

2015 IACUC Conference
Boston, MA
Session B7: A Conversation About Diversity: Why it Matters
March 19, 2015
4:00 – 5:15 PM

1. *Cultural competence is defined as a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enables that system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations. Many view cultural competence as the ‘ability to address differences’.*
 - a. *How do you or your office address cultural competency?*
 - b. *How do you design and development education programs around cultural competence?*
 - c. *Consider the statement, “cultural competence – not a matter of minimizing differences and pretending they don’t exist, but is more about acceptance and adaptation to differences ...” If this statement is true, then what are some actions or responses we can take to ensure we have a culturally competent organization.*

Probing questions/thoughts for exploration

- **Body language** <http://news.travel.aol.com/2010/07/26/dangerous-body-language-abroad/>
 - **Religious/business cultures (Asian focus)**
<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/global-business-etiquette-11-tips-on-asian-culture/>
2. The development of knowledge necessary for the improvement of the health and well-being of humans as well as other animals requires in vivo experimentation with a wide variety of animal species. (Preamble U.S. Government Principles for the Utilization and Care of Vertebrate Animals used in Testing, Research, and Training. PHS Policy.)
 3. *Katherine Miller¹ from Columbia University writes, “Research has shown that social diversity in a group can cause discomfort, rougher interactions, a lack of trust, greater perceived interpersonal conflict, lower communication, less cohesion, more concern about disrespect, and other problems.” Other research has also shown that “greater diversity leads to increased productivity”. Still others believe that greater diversity in research, leads to better science. How do diversity and inclusion (D&I) affect our organizations and our research?*
 - a. *Does diversity and inclusion really make us smarter? Why or why not?*
 - Equality in discussion & presentation of ideas
 - Acceptance of change
 - Environmental factors (culture of office/institution)
 - b. **How might we weave D&I into research?**
 - “Whiteboarding” ideas with cultural concerns/nuances
 - c. *What examples can you provide that utilize differences to strengthen the foundation of an organization?*
 - **Culture of change** “The only thing constant in life is change” Francois de La Rochefoucauld
 - **Issues w/ Change (top 5 to overcome)**
<http://www.forbes.com/sites/lisaquast/2012/11/26/overcome-the-5-main-reasons-people-resist-change/>

4. *Think about how you might write a policy about diversity and inclusion in research studies. Is diversity equally important for all research?(consider research teams/collaborators and institutional diversity practices)*
- a. *Is diversity equally important for clinical and non-clinical research studies? What about studies with or without the expectation of direct benefit?*
 - b. *Could “diversity” be “bad” for a study? (Think social science research. Perhaps the researchers are legitimately interested in a very particular population.) How would you want to address this in policy/guidance?*
 - c. *Is diversity equally important for very small studies?*

ⁱ Scientific American Magazine, September 2014 Issue