Definition of Culture

Culture is the sum total ways of living, including:

- Values
- Beliefs
- Aesthetic Standards
- Linguistic Expression
- Patterns of Thinking
- Behavioral Norms
- Styles of Communication

...which a group of people has developed to assure its survival in a particular environment (Pusch, 1981).

We are socialized through "cultural conditioning" to adopt the ways of thinking of our own group.

HOW CULTURE IS LIKE AN ICEBERG

Communicating Across Cultures

Just as nine-tenths of an iceberg is below the surface of the water, most of culture is outside of conscious awareness and can be termed "deep culture."

architecture music dress
food visual art drama crafts
dance literature language
celebration

Ethics: notions of obscenity and sin, decency, conception of justice, modesty, child raising, attitude toward dependents, social responsibility

Aesthetics: conception of beauty, humor, patterns of visual perception

Social relationships: friendship, preference for competition/cooperation, physical expression, relationship with animals, social interaction rate, courtship. Superiority/inferiority by sex, race, class, occupation, kinship, age, etc.

Communication: expression of emotions, facial gestures, body language, conversational patterns in various social contexts, transfer of knowledge

Worldview: cosmology, conception of past and future, ordering of time, notions of logic and validity, tempo of work, conception of "self", notions of adolescence

Health: tolerance of physical pain, definition of insanity, theory of disease

Necessities: concepts of food, incentives to work, forms of shelter

Authority: patterns of group decision making, approaches to problem-solving, who/what conveys power

..and much, much MORE!

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Adapted from Interaction Associates and VISIONS Inc. by Ana Perez @2015

Cultural Sharing Exercise

◆ How do you identify racially, ethnically, and culturally?

◆ Describe your class background growing up? What is it currently?

◆ Name one thing you like about your cultural identity. What is something you don't like?

◆ How might your cultural background help you flourish and grow at work? How might it hinder your flourishing and growing at work?