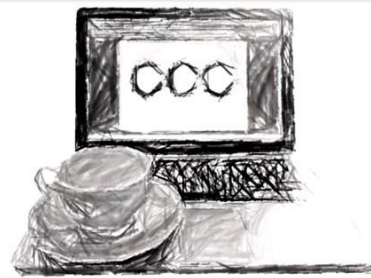




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CCC-Break 2: 20.02.2019. Burning Question: What intercultural icebreaker and game/activity work best to provide group learning in intercultural programmes?

The CCC Break Moderator, Gradiola Kapaj, opened the session and warmly welcomed the 12 attendees. She explained the logistics of the CCC Break and handed over to the Contributor/Panelist, Rosemary Gorman Morley. Rosemary began by saying that there are many wonderful resources available to help provide ways to “warm up” our participants in group intercultural training workshops, to assist us in creating a positive atmosphere, to encourage participation by our group members and to foster open-mindedness. The CCC Break participants were then reminded about the new resource from SIETAR EUROPA called, “Intercultural Training Tool Kit”. (Kindly note, this is available online to purchase and will also be for sale at the upcoming SIETAR Europa Congress in Belgium.) Despite the numerous options, many of us have, “tried and true”, or favourite icebreakers and games and activities that we incorporate into our learning and development sessions, and today’s CCC Break was considered a fabulous platform for sharing best practice amongst colleagues in the SIETAR Europa network.

The first icebreaker described was, “Human Bingo”, where programme participants are encouraged to walk around the training venue with a piece of paper, which has been divided into a grid with four blocks/squares across and four blocks/squares down. There is a question in each box, such as, “Have you ever seen the Pyramids?”, “Can you salsa or tango?”, “Are you wearing something of cultural significance?”. The aim is to find someone who answers, “yes”, to your question and to write the name of that person in the block/square. The first person to have four names across, down or diagonally is asked to call out, “Bingo” and is the “winner”. “Scavenger Search” was then mentioned as a similar icebreaker that has a list of 20 questions/instructions, such as, “Find someone who has been to New York.” These icebreakers work well to illustrate what we have in common, before a workshop proceeds to talk about cultural differences. They are also very effective for inspiring interesting conversations during the break time.

Another favourite contributed by a CCC Break attendee was an icebreaker where participants are each given guidelines of culturally specific ways of greeting others on a piece of paper. After memorising the approach, everyone must go around the room and greet the other participants using the new form of greeting that is not his/her own cultural social norm. It was advised that 2-3 people should serve as observers. This is a fantastic way to learn about different customs and to experience what it feels like to try a new way of saying hello.

An additional exercise was shared which works well when a group is divided in two, based on statements such as, "I love pizza." The participants are supposed to guess to which group individuals belong, without speaking. This is a good activity to illustrate the power of first impressions, reading or misreading body language, unconscious bias, etc. The CCC Break participants went on to discuss how powerful an icebreaker exercise can be when people share the history/significance of their name. This can reveal a lot about the individual's culture, as well create a safe space to share some personal information, which can help with relationship building.

Detailed overviews of both BaFa BaFa (invented by Dr. R. Garry Shirts) and Barnga (created by Thiagi Thiagarajan) were provided by attendees and both simulation games were considered favourites by many present. BaFa BaFa divides a group in half and gives the two groups different values, ways of behaving and problem solving. Observers are sent to the other group to try to understand the different culture, including the best way to interact with them. This activity incorporates some of Quinn's Model of "Competing Values". Barnga is a card game where, unknown to the participants, who are not allowed to speak, each table/team has been given different rules. The winning pairs of each round progress to the next table and encounter an unexpected surprise that the game is played differently. The last round sees the pair itself being changed, and now even one's own partner has a different way of thinking. Both of these simulations require time and care with thorough debriefs focusing on what happens when we find ourselves in new environments with different rules, whether it be a new country and cultural environment or new workplace and corporate culture.

A less time consuming exercise, which has many of the same learning points as the games mentioned above, is called, "Working in Unfamiliar Surroundings". The credit for this game was given to Marianne Brandt, who is responsible for the original design, and the modification of this activity, was kindly shared by George Simons. In this exercise, there are 20 simple math equations for the participants to complete as quickly as possible. The challenge is that in the "new country" where they are now working, the minus symbol means to multiply, the divided by symbol means to add, the addition symbol means to divide and the multiplication symbol means to subtract! Additionally, an alternative suggestion to Barnga was a game called CultuRallye, which is available to purchase from Megalog Training Tools. Instead of using a deck of playing cards, participants play with two cubes. There are symbols and numbers on the cubes, and once again, each table has different rules as to how to use the cubes, however, this is not shared with the groups. Talking is also not permitted.

Some tips at the end of today's session included providing culturally themed prizes, where appropriate, for games/activities, if there is a "winner" or "winning team; letting at least two people announce they are first, or they have completed the task, before ending the exercise for all, in case of an error by the first person; giving an option to participants to be an observer (highly recommended), as not everyone enjoys game participation, and there can also be cultural, including religious, reasons for wishing to abstain.


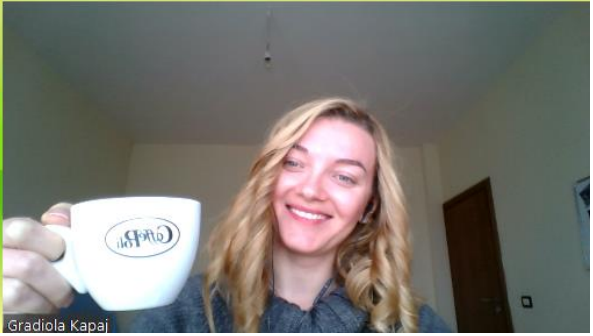
The CCC Break lasted a little longer than 40 minutes, based on the interest displayed by those present.

Thank you to everyone who attended this enjoyable and enlightening session, and a special word of appreciation goes to everyone who shared one of his/her favourite icebreakers, games or activities

SIETAR Europa Cross Cultural Coffee Breaks

Summary

Thanks for this summary of our CCC Break discussion to:

 <p>Rosemary Morley</p>	 <p>Gradiola Kapaj</p>
<p>Contributor: Rosemary Gorman Morley</p> <p>roegmorley@hotmail.com</p> <p>www.linkedin.com/in/rosemarygormanmorley</p>	<p>SEU Moderator: Gradiola Kapaj</p> <p>gradiola@sietareu.org</p> <p>https://www.linkedin.com/in/gradiola-kapaj/</p>

SIETAR Europa Cross Cultural Coffee Breaks

Summary



Thanks for the wonderful sharing of your favourite icebreakers and intercultural games and activities to all of our participants. Some of today's attendees:

