

Cultural Competence in the Workplace:

10 ways to engage with Asylum Seekers and Refugees

1. **Create an inclusive space**-for example...removal of religious iconography of one religion, replacing with a variety of religions or displaying materials that represent cultural diversity.
2. **Be mindful and positive**-providers who are unhappy and stressed are more likely to engage with stereotyping and be less patient.
3. **Establish a partnership approach**-develops a common identity, builds rapport and trust, reduces bias and creates empathy.
4. **Overcome communication barriers**-check if an interpreter is required, offer translated information resources, check understanding, adjust one's own language (no jargon) and be mindful of your body language.
5. **Individuation**-focus on unique traits of the individual and be respectful of these e.g. the use of body language may differ. Do not make presumptions based on one's own interpretation of racial/religious traits, behaviours, customs etc.
6. **Understanding**-if you require information regarding cultural background ask for clarification from the individual-it's ok not to have all the answers.
7. **Empathy**-imagine yourself living in the shoes of the person you're helping. Active listening, social talk, giving space and time for the person to explain issues enhances empathy.
8. **Planning**-seek clarification that any plans made are realistically achievable for the person e.g. public transport costs, childcare constraints, language barriers etc.
9. **Supports**-offer culturally sensitive and appropriate supports where available and relevant.
10. **Follow up/Check in**-if appointments are missed they should be followed up and where possible offer a check in/follow on call to see how the person is doing.

Resources to help you can be found on:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/primarycare/socialinclusion/about-social-inclusion/translation-hub/>