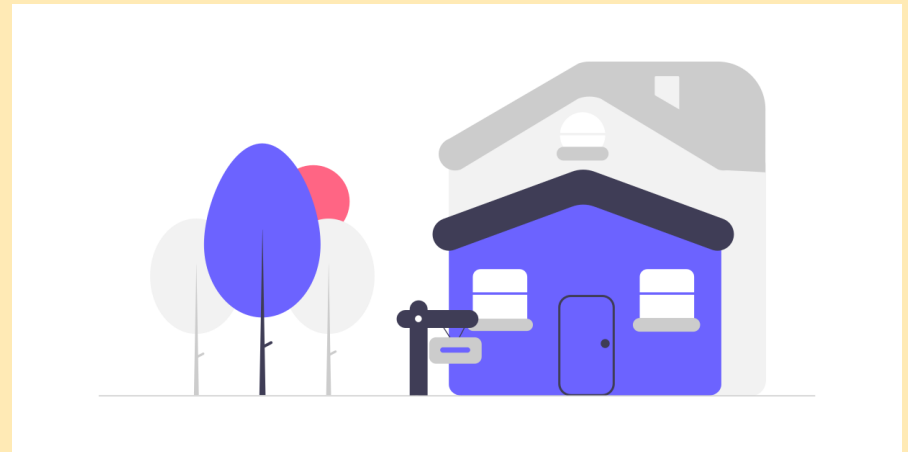


## Tools to enhance intercultural communication

### 4/ Drawing a house

#### Description of the tool

This exercise is important as it enables participants to be able to open up and talk about their own perspectives, but also allows them to view those perspectives from another person's context. What is unique about this method is the way in which it allows participants to see how easily their own explanation of something can be misinterpreted due to differences in cultural understanding. Through understanding this gap between expression and comprehension, participants can learn to communicate clearly across cultures.



#### Methodology

- Each participant must select a partner with whom they have not worked with before. Participants from different countries/cultures/backgrounds are highly encouraged to partner up.
- Each pair must sit back to back, one of them must describe a typical house in detail. Based on their description, their partner must draw the house on a sheet of paper. The person who is describing the house cannot look at the drawing, and the person drawing cannot ask questions.
- Once the house has been drawn, the partners switch roles and do the exercise again.
- Once both houses have been drawn, the partners share their drawings with each other.

#### DEBRIEFING:

After the exercise has been completed, the participants will debrief through a group discussion with a series of questions designed to show that it is normal to have different drawings because of the significant role that culture and backgrounds play on our own feelings, understandings and perceptions of a typical house.

#### QUESTION EXAMPLES:

Did the drawings look different from what was described? How? What reasons could we think of for why this might be?

Do you think culture plays a role and influences your understanding and perceptions?

In everyday situations, have you experienced that sometimes you explain something that is understood differently or leads to misunderstandings? Can you give examples?

NB: The gap between expression and comprehension should be emphasized and it should be explained that this gap can lead to misunderstandings with some people.

#### Materials and resources

Paper, pens



You can find more information about the tool on <https://www.icye.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Practical-Guide-on-ICL-final-.pdf>





## Tools to enhance intercultural communication

### 5/Flags-team building game

#### Description of the tool

The objective is improving intercultural communication, specifically, stereotyping. The activity can also be used to address culture-based conflicts if the instruction is adapted for that purpose. It improves collaboration skills, addresses cultural issues, different work cultures, and communication specialties.

The exercise can be used as an ice-breaker. In its basic form, it takes about 15 minutes to implement but the time can be extended to allow for deeper discussions, or a better finished artistic result. No special preparation is required.

#### Methodology

Each participant gets a blank flag (or a coat of arms) and draws there something about themselves that other team members should know. The participants should be encouraged to draw something personal (of course within their comfort zone). By re-using symbols reserved for nationalist thinking (the flag), the method can help participants re-focus on facts about their colleagues and avoid stereotyping them. Depending on needs, the instruction can be modified to address specific conflicts (e.g. individual priorities).



#### Materials and resources

Printed template or a blank piece of paper, pencils. Extra: handicraft materials. Digital tools can also be used.



You can find more information about the tool on <https://www.icebreakers.ws/small-group/fabulous-flags.html>





## Tools to enhance intercultural communication

### 6/A jolt of reality

#### Description of the tool

'A Jolt of reality' is a short activity, where participants are instructed to win by "making" their partner move their feet. The most important part is the debriefing, where participants discuss the strategies they chose. This activity helps participants understand how we filter information and form assumptions. It teaches reexamining one's assumptions and avoid automatic reactions, demonstrates how our behaviours are often influenced by cultural values or filters.



#### Methodology

1. Ask the participants to stand and find a partner. Direct partners face each other, place their feet firmly on the floor, and then raise both hands and place them palm-to-palm at shoulder height.
  2. Now tell participants that to win at this activity, they must make the other person move his or her feet-within 30 seconds. Start the timing. (Note: most participants will use brute force to push each other. Some may try to negotiate or bribe the other person to move. A few may stop pushing and let the other person's momentum propel him or her forward).
  3. After 30 seconds, stop the activity & ask a few participants to share some of the strategies they used to get the other person to move.
  4. Ask for a volunteer. Assume the face-to-face, palm-to-palm position. Whisper to the other person « Let's dance ». Hum a tune and move your feet together.
  5. The participants will probably protest that this is cheating. Remind them that the directions were simply to get the other person to move his or her feet within the 30-second time frame. These were no restrictions on moving your own feet or communicating. Ask participants who won.
- Cultural values such as individualism and competition may result in conflict and block win win solutions.
  - Meeting force with force is almost always futile.





## Tools to enhance intercultural communication

### 6/A jolt of reality

#### Methodology

##### DEBRIEF:

Describe what happened. When you hear interpretations, such as “she tried to bribe me” rather than descriptions like “she offered me something”, ask the participants to describe behaviours only.

-How did you feel about how you behaved? Your partner’s behaviour? The outcome?

-What values were behind the different strategies people used?  
o What did you learn from the activity itself and from the “dance” strategy?

-How can this learning be applied?

##### DEBRIEFING CONCLUSIONS:

-We tend to filter information, form assumptions based on our own experience and values, and then act according to these assumptions. Cultural values such as cooperation, competition, individualism and collectivism are demonstrated in this kind of activity.

-Assumptions can prevent us from exploring alternative behaviours.

-Cultural values such as individualism and competition may result in conflict and block win win solutions.

-Meeting force with force is almost always futile.



#### Materials and resources



You can find more information about the tool on <http://intercultural-learning.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/ICL@School-Toolbox-final-1.pdf>



## Tools to address collaboration skills

### 7/ Cooperative Learning method

#### Description of the tool

Cooperative learning is a generic model of learning where students are divided into small groups to realize a shared learning goal. The overall objective is for students to learn from one another. Mostly students learn from one another. Problem-based learning in itself is a form of cooperative learning, students work to solve a common problem as they study. It enables students from different cultures to get to know each other. There is no strict methodology on how to implement cooperative learning. This gives the teacher the flexibility and the ability to have a one-on-one interaction with students, identify intercultural communication challenges they face and identify the tools to solve them. In order to use Collaborative Learning methods, the teacher must first develop their Intercultural competencies. Otherwise, the methods in themselves will not work.

#### Methodology

Students are broken down into small teams and given course-based tasks. The tasks often bother on the topic being taught that day. Students from different cultural backgrounds are encouraged to work in small groups of three with students from other backgrounds. The teacher drops into each group spending equal amount of time. The teacher does not lead interactions within the group. Rather the teacher listens to the student and from time to time asks questions that will enable the students in the group engage among themselves to respond as well as learn in the process. Although cooperative learning activity is generic, it helps students from different cultures open up and learn from one another. An example is silent games mentioned later.



#### Materials and resources



You can find more information about the tool on <https://www.teacheracademy.eu/blog/cooperative-learning-strategies/>

<https://scsdbehaviormatters.weebly.com/blog/best-practice-classroom-activities-for-improving-students-cooperative-skills> (other examples of cooperative learning methods)





## Tools to address collaboration skills

### 8/ Our city

#### Description of the tool

Intercultural awareness is strengthened, leading to understanding the viewpoint and needs of others. Our cities is an intercultural exercise designed by the CRN trainer Kamila Kowenzowska

- The exercise was performed 12 times during the intercultural stimulation, during the Urbanities and Applied Emotion Erasmus+ projects
- The main target group had been adult facilitators, teachers and urban activists and researchers.
- The exercise can be performed with any learner group with similar outcomes
- The participants experience the process and thus learn emotionally
- The exercise is easy transferable



#### Methodology

It's an experiential role playing game followed by a discussion.

1. There is a planet with four cultures, each proud of their civilization and ready to build their capital.
2. 4 groups start to discuss, based on a provided description their values, traditions and interactions
3. Each nation receives a set of materials, which they have to use to build their capital.
4. The materials reflect the specific culture' described before



5. TURN OF THE EVENT - After a while each culture gets a note that a catastrophe happened – they have a short time to decide what buildings or institutions they want to take with them
6. Each culture is send to block city (where the citizens are not aware of their arrivals) with the task to negotiate their space
7. Each nation has a different amount of time, while the process at the beginning is still structured, the mass of arrivals soon challenge the block city but as well the arriving cultures

#### Materials and resources

City scenarios (Annex), description cards, various materials that can be used to build a model city

 You can find more information about the tool on <https://crnonline.de/result/our-cities-a-method-guide/>



## Tools to address collaboration skills

### 9/ Silent game


#### Description of the tool

The “Silent Game” tool enables students to learn about each other as well as lend a helping hand in order to ensure that their common tasks succeed. It helps to overcome differences in learning styles. It helps people who have never met to learn how to work together, revealing the strengths of each other.



#### Materials and resources

- A sheet of paper with instructions
- A questionnaire with free text options can be helpful guides for the students.
- Lego Bricks,
- A plate to mount the lego bricks,
- Gaming tables

 You can find more information about the tool on <https://ideas.repec.org/a/igg/jesma0/v9y2017i4p1-23.html>

#### Methodology

Step 1: Students are distributed in groups of 3-4 persons (up to 5 is possible), sitting around a table with two portions of LEGO bricks and one plate for mounting the bricks.

Step 2: Students choose their role: Player one, player two or Observer(s).

Step 3: Without communicating his or her idea, Player One initiates a game by placing a number of bricks at the plate. Player Two 'answers' by placing more bricks. This turn-taking goes on in silence until Player One announces that the game is over.

Step 4: Then first the Observer summarises his or her observations of how the two players communicated with each other, then Player Two adds his/her observations, and then finally Player One comments.

A new game can be started, by shifting the roles, and/or modified rules of the game. Students should be encouraged to modify the game rules/configuration and discuss the outcome.

Students evaluate their own experiences with the tool, but since no normative values are embedded in the game (e.g. it has no winning condition or any preferred model of communication or hierarchy), a benchmark evaluation of 'performance' does not make sense. The game works as a mirror for the student. The teacher can early identify students that have fundamental problems with relating to the game (could indicate social-communicative problems). In a longitudinal evaluation, the well-functioning of groups that have been formed with the use of Silent game could be evaluated.







Tools to address cultural issues, different work cultures, communication specialties etc

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## 10/ BaFá BaFá or Culture Shock (Game)

### Description of the tool

BaFá BaFáis a method that can be used in many different settings and can be adapted across cultures. It has been used in settings such as diversity/inclusion training, sociology classes, management training, workplaces, and in intercultural competence training. It is designed to improve participants' intercultural competence through understanding the impact of the culture on behaviour of others. Importantly, it encourages participants to experience and work through the feeling of culture shock and tries to allow people to work through the difficulties of interacting with cultures where different values, ways of behaving, and ways of solving problems are present.

A slightly different version of this tool is “Culture Shock”, a cross cultural business negotiation simulation game created by Maria Todosiychuk.

### Methodology

Running time: 1 - 2 hours for exercise & additional 1 - 2 hours for debriefing.

1. After briefing participants on the purpose of the simulation game, the first step is creating two simulated cultures, one "Alpha" culture and one "Beta" culture. The facilitator assigns each participant to either the Alpha or Beta culture. Both cultures represent different behaviours, which correspond to their own cultural code) for example: one culture could be a collective culture based on common good, solidarity, and body contact, while the other is an economic culture based on trade and profit, individualism and formal/distant relations. Each group moves to their own area where members are taught the values, expectations and customs of their new culture, without knowing anything about what the other culture is.

2. Each culture sends an observer to the other culture, the observer must learn as much as possible about the other culture while the other culture roleplays the values and customs of their culture. After a fixed time, the observer from each culture must return to his or her own culture and report on what was observed.







## Tools to address cultural issues, different work cultures, communication specialties

### 10/ BaFá BaFá or Culture Shock (Game)

#### Methodology

3. Each group will then develop a strategy for how their culture can best interact with the other culture, based on what was reported by the observer. Once this strategy has been made, each culture will be allowed to send small groups to visit the other cultures. The visits will be used to test and improve the strategies they have made for interaction. The simulation ends once everyone has had the chance to visit the other culture.
4. All participants across two culture groups join into one group to discuss their experiences. The cultures will be discussed, as well as the strategies that they ended with, and what they learned about creating a school/workplace environment in which everyone feels safe, included, productive and able to work their best.



#### Materials and resources

- Two separate spaces
- Descriptions of two different cultures on coloured paper
- Nametags (half of them named "Alpha" in red, half named "Beta" in blue)
- 1 box of 100 small paper clips for "Alpha" group
- 1 box of 100 large paper clips for "Beta" group
- A special wristband to be taped to the Alpha leader's wrist



You can find more information about the tool on <http://intercultural-learning.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/ICL@School-Toolbox-final-1.pdf>



## 11/ Visiting the Albatross Culture

### Description of the tool

This activity aims to bring participants into a situation in which they are confronted with behaviour and experiences which are new to them. It serves to provide the experiential understanding that many interactions are initially interpreted incorrectly and points out once more the complexity of intercultural understanding.

It is a type of exercise or game that can be facilitated in a workshop or in the classroom environment. It requires the participation of female and male leaders and players and it requires movement and interaction.

One of the main challenges with implementation that facilitators should be aware of is that participants could quickly jump to conclusions, making assumptions based on their own cultures, and find the game offensive. The key is to make it through to the end with an open mind, so that participants can realize their assumptions have been based on their own cultural backgrounds.

### Methodology

A circle of chairs is formed. Only the workshop leaders are in the room at first. The male workshop leader is sitting on a chair, while the female leader kneels barefoot on the floor next to him. The participants enter the room (the only information they are given beforehand is that they are now visiting a new culture as guests).

There are three ways of communicating (which are not known to the participants). 1) "Sssssssss!!!" = negative signal (for incorrect behavior) 2) "Mhmhmhmhhh!!!" = positive signal (for correct behavior) 3) Clicking one's tongue = an order to do something

The activity could be defined as follows (there are however no limits to being creative!) -

Taking position. The female leader signals to the participants that -

1. The female participants should kneel on the floor just like her -
2. The male participants should sit down on the chairs -
3. The female participants should take off their shoes.

- Drinking water. The female leader walks around and offers water by holding the glass to the mouths of the men to let them drink. For the women, she passes the glass to them and they take drink by themselves.

- Eating bread. The female leader walks around and hands out the bread, by feeding the men and passing the bread into the hands of the women to eat.

- Choosing a woman. Afterwards, both male and female leader walk around and look at the feet of the individual women (the women are signaled to stand up one at a time to have their feet inspected). They choose the woman with the biggest feet and signal her to take her place (kneeling) on the other side of the chair the male leader sits on.

- Hand on head. The leader places his hands on the heads of the two women kneeling beside him and tilts their heads gently towards the floor. He motions to the other men to do the same to the women at their sides.





Tools to address cultural issues, different work cultures, communication specialties etc

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## 11/ Visiting the Albatross Culture

### Methodology

Now the activity is over and the leaders ask the participants to resume their seats (now back in the language we are used to) and evaluate the game by asking questions like "What did you observe?" "Did you notice anything in particular?" "What happened?" "How did the men feel?" "How did the women experience their roles?"

Next, the meanings of the actions are explained. In the Albatross culture the ground is considered holy. In the social hierarchy, the women rank above men, therefore only women are allowed to touch the holy ground barefoot. The women are considered holy, too. The men must not touch what comes from the ground, therefore the men are fed by the women, whereas the women may touch the food and the water. The specially selected woman was chosen by the size of her foot, and the honour to kneel beside the leader was given to her as the woman with the largest feet because she has the biggest area of contact with the holy ground. The bending of the heads was a sign of gratitude - in this way the men can come closer to the holy ground (by touching the women).

- "Why did most of you immediately assume that the women were being discriminated against?" (this is often the case – women feel obliged to work in the course of the game)
- Pointing out hierarchies: in Europe up = good; in Albatross down = good - "Do you believe that in a foreign country/culture you might encounter a situation like in this game?"
- "How can we try to find out what the underlying reasons for behavior are if we are not sure of interpreting the behavior correctly?"



### Materials and resources

Chairs, Water, Glass, Bread



You can find more information about the tool on <http://crossingborders.dk/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/1-Visiting-the-albatros-culture.pdf>

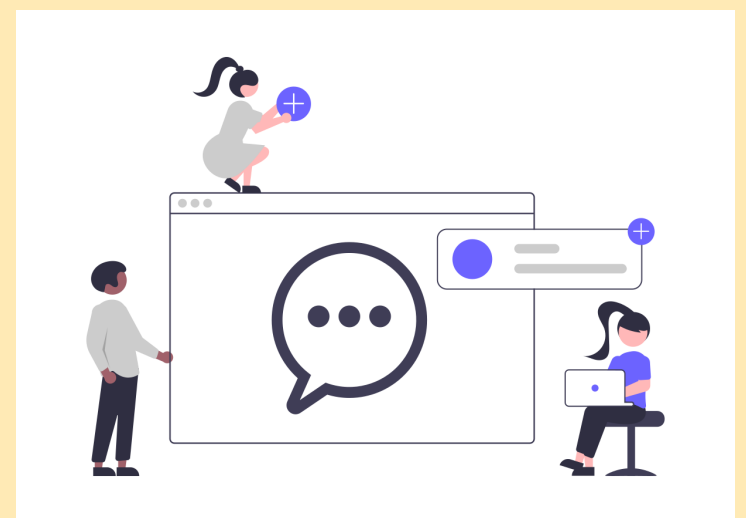




## 12/ Experiential E twinning project

### Description of the tool

In the e-twinning project, the students developed closer personal relationships, engaged in intercultural dialogue of their own will, and were encouraged to continue learning even after the formal end of the course. Though the development of other linguistic competences except in English was not the intended aim of the course, students used the opportunity provided by the course to teach each other Romanian and Lithuanian in the evening, from home, via Skype, and even to teach the other members of the students' families. Thus, they capitalized on the cultural contact that the institution provided in order to act on their cultural curiosity, to become richer in cultural knowledge, more perceptive of cultural difference, flexible, tolerant in their views and better equipped to identify and express the values, beliefs and styles of living and of communicating in their own cultures. They learned how to think differently, as a first step towards acting differently. The rippling effects of this project showed the power of the new media to bring people together in a project that was thought of as an exercise in intercul-



### Methodology

The project aimed to bring together students in real-time online communication and with the guidance and monitoring of the trainers to ask them to work together on a challenging task.

Indicatively, they asked them to create their own learning objects (PowerPoint presentations, country and company profiles, price lists, and guidebooks for survival in their own countries) by using ICT tools. The added value of bilateral communication within the activities of this methodology is that it allowed students to develop closer personal relationships, to engage in intercultural dialogue of their own will, and to continue learning even after the formal end of the course.



### Materials and resources

E- twinning, digital communication platforms, Microsoft Office (Powerpoint presentations, Word), PDF Online Tools.



You can find more information about the tool on <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.10.094>



## Other Tools

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### 1/ Active Listening

#### Description of the tool

This is a simple free active listening training activity to run that is useful with any communications training, team building training, or management training.

#### Methodology

##### Step 1:

Ask participants to form groups of up to 4 people per group.

Then give each group a sheet of A1 paper from a flipchart and some colored markers.

Ask each group to brainstorm and come up with a list of things that can stop us from listening and write the list on the A1 sheet of paper.

If it helps them, ask participants to think of a time when they were not listened to or when they realized they were not listening to someone. Why did they think that happened?

Give them 5 minutes to brainstorm and write the list down.

After 5 minutes, ask the groups to share their answer with the rest of the class and start a discussion, which should last about 10 minutes.

##### Step 2:

During or after the discussion, show the Active Listening list (below), to compare them with the answers that participants gave and to comment.

Active listening list:

1. lack of focus (due to external distractions or internal ones, such as being hungry, cold, upset etc).
2. Making assumptions
3. Being in a hurry
4. Having to be right
5. Trying to do too many things at once
6. Being more worried about what you are going to say next than about what you are hearing.

##### Step 3:

The facilitator then discusses with the students how they can become active listeners and why it is important

#### Materials and resources



You can find more information about the tool on [https://www.google.com/url?q=https://symondsresearch.com/active-listening-training-activity/&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1658481610102113&usg=AOvVaw1S\\_hFv8O-78dqG2HYkhBS6](https://www.google.com/url?q=https://symondsresearch.com/active-listening-training-activity/&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1658481610102113&usg=AOvVaw1S_hFv8O-78dqG2HYkhBS6)



## Other Tools

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### 2/ Abigale Story's

#### Description of the tool

Abigail's Tale is a story that shows how people view the world from different perspectives, have different values and reach different conclusions out of the same information. It addresses cultural issues and improves intercultural communication skills.

#### Methodology

1. Give the learners a printed version of the story or tell the story (maybe drawing the characters on a flipchart).
2. Give them 3' to establish the guilty parties from the guiltiest to the less guilty.
3. (Optional) Split them in pairs and give them 5' to make the list (guiltiest to less guilty).
4. Put them in groups of 5 with the same goal (a common list). (15-25')
5. Do a group discussion (15')
6. Debrief (15')

The task of the small groups is to come up with a common list – a list that everybody in the small group can agree on. Ask them to avoid using mathematical methods in order to establish the list, but rather to build that list on the basis of a shared understanding of what is good and what is bad.

#### Reflection and evaluation

One focus of the evaluation is the relevance values have for us to determine what we think is good and what is bad. After having established that insight, the next step is to look at how easy or difficult it is to negotiate about values when having to establish a common list. You can ask people how they managed to come up with a common list – which arguments worked to convince them, and why, and where there was a border of being able to understand and/or follow the other. A possible follow up is to then look at where we learned what is good and what is bad – and what that tells us about what we have in common and what makes us different.

#### Materials and resources

Per participant one copy of the Abigale's story (available via online link), Flipchart, pens



You can find more information about the tool on [https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/toolbox\\_tool\\_download-file-112/t%20kit%20intercultural%20learning.pdf](https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/toolbox_tool_download-file-112/t%20kit%20intercultural%20learning.pdf)





## Other Tools

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### 3/ Equality planning

#### Description of the tool

This tool targets the administration of HEIs. The tool helps prepare comprehensive strategies that enhance equality in different aspects of HEIs' operations, from the admissions of new students to university-level elections. To be successful, the tool requires the participation of the entire academic community, and the cooperation of different departments. The tool can also enable cooperation with external partners, such as NGOs or expert organizations. The tool can be implemented by individual HEIs or by policy makers.

#### Methodology

The tool can be implemented as a series of discussions, surveys or development workshops for staff and students. First, different areas of development must be mapped: e.g. student admissions, RDI activities, study environments, staff development and so on. The participants responsible for each area need to identify specific objectives, and find practices that will help achieve these objectives, as well as identify indicators to track the progress.



#### Materials and resources



You can find more information about the tool on the following example plan

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1cXGgrFUCm8O5N1E4rLazMIDHdN-II\\_6s/edit?hl=fi](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1cXGgrFUCm8O5N1E4rLazMIDHdN-II_6s/edit?hl=fi)



## Other Tools

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### 4/ Exploring Diversity

#### Description of the tool

This exercise was created by INCOM-VET (Development of Intercultural Competence of Students and Trainers in EU VET institutions) project partners. The exercise let the students face unexpected situations, dismantling social representations and stereotypes. Appropriate use of the feed-back can generate reflections on multidimensional patterns of diversity and can lead to overcoming barriers hampering proximity and contacts (engendering intercultural understanding).

This activity can generate reflections on multidimensional patterns of diversity, and can lead to overcome barriers hampering proximity and contacts (engendering intercultural understanding).

The exercise has been developed as a city exploration (adaptable to various experimental settings, e.g. workplace, university, community). It provides teachers and trainers with a methodology useful to create diverse exploration settings, for instance organizing visits and encounters in a specific work environment characterized by intercultural dynamics. Exploration techniques enable the learners to experience a direct experience of diversity; explorations can be more or less prepared and guided.

#### Methodology

In the setting of the city exploration, students are expected to explore a neighborhood over a period of three days. They are divided into subgroups (4 to 8 persons each). At the end they are expected to prepare a guided tour for presenting the results of their exploration, and the neighborhood under the lens of intercultural dynamics, to the other teams. The exercise is structured into 4 phases:

1. (Half day) - Step 1 Preparation – introduction of different neighborhoods by means of a lecture and a city walk. It includes gaining general knowledge, insight information, social, economic, political and historical background information, facts and figures from a broad range of perspectives. It helps refine the focus with respect to the general topic “interculturality and diversity”. After a collective introduction, students are divided into small groups composed of mixed backgrounds. They receive more detailed information on one specific neighborhood of the city (a „survival kit“, e.g. a map of the neighborhood, contact information for places of interest, articles and figures on the area and contact information of a „tutor“). They formulate hypotheses to be tested during the visit.
2. (Whole day) - Step 2 Exploration – Step two consists of going to the field (the neighborhood) and explore the environment, gaining new knowledge by observing, having contact with local actors and visiting local organizations. At the end of step 2, students gather enough information to compare the formulated hypotheses with the information gained exploring the neighborhood.



## Other Tools

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### 4/ Exploring Diversity

#### Methodology

3. (Half day) - Step 3 Elaboration: students test the hypotheses, reflecting on the general information, confirming or refuting their hypotheses. Prejudices are detected and compared with a different reality. New questions arise and new hypotheses could be formulated by adapting their preliminary hypotheses. Students prepare their guided tours for introducing the visit to another team.

4. (Whole day) - Step 4 Feedback – Each group designs a neighborhood walk, which includes a route map and the information gained during the exploration, for another group of students. The different groups exchange their products. Each group explores a new area using the route map and the extra information prepared by another team. The experience of a different area confronts the teams with the disparities between the different areas experiencing the diversity that may exist within one city. After the visits, a peer evaluation session is organized, based on the experience of the neighborhood walks. The students are encouraged to give feedback on their walks. A plenary debate on interculturality and diversity within an urban context concludes the work.

#### Materials and resources

Maps, materials and presentations about the place that will be explored



You can find more information about the tool on [http://farintercultural.ch/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/3\\_DEVELOPMENT-OF-INTERCULTURAL-COMPETENCE.-HANDBOOK-FOR-TEACHERS-AND-TRAINERS.pdf](http://farintercultural.ch/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/3_DEVELOPMENT-OF-INTERCULTURAL-COMPETENCE.-HANDBOOK-FOR-TEACHERS-AND-TRAINERS.pdf)

### 5/ Fairy Tale Evening

#### Description of the tool

This activity provokes a discussion on cultural heritage, moving definitions of culture and communication and ending with some tools and strategies aimed at improving intercultural communication and intercultural sensitivity. It can be considered as a form of experiential learning that combines theater, improvisation, creativity, reflection and can be used within the classroom as group activity.

- 1) Participants are divided into small groups
- 2) The group chooses a fairy tale or legend among those preferred by the participants and represents it in front of the others trying to put together different legends from different places and countries
- 3) It is possible to use various objects, fruits, drinks or whatever is necessary for the theatrical representation.

#### Methodology

The workshop methodology and content should be explained to participants 2-3 hours before its development to allow them to prepare properly. The facilitators divide the students into small groups.

Each group has to choose a fairy tale or legend among those preferred by the participants and represent it in front of the others trying to put together different legends from different places and countries. It is possible to use various objects, fruits, drinks or whatever is necessary for the theatrical representation.





## Other Tools

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### 5/ Fairy Tale Evening

#### Methodology

Then the facilitators should give each group time to prepare for the theatre performance. It would be better to carry out the activity in the evening using a stage or a dark room which creates more atmosphere and therefore greater participation and involvement. After the performance it is necessary to do the evaluation to understand how difficult it was to realise the activity and how difficult it was to join different stories from different countries.

#### Materials and resources

Colourful papers, scissors, balloons, masking tapes, make-up, face paint, post-its, string.



You can find more information about the tool on <https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-1789/Booklet%20Intercultural%20Communication%20Resource%20Pack.pdf>

### 6/ Multidimensional and Multicultural Expertise of Human Resources Professionals course and Community

#### Description of the tool

MMEHR 'Multidimensional and Multicultural Expertise of Human Resources Professionals' course is an online learning tool; that was developed under the framework of an Erasmus+ project. The project called 'Multidimensional and Multicultural Expertise of Human Resources Professionals aimed at fostering innovative teaching/learning in the Human Resources area based on advanced multidimensional and multicultural 4.0 skills. The MMEHR Course Human Resources multicultural recognition and evaluation 4.0 is made available as a MOOC "Massive Open Online Course According to the 2011 EU Modernisation Agenda enhancing lifelong learning via the creation of flexible learning paths, MMEHR promotes the development of ways to increase the rate of employability. The MOOC completion for trainers and students will provide them with the acquisition of quality skills and competences and, consequently, with a valuable opportunity for accessing the labour market.

#### Methodology

The online course can be used in multicultural or/and multilingual teams of students or employees easily as it hosted in the FEDERICA platform, whose structure is assistant and provides easy access, evaluation and monitoring to the facilitator. During the project partnership engaged learners and professionals in online training (more than 60 hours-25 participants) and pilot testing of the learning platform (60 participants) and intended to simulate the multicultural environment of the labour market. The element that makes this learning course special is the interaction between multicultural teams on the basis of learning material focusing on the topics of multiculturalism and diversity management (to the point interaction).

#### Materials and resources

Tools developed by the MMEHR project - available on the project website, laptop or desktop



You can find more information about the tool on <https://www.hrmmexpertise.eu/en>



## Other Tools

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### 7/ Managing individual differences

#### Description of the tool

Cultural differences may pose some difficulties for people when managing their businesses or working together. At the same time each culture offers a competitive advantage and can provide tremendous strengths to a team or project. This activity encourages taking advantage of diversity rather than suppressing it. It teaches how to overcome individual differences and cooperate. It is a method consisting of 4 stages that addresses collaboration skills and intercultural communication.

#### Methodology

Introduction and Reflection.

During this period, each participant will introduce themselves and five interesting cultural facts about the regions/countries that they represent. After everyone finishes with the introductions, the facilitator will divide the team into four groups and ask each group to compare and contrast different cultures and their associated practice. Each group will send a representative to present their findings. The end result of this activity is to help participants recognise that although on the surface, every culture seems to be deeply divided, all cultures share a universal set of common values, which lay the foundation for cooperation. (Duration 1 hour)

Workshop 1: The workshop will be conducted by an expert presenting the topic of different models of intercultural management which addresses the behaviours of people in organizations around the world and provide tips as to how to work with people from different cultures all over the world. The workshop is in seminar format where the expert only introduces the key points and theory and the participants will contribute by sharing their knowledge and experience. The purpose of this workshop is to ensure every participant is equipped with sufficient knowledge and management theories.(Duration 1 hour).

Lunch and dining etiquette across cultures. The restaurant is separated into four rooms, which are decorated in four themes: Chinese dining setting, British dining setting, Mexican dining setting, and American dining setting. There will be a facilitator joining with participants in each room. Table manners are the products of cultures and can differ greatly from culture to culture. If a person does not know about the dining etiquette of a particular culture, he or she can easily feel embarrassed and uncomfortable when participating and communicating in such an event. The purpose of this activity is to inspire participants to share their experience with this topic, learn about different table manners and give some recommendations as to how to act in this case. (Duration 1 hour).

1 hour rest:

Workshop 2: An expert will present on the topic of cultural dimension, cultural intelligence (including Linguistic Intelligence, Spatial Intelligence, Intrapersonal Intelligence, and Interpersonal Intelligence), and sources of cultural differences (male vs. female, individualism vs. collectivism, etc.). (Duration 1 hour) .

International Dinner: The restaurant serves food from all regions around the world, featuring specialties and delicacies from different places. During dinner time, participants are divided into teams of five to prepare for the campfire activities. (Duration 1 hour).



## Other Tools

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### 7/ Managing individual differences

Practice for campfire activities. Each team will represent an assigned country and prepare a 5 to 10 minutes performance to perform at the campfire, showcasing that country's culture. The performance can be dancing, singing, fashion show, short play, etc. The team is free to choose what they would like to do. (Duration 1 hour).

Campfire and team building exercises. The facilitators will assess the performance to choose the winners. (30 minutes)

### Materials and resources

Flip charts, food from different culture, camp fire, a price, writing materials, group rooms

 You can find more information about the tool on <https://toughnickel.com/business/Sample-Intercultural-Training-Programme>

### 8/ My History

#### Description of the tool

This exercise is designed to develop skills of self-awareness and self-knowledge, empathy and decentering, knowledge and understanding of other cultures, and to raise curiosity and empathy about other cultures and history. It is particularly useful to inspire curiosity in participants about the culture of others, to encourage people to speak about their cultural and historical similarities and differences, and to see where our beliefs and values stem from. It can work in local groups, but is particularly useful across cultures, as participants can experience shock/surprise that they have experienced similar historical events, or that they all have been affected by similar situations in the past.

#### Methodology

- Each participant must choose three public historical events that have left an impact on their lives (could be related to politics, history, sports, music, art, accidents, etc. and the focus can be positive, negative or neutral, as long as the event was public and left an impact on their life.
- Each participant must use a felt-tip pen or marker to write their name on the calendar beside the year in which the events occurred.
- Each participant must then present their three events, why they chose them, what happened, and how they impacted their life.
- After each participant has presented their events, each participant will be encouraged to raise their hands if they recognized any of the other events spoken about, and furthermore discuss if they were also impacted by the events.
- Participants will discuss whether we can see any patterns in the types of events that were chosen i.e. is there a specific type of event we attach more importance to than others?






## Other Tools

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### 8/ My History

#### Materials and resources

A calendar drawn on a board or a large sheet of paper, the calendar must show years starting at the year of birth of the oldest pupil and ending in the present

 You can find more information about the tool on “All different – All equal, Education Pack”, European Youth Centre, 1995 - more information found through this link: <http://intercultural-learning.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/ICL@School-Toolbox-final-1.pdf>

### 9/ Office InterActors (Leonardo da Vinci - Transfer of Innovation project)

#### Description of the tool

This methodology was implemented within the European project “Office Interactors” by the partners from 6 countries. It was targeting the development of transferable basic and professional communication and entrepreneurial skills for business and administration via internet-based simulations, problem-solving and role-play. The heart of this project was that it addressed the communication skills within the professional environment, having also the challenge of multiculturalism and diversity. The learners from this methodology can be trained to practice communication in complex situations, but very realistic for the job market.

#### Methodology

Application within the project “Office Interactors”

Advanced learners worked in national and multinational teams of entrepreneurs who had to suggest a new product for the national market, to find a name and create the mission statement of the new company that would manufacture it, to negotiate with the other teams and to choose only one product that would be made in an imaginary country Sechuria. In addition, they had to create the company structure, describe the production line, and create a blog for online company promotion. These tasks encouraged students’ entrepreneurial and negotiation skills, raised their awareness of the different accents of English as a global language, and improved their oral and written intercultural communication skills.

The intermediate students constituted the consultants’ group; they had to create a consulting company, to write job descriptions and to design a training programme for new employees, to give a presentation on equal opportunities in their country, to film it and post the video. In addition, they compiled a list of “do’s” and “don’ts” for potential foreign investors and to provide a “survival” lexicon in English and in their native language.

With both groups of learners, the opportunities for online interaction via moodle and skype encouraged their informal dialogue beyond the pre-defined tasks and their independent intercultural learning, according to their needs and curiosity. In addition, the freedom that they had in creating products, companies and advertising campaigns stimulated their spirit of competitiveness. Ultimately, they did not perceive the project as yet another school assignment but as something meaningful, outside of the classroom, as an experience and a form of expression that was valuable to them as individuals and as a group. Overall, the methodology enhanced the collaboration within the teams of multicultural learners and developed their perspective of the multicultural issues and diversity in the work environment.




## Other Tools

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### 9/ Office InterActors (Leonardo da Vinci - Transfer of Innovation project)

#### Materials and resources

Moodle, skype or other digital communication platform

 You can find more information about the tool on <https://www.euroed.ro/en/proiecte/proiecte-euroed/office-interactors>

### 10/ Step by step guide to cross-cultural training for offshore development team

#### Description of the tool

In 2020 the world experienced the COVID-19 pandemic. This led to school activities working remotely (online). This was the case as well with schools adopting PBL. facilitating PBL online is challenging for both Instructors and students alike. Intercultural communication challenges became more pronounced as student who were already experiencing intercultural communication problems either abstained from group meetings or faced the challenge on how to effectively participate in the meetings, hence remained mute. The cross-cultural training for offshore development team helps the instructor prepare and train multicultural students remotely in a PBL environment before they begin to work together. It is a tool that can be used at semester start events remotely and during the semester, as long as it does not add extra workload to the instructor. This is a tool widely used in industry for remote multicultural teams. It is adapted to a HEI environment for the purpose of this toolkit.

#### Methodology

1. Determine Cross-Cultural Training Needs
2. Define Training Objectives and Milestones
3. Establish a Structured Training Plan

Your training program should be structured in such a way that it complements the broader objective, your set milestones, and each individual team member's training success. Compare this to a teacher's lesson plan. Your plan should cover both work-related and general cultural principles, so the offshore team is able to comprehend the values and norms of U.S. business culture as a whole.

After you have defined both the broad and detailed objectives, establish a routine schedule for team discussion. These meetings will not only provide a means to stay well informed on your team members' progress, but also an-

-Introduce cultural tidbits or information in each meeting, or facilitate a discussion on positive globally trending news topics

-Participate in group learning activities, such as a relevant online-based class, webinar, or forum discussion

-Provide occasional fun extracurricular activities, such as film or book club, then regrouping to discuss plot points.

To further involve your team in these discussions, you could ask team members to provide these topics for discussion. By doing so, you can lean on these meetings to give you a good grip on your team's understanding

4. Create Measurable Tracking Metrics to Monitor Training Progress.



## Other Tools

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### 10/ Step by step guide to cross-cultural training for offshore development team

#### Methodology

##### 5. Delegate and Assign Ownership:

After defining time-specific objectives with your team, it's valuable to entrust certain individuals, from both the onshore and offshore teams, additional responsibility. Assigning ownership to these individuals, and having them become part of the training, will provide progress security and help bolster productivity within the team. It creates an extra filter to ensure progress continues, even in your absence

##### 6. Put Extra Emphasis on Mentoring

##### 7. Ensure Team Cooperation

#### Materials and resources

Supporting film, books, online communication facilities

 You can find more information about the tool on <https://allshorevirtualstaffing.com/step-step-guide-cross-cultural-training-offshore-development-teams/>

### 11/ Mirror game


#### Description of the tool

It is a rather easy exercise that can be used at the beginning of a new group process, it has a warm-up effect as well. It can help learners develop empathy and atonement, self-awareness and familiarize with the group.

#### Methodology

1. The group members form pairs and stand in front of each other.
2. One of the pairs is the model, the other one follows, mirrors any movement as best he/she can.
3. Then they change roles.
4. Debriefing

#### Materials and resources

 You can find more information about the tool on <https://crnonline.de/result/the-artist-within-toolkit-methodology-and-ideas/>





## Other Tools

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### 12/ International Tutor

#### Description of the tool

The UEF recruits peer tutors for different target groups (new students, new master students, international students, tutor for tutors). Each group must complete a training, for which they receive study credit points. The peer tutor's job is to make sure that the new student's adaptation goes smoothly. Peer tutors can assist with the following tasks: picking up keys for the apartment and a survival package (a set of basic household items, like dishes or sheets), picking up the student from the airport/train station, showing the student around at the university. The tutor can study in the same program but many do not. Sometimes the tutor invites new students to social activities, though this is not a rule. The tutor program has a formal status at the UEF. Tutors can receive awards for their work. Senior tutors are paid, employees.

#### Methodology

As tutoring requires certain skills, tutor recruitment needs to be taken seriously to make sure that new students are in good hands. Developing a functioning tutor program is a long process that requires stability, constant improvement and learning from mistakes. To develop a tutor program in your institution or organization you can start easily by discussing it with fellow workers/ educators and start disseminating this idea among students.

Try to read the experience from other relevant initiatives and if possible come in contact with the educators in order to find good practices and useful tips. This process will be time consuming, but it will establish a very efficient practice for the smooth adaptation of new students to the university life. With this initiative new students can easily find out information about studying, while they can easily find at least 1 friend at the start of term.

#### Materials and resources

Supporting film, books, online communication facilities



You can find more information about the tool on <https://allshorevirtualstaffing.com/step-step-guide-cross-cultural-training-offshore-development-teams/>