



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>My personal tour guide</b>
Time	40 minutes
Material	Blindfolds, flipchart, pens
Description of content	<p>The topic is experiencing ambiguous situations and how to control emotional involvement.</p> <p>The group is split in two, one is playing the tourists, the other one the tour guides. The tourists are given the following instructions:</p> <p>"Imagine you travel to a fictitious culture you do not know. You will get a tour guide who is to make you familiar with his culture. However, there is a problem: he doesn't speak your language and so you can only communicate non-verbally with your tour-guide. Another obstacle is that you will be blindfolded. The tour-guide will introduce 3 main characteristics of his culture non-verbally."</p> <p>The tour guides now have 5 minutes to think of the 3 characteristics, then they choose a tourist and guide him around and try to convey the characteristics to him non-verbally. Finally the guides take their tourists back to their seats.</p>
Aims of exercise	This is an activity to discover how different perceptions lead to misunderstandings, raising awareness for cultural differences and enhancing intercultural competencies.
Reflection of exercise	<p>In the following reflection and evaluation round, first the tourists speak about their experiences. The trainer takes notes on the flip-chart: in the first column he writes what was shown to the tourists and in the second column he jots down what the tourists think the meaning of this was. Then it is the tour guides' turn: They now reveal what they really meant to express.</p> <p>Participants who experienced this exercise report this: "I was the tourist and was fed by my guide and I interpreted this as an act of paternalism. But the guide really wanted to express hospitality in his culture."</p>
Benefits of exercise	The activity is well placed when we want to emphasize how different perceptions lead to misunderstandings. It addresses traps we might fall into when dealing with other cultures in a more holistic sense, as participants really experience this in the activity and not just talk about them.
Obstacles of exercise	For some participants it may be a problem to be blindfolded. The trainer needs to check if this is the case, and then should replace the activity by a similar one.
References	Emil, Handbuch für Interkulturelle Kompetenz in der Grundschule