



**Intercultural  
Programs** *USA*

# **RE-ENTRY ORIENTATION**

## **LEADER'S GUIDE**

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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the AFS-USA Re-entry Orientation Leader's Guide and thank you for taking on the task of addressing this extremely important, yet sometimes forgotten, phase of the cultural adaptation cycle with returnees in your area!

These materials were brought to you through the work of the AFS-USA Orientation Workgroup, a group of AFS-USA staff and volunteers who work together to improve the quality of our orientation materials. Much of the content of this booklet was created by one member of the group in particular, former staff member and current AFS volunteer, Sara Vandepuete of the Capitol Area Team. On behalf of all AFS-USA staff and volunteers, my heartfelt thanks go out to Sara for all of the time, energy and expertise that she contributed to this project.

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### Coming Home

As countless AFS returnees can attest, the re-entry phases of the cultural adaptation cycle are challenging for many sojourners and re-adjusting to the home culture is often more difficult than the adaptation to a foreign culture. This occurs because the sojourner expects to return to a familiar environment in terms of family, friends, culture, school, work, community groups, and routine. However, the sojourner often does not recognize how much s/he has changed during the overseas experience and how this has affected his/her perspective, values, beliefs, expectations and choices.

As a result, most sojourners experience reverse or re-entry culture shock as a part of coming home. What makes reverse culture shock so powerful is that it is typically unexpected. After all, why would anyone suspect it to be difficult to return home? Future sojourners, although not always well-prepared, are usually at least aware that culture shock is part of living abroad. There is a recognition that they will be going to a place where the way of life is different and this will cause disorientation, frustration, and conflict. However, they do not expect to face similar challenges at home as if they were in another country. Therefore, it is important to provide support to sojourners not only prior to and during their stay abroad, but also when they return home.

### Goals of the Re-entry Orientation

By participating in the Re-entry Orientation (REO) we hope that participants will:

1. Understand a framework for the re-entry phase of the exchange experience (Honeymoon, Reverse Culture Shock, Recovery, Reintegration);
2. Consider coping skills to help ease the re-entry process;
3. Process the exchange experience in a supportive environment;
4. Increase awareness of intercultural learning and personal growth that emerged, and continues to emerge, as a result of the AFS experience;
5. Begin/continue integrating the AFS exchange experience and personal growth into daily life in the United States; and
6. Explore options to develop leadership skills as global citizens, including specific opportunities for continued involvement with AFS.

The first goal aims to ensure that participants leave the REO recognizing that the emotions they experience associated with returning home are common and they are not alone in feeling them. The second goal allows participants to share and consider strategies for coping with potential challenges related to the re-entry process. Providing both a framework for understanding the adjustment cycle and a forum for sharing throughout the REO helps participants to articulate their experience, which in turn, helps them to accomplish the third goal of the Re-entry Orientation: processing the exchange experience in a supportive environment.

By allowing the participants to process their experiences in a supportive environment we set the stage for the fulfillment of goal number four: increasing awareness of intercultural learning and personal growth. As stated earlier, returned sojourners often do not recognize how much they have changed and grown until after returning home. For instance, participants have not only learned about, but have been presented and challenged with different beliefs, values, and perspectives. In many instances, participants have adapted to the new culture by incorporating some of these beliefs, values, and perspectives. As a result, they are able to view life from at least two cultural frames of reference, and therefore recognize that there is more than one viable way to live. In the process, many participants have also acquired skills and attitudes key to successful cross-cultural communication. It is important for participants to recognize this growth because it validates and affirms the value of the participants' experiences as well as empowers them to express how they matured and demonstrate their newly acquired skills.

We included the fifth goal of integrating the AFS exchange experience and personal growth into daily life because often returnees compartmentalize or "shoebox" their overseas experience, much like a box of souvenirs which remains on a shelf at the back of the closet, only to be taken out from time to time and usually not shared with others. This may occur because the returnee perceives that his/her family, friends, and other important people show a superficial interest in the exchange. This response may seem discouraging and trivialize the returnee's experience. At the same time, the returnee may not realize that the people in his/her life have not grown and changed in the same way as s/he has during the sojourn. Therefore, they may not always know how to support the significance of returnee's exchange. Equally crucial, the returnee must recognize that just as s/he has changed during the time away, it is likely that the people at home have changed as well. By setting integration as a goal, there will be a space at the orientation dedicated not only to honoring this growth and the experience, but for recognizing that this growth has a place in the returnee's life, whether personal or public. Also, this indicates that an experience abroad does not have to be limited to a journey, but can evolve into an odyssey that lasts a lifetime.

The sixth goal is an extension of the fourth and fifth. Now that the returnee has lived abroad, grown as a result, and is learning to honor these experiences and integrate them into daily life, s/he should explore future possibilities. How can the returnee take his/her experience and make a difference in the world? After all, there is much conflict today stemming from poor cross-cultural communication and ethnocentrism both within the United States and between nations. Many recent returnees have begun to hone the very knowledge, skills, and sensitivity key to improving this situation through their exchange experience. It is also important to speak of continued involvement in AFS because it not only creates a supportive community for the returnee, but today's returnees are the future of AFS.

## **DESCRIPTION OF SECTIONS OF THE REO LEADER'S GUIDE**

The REO Leader's Guide is divided into four main sections:

1. Planning
2. Activities
3. Evaluation
4. My Resources

### **Planning**

In this section you will find various resources to help you plan an orientation, including templates to help create an agenda, as well as tips on selecting and training facilitators, and creating an effective learning environment.

### **Activities**

In the Activities section of the handbook you will find a set of REO activities. We ask that you choose a selection of these activities, the combination of which will fulfill all six goals of the REO. We have designed the handbook in this way in order to accommodate the wide range of needs found among Area Teams. For example, some teams will have a half-day event, attended by six people. Others will have an overnight event combined with another hosting or sending orientation. We hope that this design will better serve the needs of all Area Teams.

### **Evaluation**

This section emphasizes the importance of conducting an evaluation of your REO and provides tips for doing so. We encourage you to share a summary of your results or feedback on your REO via the Orientation Discussion of AFS Online. In this way other volunteers may benefit from your experience with the activities you chose to use and your input will be taken into consideration during future revision of this handbook.

### **My Resources**

The last section, My Resources, is a place for you to keep personal or Area Team contact lists, sign-up sheets, schedules, site directions and rules, sample invitations, etc. Again, if you have a particular resource that you feel would be useful to other volunteers, please share it via the Orientation Discussion of AFS Online.

We have designed this handbook so that it may be easily updated, including the addition of new activities. This format will also allow for ease of photocopy, result in less waste and a better resource which reflects the changing reality and needs of both Area Teams and the organization. The entire handbook and any updates will be available in the Library of AFS Online.

## FORMAT OF THE ACTIVITIES

### General Design

The format of the REO activities is designed to ensure that each activity could be run effectively regardless of the leader's level of knowledge about AFS or level of experience with AFS. In essence, we have strived to "put down on paper" the knowledge and experience of hundreds of volunteers and staff, combined with the most up-to-date information about AFS policies, procedures and resources related to the overseas exchange experience. All handouts for group leaders and participants are included with each activity, so there is no participant handbook. You will create a packet of handouts for your participants and group leaders based on the activities which you choose to use.

Key to the success of the revised REO is the Orientation Work Group and the Orientation Discussion of AFS Online. The Orientation Work Group consists of individuals who are available to share feedback on draft orientation resources created by volunteers and staff, and who share their own ideas and resources for consideration for use at the national level.

The Orientation Discussion is located in the Orientation Discussion section of AFS Online. It is the hub of activity related to orientation content, for both hosting and sending. It is where ideas and best practices are shared and calls for assistance and feedback are posted. Both the Orientation Work Group and the Orientation Discussion are open to all staff and volunteers of AFS-USA. For more information on how to join the Orientation Work Group or access the Orientation Discussion, please contact your Regional Travel and Logistics Coordinator.

### Activity Format

Each activity in this handbook consists of the following sections: *Title, Goals, Objectives, Time, Group Size, Materials, Preparation, and Instructions.*

In addition, on the top right corner of the first page of the activity you will find a code box. Each activity in this handbook is coded according to:

1. Which of the six goals of the REO program it fulfills;
2. The level of preparation and amount of supporting materials it requires; and
3. The length of the activity.

See page 12 for a list of codes and their meaning.

## **PLANNING**

Putting together a successful orientation has many steps. As a facilitator, you will be involved with important organizational tasks that set the stage for the orientation itself. In some situations, you may handle these tasks yourself. In others, you may share the duties with others. Either way, laying the proper groundwork is essential for any workshop that you are facilitating. This section will cover handling the logistical concerns related to planning and running an orientation.

### **Logistics**

Organizing an orientation involves several logistical pieces that emerge from the parameters you have established. If you are working as part of an organizing team, this is an area where other team members can contribute greatly by taking responsibility for making arrangements. As the orientation facilitator, however, it is important to be involved in the logistics, whether or not you take primary responsibility for them. Part of organizing an orientation is ensuring that all of the pieces come together smoothly so that the participants are able to learn in a comfortable and problem-free environment.

### **Training Site**

The first major task is finding a site where the orientation can be held. Once you know where and when you want to hold the orientation, how long it will be, how many people will ideally be in attendance, and how much money is in your budget, you can begin the process of finding an appropriate site. There are many options to consider, including community centers, churches, schools, camps, office conference rooms, and hotel conference rooms. Each option should be considered in light of other logistical arrangements. Consider the following questions:

- How much training space will you need?
- Will you need overnight rooms? How many?
- Will you need common areas for eating and socializing?
- Does the site allow you to bring your own food?
- What facilities do you need to prepare food?
- How accessible is the site to the orientation participants?
- Will you need to arrange group transportation to the site because of location or distance?
- Is adequate and affordable parking available?
- Does the site have the audio-visual equipment that you need or will they allow you to bring your own?

You may have other specific training needs from the site, so it is helpful to write down a list of requirements before beginning the search process.

Once you have located a site, you will need to reserve it. Some sites are quite popular and may need to be reserved months in advance, so plan as far ahead as possible. Reserving a site can sometimes be a simple process involving no money or contract. In most situations, the arrangements will be more formal. Always consult with the volunteer leaders in your area and with your AFS Regional Service Center if you are asked to sign a contract, make a down payment, and provide proof of liability insurance because you are committing not only yourself but the organization when you take these steps.

After reserving the site, you will want several pieces of information for yourself and your participants, directions and a map for reaching the site, instructions for parking, and important

phone numbers. You will also want to familiarize yourself with the layout of the site so that you are comfortable with the environment and can help familiarize the participants in your workshop. Know about restrooms, public phones, smoking policies, other events taking place at the same time, and local community services such as gas stations and photocopying centers. Finally, you will want to know how you gain access to the facility on the day of the orientation, since you will most likely be training outside of regular business hours.

## **Overnight Lodging**

There are a variety of options to consider, including rooms in private homes, hostels, and camps. Except when you are using private homes, your lodging and training site will most likely be the same location, so you can build rooms into the contract. In any situation involving a contract for lodging, find out when you must firmly commit to the number of rooms you will need. Even if you do not fill all of the spaces in the orientation, you will typically have to pay for all of the rooms or beds you have reserved. Finally, find out when participants can arrive and by what time they must leave. Most facilities will make arrangements such as extended check-out and luggage storage if the times do not coincide neatly with the orientation times.

## **Serving Food and Drinks**

For an orientation of any length, it is highly recommended to provide refreshments and/or meals. The amount and frequency will vary with the time of day and length of the orientation itself. In short, the food and drink arrangements can help entice invitees to attend, can provide opportunities for socializing during an orientation, and can provide the boost of energy participants need to stay alert after a couple of hours of training. Given the relatively low cost of providing food and drinks, it is better to be generous because satiated participants are happier participants.

Handling food and drink arrangements and preparation is time-consuming. As the orientation facilitator, you will probably have difficulty focusing on the training if you also have to worry about snacks and meals. It is especially helpful to get assistance in this area, and even better to turn all of the arrangements over to someone else not involved in organizing the training. If you are using professional food services such as the site caterer or a restaurant, the arrangements are simpler, but can still be a distraction. If your group is preparing your own food, it is imperative that someone else take the lead in handling these preparations.

In handling food and drink arrangements it is important to be thorough. In addition to the food and drinks, make sure to have plates, utensils, cups, napkins, cutting knives, salt and pepper, condiments, ice, trash bags, and other standard accompaniments that you would readily have at home. If you are using professional food services, make sure you have budgeted carefully, including taxes and gratuities. Given the diversity of eating habits, it is also important that you account for different tastes by offering a variety of options, including a vegetarian option. A variety of drinks is also important as different people prefer water, juice, sodas, coffee, and tea.

## **Organizing Equipment and Supplies**

While preparing the activities you are going to use in the orientation, make a list of equipment and supplies that you will need. The following items are commonly used for workshops:

- Dry erase boards and/or chalkboards
- Flip chart paper
- Marking pens
- Chalk
- Masking tape
- Thumbtacks
- Staplers
- Paper clips
- Pens or pencils

Depending on the training site, you may be able to bring in your own equipment, you may be able to use the facility's equipment free of charge, or you may have to pay for the use of the facility's equipment. In selecting your site, it is best to ask ahead of time about their equipment use policy because it can be a major expense if you are required to use and pay for their equipment, something which is common for hotels as an example.

If you plan to use more sophisticated high-tech equipment, test using it before the orientation begins. The equipment can be confusing to use when you are in the midst of facilitating an orientation and the technology does occasionally fail. Though high-tech equipment can help you make snazzier presentations, the content rather than the technology should be the central focus of the orientation. As a backup to equipment failure, do have some low-tech options that you can rely on.

It is also important to make a list of the handouts you will be using in the orientation. Plan to make photocopies well in advance of the orientation to avoid mishaps with faulty copying machines. Also, make more copies than you think you will need so that all participants receive their own materials. As a contingency, know where you can conveniently make more copies if you do run out of them during the orientation.

## **Transportation Issues**

Most participants will drive their own vehicles or carpool to the orientation. For those who are driving, you will need to make sure they have a few simple pieces of information, including directions and a map to the training site and parking instructions. If you believe carpooling will be helpful, you may also want to maintain a list of participants who have indicated they would like to share rides. You can share this information among participants as they request it.

If participants arrive by means other than a car, you will want to keep a list of scheduled arrival times and possibly assist in making arrangements for them to go from the train station or bus depot to the training site.

## **Managing Expenses**

Consult your Chapter or Area Team Treasurer to determine your budget for the event. Once you have been allotted a specific budget for the orientation, it is important to stay within it. To start, decide how much money will need to spend on each of the arrangements — site rental, lodging, food and drinks, equipment and supplies. Also consider administrative expenses such as postage, photocopying, and phone calls. Create a written budget for the event and record

expenses as they occur. This will help you monitor and adjust your budget as needed. In all cases, keep receipts to document what you have spent. Receipts are a necessary part of the expense report form whether you have received an advance or will be receiving reimbursement.

## Handling the Orientation Logistics — Checklist

- Reserve a training site that meets the needs of the orientation and familiarize yourself with the services and layout of the site.
- Arrange overnight lodging for participants, if necessary.
- Consult with volunteer leaders and staff if you need to sign a contract, make a down payment, or offer proof of liability insurance for the site and/or lodging.
- Determine what food and drinks need to be provided at the orientation and who will handle these arrangements.
- Make a list of equipment and supplies needed for the orientation, make arrangements to have them at the site, and test the equipment before the orientation begins.
- Determine how people will travel to the site and ensure that participants who need special travel arrangements receive personalized assistance.
- Consult with the unit's financial officer to establish a detailed budget, a process for monitoring expenses and collecting receipts, and a procedure for reimbursing yourself and workshop participants.

## The Invitation

All of the decisions and arrangements you are making are on behalf of participants whom you hope will attend the orientation and gain the maximum benefit from being there. Through good communication you will generate enthusiasm and create realistic expectations about the event.

Your first step is to obtain a list of returnees from your Regional Travel and Logistics Coordinator at least one month prior to the date of your REO. Next you will draft a formal invitation to the event. A well-designed invitation will spark interest and encourage returnees to attend. There are items which you can include in the invitation that will help towards these ends, such as a hand-written note encouraging an individual to attend, a testimonial from an older returnee in your area about the importance of attending the REO, "teasers" on the topics to be covered, and information about the social opportunities, if any, surrounding the orientation.

The invitation should also be very clear about the logistical details of the orientation. Participants want to know specifics such as who has been invited, when and where the orientation will be held, what food is being offered, who will be facilitating the orientation, how to RSVP, and who to call if they have questions. Including these details will convey a message that the orientation is well organized and will reduce the potential for confusion and frustration. Sending the invitations well in advance (approximately four to six weeks) is another detail that will show the professional level of organization behind the orientation and allow people enough time to make plans to attend.

After the invitations have been sent, you will increase attendance by initiating follow-up phone calls and e-mails encouraging people to attend. Other volunteers can be very useful by calling people they know personally to encourage them. Sending a reminder postcard to those who have not sent their RSVP is another way to increase attendance since many potential participants will put the invitation in a pile and forget to return to it.

## **Setting Realistic Expectations**

One of the greatest detriments to the success of an orientation is an unfulfilled expectation. If the initial invitation does not convey the topics that will be covered, you may want to send follow-up correspondence such as an agenda or some brief background reading related to one of the goals of the orientation. Not only will this help ensure that all of the participants are on the same page, but it will help remind people to attend the event.

## **Steps for Drafting Agenda**

Following are the steps we recommend taking when drafting the agenda for your Re-entry Orientation.

1. Keeping in mind the approximate length of your REO, review the activities in this handbook and select those that you would like to include.
2. Begin to complete the *Goals Worksheet* (see page 13) by inserting the name of each activity you have chosen into the field corresponding to the goals which the activity helps fulfill. The *Goals Worksheet* is also available on AFS Online.
3. Review the *Goals Worksheet* to determine if the combination of activities which you have selected help fulfill all six goals of the REO program. There should be at least one activity listed for each goal. One activity may help fulfill several goals and therefore be listed under several goals. If not, choose another activity or substitute one for another and adjust your worksheet accordingly.
4. Complete the *Agenda Template* (see page 14) by inserting the activities that you have chosen and the appropriate breaks and icebreaker. If you have too few or too many activities to fit the time frame provided, review your *Goals Worksheet* to determine where you might want to insert or delete an activity. The *Agenda Template* is also available on AFS Online.

Sample Agendas and Sample Goals worksheets can be found starting on page 15.

## **Tips for Drafting an Agenda**







Following are some general tips to keep in mind when drafting your agenda:

- Always start the session with the required *Getting Acquainted, Goals, Agenda, Setting Norms* activity so that attendees understand from the start what they can expect to learn and when. Always end it with the required *Closure and Evaluation* activity.
- Schedule a break or meal at every 90 to 120 minutes during the session.







- Move from lower to higher risk activities as the session unfolds. In other words, don't insert intense activities which require a lot of processing and self reflection at the very beginning of the schedule. Allow time for people to relax, get to know one another and build a little trust before you expect them to participate in this kind of activity.
- Keep switching from small to large groups to a minimum in order to save time.
- Try to mix the small groups up so that the same people are not together the entire session, especially in the case of longer (overnight) orientations.
- If possible, do a short 3 – 5 minute physical energizer right before the session following lunch.

If you have any tips you would like to share with other volunteers and/or see in the next version of this handbook, please post them on the Orientation Discussion of AFS Online.

## Goals Code Key

	<b>Understand a framework for the re-entry phase of the exchange experience (Honeymoon, Reverse Culture Shock, Recovery, Reintegration).</b>
	<b>Consider coping skills to help ease the re-entry process.</b>
	<b>Process the exchange experience in a supportive environment.</b>
	<b>Increase awareness of intercultural learning and personal growth that emerged, and continues to emerge, as a result of the AFS experience.</b>
	<b>Begin/continue integrating the AFS exchange experience and personal growth into daily life in the United States.</b>
	<b>Explore options to develop leadership skills as global citizens, including specific opportunities for continued involvement with AFS.</b>
●	<b>Minimal preparation/materials</b>
● ●	<b>Some preparation/materials</b>
● ● ●	<b>Substantial preparation/materials</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>The length of the activity is noted in the last field of the code box in increments of 15 minutes.</b>







## Goals Worksheet

	<p><b>Understand a framework for the re-entry phase of the exchange experience (Honeymoon, Reverse Culture Shock, Recovery, Reintegration).</b></p>
<p><b>Activities</b></p>	
	<p><b>Consider coping skills to help ease the re-entry process.</b></p>
<p><b>Activities</b></p>	
	<p><b>Process the exchange experience in a supportive environment.</b></p>
<p><b>Activities</b></p>	
	<p><b>Increase awareness of intercultural learning and personal growth that emerged, and continues to emerge, as a result of the AFS experience.</b></p>
<p><b>Activities</b></p>	
	<p><b>Begin/continue integrating the AFS exchange experience and personal growth into daily life in the United States.</b></p>
<p><b>Activities</b></p>	
	<p><b>Explore options to develop leadership skills as global citizens, including specific opportunities for continued involvement with AFS.</b></p>
<p><b>Activities</b></p>	

## Agenda Template

Time	Length	Type	Title	Group Size	Notes
	60	Required	Getting Acquainted, Goals, Agenda, Setting Norms		
	45	Required	Closure and Evaluation		

## Sample Goals Worksheet I

	<p><b>Understand a framework for the re-entry phase of the exchange experience (Honeymoon, Reverse Culture Shock, Recovery, Reintegration).</b></p>
<p><b>Activities</b></p>	<p>Charting the Curve</p>
	<p><b>Consider coping skills to help ease the re-entry process.</b></p>
<p><b>Activities</b></p>	<p>Coping Tools: Common Problems and Solutions</p>
	<p><b>Process the exchange experience in a supportive environment.</b></p>
<p><b>Activities</b></p>	<p>Charting the Curve Coping Tools: Common Problems and Solutions Reflecting on the Experience</p>
	<p><b>Increase awareness of intercultural learning and personal growth that emerged, and continues to emerge, as a result of the AFS experience.</b></p>
<p><b>Activities</b></p>	<p>Outcomes from an International Experience Reflecting on the Experience Launching an International Club</p>
	<p><b>Begin/continue integrating the AFS exchange experience and personal growth into daily life in the United States.</b></p>
<p><b>Activities</b></p>	<p>Outcomes from an International Experience Reflecting on the Experience Launching an International Club Weaving the AFS Experience into Your Life</p>
	<p><b>Explore options to develop leadership skills as global citizens, including specific opportunities for continued involvement with AFS.</b></p>
<p><b>Activities</b></p>	<p>Launching an International Club Weaving the AFS Experience into Your Life</p>

**Sample Agenda I**

Six or more returnees







Overnight session combined with a Hosting and/or Sending Orientation

**Sample Agenda I**

Time	Length	Type	Title	Group Size	Notes
<b>Day 1</b>					
9:00 – 10:00	60	Required	Getting Acquainted, Goals, Agenda, Setting Norms		
10:00 – 11:00	60	Activity	Charting the Curve		
11:00 – 11:15	15	Break			
11:15 – 12:15	60	Activity	Coping Tools: Common Problems and Solutions		
12:15 – 1:15	60	Lunch			With hosting or sending orientation attendees
1:15 – 2:00	45	Activity	Outcomes from an International Experience		
2:00 – 3:30	90	Activity	Reflecting on the Experience		
3:30 – 3:45	15	Break			
3:45 – 5:00	75	Activity	Join Hosting or Sending Orientation in session		As co-group leaders or otherwise
5:00 – 5:30	30	Break	Free time		
5:30 – 6:30	60	Break	Dinner		
6:30 – 7:00	30	Activity	Team building activities		
7:00 – 8:30	90	Activity	Join Hosting or Sending Orientation		As co-group leaders or otherwise
8:30 – 12:00		Free time			Have movies, board games, & group games available – <i>Twister</i> , <i>Uno</i> , <i>Cranium</i> , <i>Pictionary</i> , etc.

<b>Time</b>	<b>Length</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Group Size</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Day 2</b>					
7:30 – 8:30	60	Breakfast			Pack and clean up room
8:30 – 9:45	75	Activity	Launching an International Club		
9:45 – 10:30	45	Activity	Weaving the AFS Experience into Your Life		At the end of the activity present schedule of AFS events and sign-up sheets
10:30 – 10:45	15	Break			
10:45 – 11:30	45	Required	Closure and Evaluation		Extra time at end in case you get off schedule in the morning, or have them help clean space

## Sample Goals Worksheet II

	<p><b>Understand a framework for the re-entry phase of the exchange experience (Honeymoon, Reverse Culture Shock, Recovery, Reintegration).</b></p>
<p><b>Activities</b></p>	<p>Charting the Curve</p>
	<p><b>Consider coping skills to help ease the re-entry process.</b></p>
<p><b>Activities</b></p>	<p>Coping Tools: Common Problems and Solutions</p>
	<p><b>Process the exchange experience in a supportive environment.</b></p>
<p><b>Activities</b></p>	<p>Charting the Curve Coping Tools: Common Problems and Solutions</p>
	<p><b>Increase awareness of intercultural learning and personal growth that emerged, and continues to emerge, as a result of the AFS experience.</b></p>
<p><b>Activities</b></p>	<p>Launching an International Club</p>
	<p><b>Begin/continue integrating the AFS exchange experience and personal growth into daily life in the United States.</b></p>
<p><b>Activities</b></p>	<p>Launching an International Club</p>
	<p><b>Explore options to develop leadership skills as global citizens, including specific opportunities for continued involvement with AFS.</b></p>
<p><b>Activities</b></p>	<p>Launching an International Club</p>

**Sample Agenda II**

Four or more returnees, about 6 hours

If you have 4 – 6 returnees only, take off 15 minutes from the length of each activity.











A larger group will take the full time allotted due to lengthier discussion.

**Sample Agenda II**

Time	Length	Type	Title	Group Size	Notes
10:00 – 11:00	60	Required	Getting Acquainted, Goals, Agenda, Setting Norms		
11:00 – 12:00	60	Activity	Charting the Curve		
12:00 – 1:00	60	Lunch			Order pizza or have potluck — ask kids to bring a dish from their host country
1:00 – 2:00	60	Activity	Coping Tools: Common Problems and Solutions		
2:00 – 2:15	15	Energizer			
2:15 – 3:30	75	Activity	Launching an International Club		At the end of the activity present schedule of AFS events and sign-up sheets
3:30 – 4:15	45	Required	Closure and Evaluation		



## ACTIVITIES

Page	Title	Goals	Prep	Time
22	Getting Acquainted, Goals, Agenda, Setting Norms	Required	•	<b>60</b>
25	Closure and Evaluation	Required	•	<b>45</b>
31	Charting the Curve	 	•	<b>60</b>
35	Coping Tools: Common Problems and Solutions	 	•	<b>60</b>
39	Outcomes from an International Experience	  	•	<b>45</b>
43	Reflecting on the Experience	  	•	<b>45</b>
57	Launching an International Club	  	•	<b>75</b>
60	Weaving the AFS Experience into Your Life	 	••	<b>45</b>

Required Session	•	60
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## Getting Acquainted, Goals, Agenda, Setting Norms

### **Goals**

In addition to introducing those present, this activity serves to help set the tone for the day; one in which each individual is encouraged to share his or her experience in a warm, welcoming and respectful atmosphere.

### **Objectives**

By the end of this session participants will:

1. Be familiar with the orientation leaders and other returnees;
2. Understand the schedule of events for the day;
3. Know the goals of the orientation; and
4. Have agreed-upon norms for the event.

### **Time**

60 minutes, depending on the number of returnees present and total time available for the event.

### **Group Size**

4 or more

### **Materials**

- Flip chart or butcher paper
- 8 1/2 x 11 paper
- Pens or pencils
- Markers
- Tape

### **Preparation**

1. When inviting the returnees to the session, request that they bring a photograph which depicts an important person or place in their host country or represents a short story that took place during their AFS experience.
2. Request that all others involved with the orientation do the same. If they have not had an AFS experience, instruct them to bring a photo representing something or someone related to an important intercultural experience they have had. For example, a volunteer might bring a picture of his or her former host child, Peace Corps returnees might bring a picture of a colleague from the country served, etc.
3. Prior to the session write the agenda for the day on one large piece of paper and the goals of the orientation on another. Post them in a position in the room visible to all, but keep them covered until you are ready to review them.

4. Have some blank sheets of 8 1/2 x 11 paper on hand as those who arrive without a photo will be instructed to draw a picture representing an important person or place related to their AFS Intercultural experience.
5. Arrange for seating in a circle whether on the floor or in chairs.

### **Instructions**

1. As people begin to arrive ask them whether they remembered to bring a photo; if not, provide them with a blank sheet of paper and some markers and instruct them to draw a representation of an important person or place in their host country or a short story that took place during their AFS experience.
2. Begin the session by welcoming everyone, thanking the volunteers present for helping make the event possible and the host for providing the meeting space.
3. Briefly introduce the activity by stating or adapting the following:

*Before we review the agenda and goals for today we are going to take some time to get acquainted with each other.*

*The goal of this activity is of course to introduce everyone, but also to get us in that “AFS space.” It may also provide some content for activities that we will do later in the day.*

*As each person introduces him/herself, please share your name, host country, duration of the program and a brief explanation of your photo or drawing. I will begin and we will go around the circle clockwise.*

*Hint — specify a time limit of two minutes for each person if you have a very large group. If you have a small group, state that others may ask questions of the presenter and/or encourage discussion by asking questions yourself.*

4. Share your photo and indicate that the person to your left continue.
5. After everyone has shared their photo/drawing state or adapt the following:

*Thanks to everyone for sharing this slice of your AFS or intercultural experience. In part, that is what this orientation is about — helping to integrate the learning you gained as a result of the relationships you formed and the experiences you had while abroad into your life back home.*

*In other words, among other things, today we want you to help each other learn to avoid the tendency to “shoe-box” your experience. Literally this means when you put your mementos (letters, ticket stubs, photos, brochures, etc.) in a box and put it away to be taken out and looked at when you feel the need to reconnect with or relive your experience. Figuratively this is to mentally compartmentalize the experience as a completely or largely separate part of your life back home.*

*But before we get to that part, there are a few other things we need to accomplish first. Let’s begin by reviewing the goals of the orientation.*

6. Uncover the goals and review them with the group.
  - Understand a framework for the re-entry phase of the exchange experience (Honeymoon, Reverse Culture Shock, Recovery, Reintegration).
  - Consider coping skills to help ease the re-entry process
  - Process the exchange experience in a supportive environment.
  - Increase awareness of intercultural learning and personal growth that emerged, and continues to emerge, as a result of the AFS experience.
  - Begin/continue integrating AFS exchange experiences and personal growth into daily life in the U.S.
  - Explore options to develop leadership skills as global citizens, including specific opportunities for continued involvement with AFS.

7. Ask the group the following question and note their answers on a flip chart:

*Is there anything else you were hoping we would accomplish today? If so, let's post it here and we will see if we can work it into the session, or consider doing so in a future meeting.*

*During the next break leaders will review the list and determine whether it is feasible to accomplish any of the items mentioned and if so, come up with a plan for doing so. At the end of the session the group will refer to the goals and this list as a way of evaluating the session and gauging whether the group would like to arrange a second meeting.*

8. Reveal and review the agenda for the rest of the day, letting the group know where the restrooms are located. Close by stating or adapting the following:

*So, as you can see we have a lot of ground to cover. In order to get the most out of your time together today, we would like to take a few minutes to set some "norms" for the group, or ways in which we agree to behave while we are together. Does anyone have any ideas?*

*Hint — If no one speaks up, have one of the returnees present prepped to propose a norm, for example, "Only one person speaks at a time."*

9. After everyone has finished suggesting norms, if not mentioned, add the norm that personal experiences shared by individuals during the orientation should stay with this group and be treated as confidential information. This norm should help foster trust and facilitate a greater willingness to share amongst the participants.

10. Record the norms on flip chart paper and post somewhere visible to all. Close the session by stating or adapting the following:

*Thanks for your help with that, now let's get started.*



## Closure and Evaluation

### **Goals**

This activity serves to bring closure to the orientation and elicit both written and verbal feedback from the participants.

### **Objectives**

By the end of this session participants will:

1. Reflect on the entire Re-entry Orientation and have shared any major insights and feedback from the day; and
2. Fill out and submit a written evaluation of the Re-entry Orientation.
3. Group leaders will also complete a written evaluation of the Re-entry Orientation.

### **Time**

45 minutes, depending on the number of returnees present and total time available for the event.

### **Group Size**

4 or more

### **Materials**

- AFS Re-entry Orientation Evaluation — one per participant
- AFS Group Leader Re-entry Orientation Evaluation — one per group leader
- Pens or pencils — one per participant

### **Preparation**

1. Make enough copies of the evaluations for participants and facilitators.
3. Gather writing utensils.
4. Prepare CD Player and a CD for background music if you plan to use it during guided meditation.
5. If you would like to close the orientation with a quote, poem, or anecdote, identify this contribution prior to the orientation. For example:

*“It is not our differences that divide us; it is our inability to recognize and celebrate those differences that do.”*

— Author unknown

*“One’s destination is never a place, but a new way of seeing things.”*

— Henry Miller, U.S. author, 1891 – 1980

## **Instructions**

1. Ask participants and facilitators to help arrange the chairs in a circle and then ask everyone to take a seat. Turn off any unnecessary lightning.

2. Begin the activity by stating or adapting:

*First of all, I want to thank everyone for taking part in this orientation today and sharing your reflections, insights, thoughts, and feelings. Your contributions and participation have made this orientation what it is — whatever that means to each one of you.*

3. As you go through each step of this guided meditation, relax and pace yourself. Remember to allow time for the participants to reflect on each item. When there is a change in paragraph in the text below, allow some time to pass before continuing to speak.
4. If you plan to use background music, turn it on at this time.

*To help us reflect on the day and bring closure to this orientation, I would like to invite everyone to close their eyes and take several slow and deep breaths and allow your body to relax.*

*Think back to when you first heard about this orientation. How did you feel about attending? Were you excited? Were you unsure of whether you would or could come? Did you wonder about who you would meet?*

*Facilitators, how did you feel about the orientation? Were you excited or anxious?*

*I would like you to think about our first session. Reflect on each person and what he or she shared with the group. If you don't remember the exact details, don't worry. Just take a moment to focus on each person here today.*

*Now, I would like you to take some time to quietly remember each session, going through them one by one. If you cannot remember every session, don't worry. Just reflect on the ones that come to your mind.*

5. Allow at least five minutes to pass.

*Slowly open your eyes and look at each person in the room. Allow yourself to make eye contact and take several more deep breaths.*

*I would like to open up this "space" for you to share what came to your mind during your reflections about today's orientation. You can share what you like or not share at all. It is up to you. Please honor that when one person is sharing, no one else interrupts. Speak from your own heart and experience. Do not worry about whether your feelings or thoughts reflect the previous person's contributions. Each of us owns our personal experience.*

*I also ask that what is shared here, stay in this circle and remain in this group. Does everyone agree? (Wait for response from the group.)*

*We will do this "popcorn style," meaning just raise your hand when you are ready to contribute.*

*Start by sharing about your experience at the orientation. What you chose to share is up to you. It could be a reflection of your emotions regarding the day, about a special moment that occurred, or a challenge you encountered.*

Have another facilitator identified to contribute in case the participants are hesitant, but also allow time for the next person to start.

6. Once there has been an ample opportunity for everyone to contribute, ask the group if anyone has anything else to say.
7. Thank the participants and facilitators again for their participation and valuable contributions. If you would like, you can conclude the orientation with a quote, poem, or anecdote that you have identified prior to the event. This would also be a good time to announce any upcoming AFS events and pass around or post sign-up sheets for those who would like to help with these events.
8. Distribute the *AFS Re-entry Orientation Evaluation* and *AFS Group Leader Re-entry Orientation Evaluation* and ask that each person complete this handout before departing, stressing its importance in improving the orientation.

### **Review of the Evaluations**

Within a week to ten days after the REO, we ask that you review the evaluations in the following manner and send a brief summary of your findings to your Regional Travel and Logistics Coordinator and/or post it in the Orientation Discussion of AFS Online. Your summary will be reviewed and taken into consideration when revising the REO Leader's Guide so that we may continually improve the quality of the Guide. By posting it on the Orientation Discussion you will also allow other volunteers to benefit from your experience.

### **Returnees**

1. Determine the most often stated stage of re-entry in which participants find themselves. What does this tell you about the kinds of activities that might be appropriate for future REOs?
2. Note the responses and activities mentioned in question 2. Are there any common themes, any activities mentioned more often than others? What does this tell you about the effectiveness of these activities and what people feel is important to know? How might all of this information impact the design of future orientations?
3. Note the responses and activities mentioned in question 3. Are there any common themes, any activities mentioned more often than others? What does this tell you about the effectiveness of these activities? What does this tell you about what is important to convey to participants at any time throughout their AFS experience and/or in future REOs?
4. Note the responses and activities mentioned in question 4. Are there any common themes, any activities mentioned more often than others? How might this information impact the design of future orientations?
5. What kinds of goals are listed in response to question 5? Are there any common themes? What does this tell you about the effectiveness of the orientation?

6. What kind of feedback did you receive in response to question 6? Are there any common themes? How might this impact the design and implementation of future orientations?

### **Group Leaders**

1. Tally the average rating in question 1. What does this tell you about the quality of training provided to group leaders? How does this compare to training provided to previous group leaders? What could have made the difference between this average rating and scores in the past? Are there any common themes? How might these influence future group leader training sessions?
2. Note the responses and activities mentioned in question 2. Are there any common themes? How might this information impact the preparation of future group leaders?
3. Note the activities mentioned in question 3. Are there any common themes, any activities mentioned more often than others? What impact might this have on the design of future REOs?
4. Note the activities mentioned in question 4. Are there any common themes, any activities mentioned more often than others? How might this information impact the design of future orientations? What, if any, changes would you recommend to the activities based on this feedback?
5. Are there any common themes, any activities mentioned more often than others? How might this information impact the design of future orientations?
6. What kinds of responses are mentioned here? Would sharing this information inspire others to serve as group leaders? If so, how can you use this information to engage/encourage returnees and others to serve as group leaders?
7. What kind of feedback did you receive in response to question 7? Are there any common themes? How might this impact the design and implementation of future orientations?



## AFS Re-entry Orientation Evaluation

1. I currently find myself in this stage of the re-entry phase of cultural adaptation:

The following circumstances and/or feelings have led me to this conclusion:

2. The most helpful thing I learned today in terms of coping with the re-entry process was:

From which activity/ies did you learn this?

3. The most surprising thing that I learned today was:

From which activity/ies did you learn this?

4. The most important thing that I learned about myself today was:


From which activity/ies did you learn this?

5. After today I have identified the following as a personal goal to help continue the personal growth and learning that emerged as a result of my AFS experience:

6. Please note any additional feedback about the event the other side of this page. (i.e., organization and logistics, timing, flow, facilities, refreshments, other). Thank you!





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## Charting the Curve

### **Goals**

In this activity participants will reflect on, illustrate and share their experiences and feelings related to returning home by drawing a picture including a curvy line to portray the participants' individual adjustment processes. These pictures will allow the returnees to analyze and express their own experiences of returning home, as well as how it compares to the typical re-entry phases. This activity will also help the returnees recognize that, although the feelings and experiences related to re-entry can be difficult, they are normal and will pass.

### **Objectives**

By the end of this session participants will:

1. Reflect on and share elements of their own re-entry process;
2. Be familiar with the four phases of re-entry: Honeymoon, Reverse Culture Shock, Recovery, Reintegration; and
3. Be reassured that experiencing difficulty during re-entry is normal and will pass.

### **Time**

60 minutes, depending on the number of returnees present and total time available for the event.

### **Group Size**

4 or more

### **Materials**

- Flip chart or butcher paper for example chart
- 8 1/2 x 11 paper — one per participant
- Pens or pencils — one per participant
- Markers
- Tape

### **Preparation**

1. Before the event, ask one of the older returnees or group leaders to draw his/her re-entry curve on flip chart paper large enough to be visible to all and representing his/her experience through reintegration, or whichever phase s/he feels s/he is currently in.
2. Prepare a set of paper and markers available for each small group to use. A shoebox makes a good container for markers.

## **Instructions**

1. Introduce this activity by stating or adapting the following:

*Coming home can feel like being on a roller coaster. There may be moments during which you are happy to be back and other times when you will experience feelings such as sadness, frustration, confusion and isolation. As tough as it can be, this is part of coming home and your feelings are often the signs of growing pains and the changes that have occurred within you while you were away.*

*And ... you are rarely alone in experiencing them. Today is an opportunity to share these feelings and recognize their role in your return to the U.S.*

*You will draw a picture (somewhat like a graph) of a curvy line (the roller coaster) to represent your adjustment process of coming home, starting with the flight home until the present day. The horizontal direction represents time and the vertical direction represents sense of satisfaction, or how you are feeling at each moment. To show why the line is going up or down, indicate what happened and how you reacted to it. This can be expressed in words, a quote or a picture ... this is up to you. (Insert returnee's name) will give an example.*

2. The returnee presents his/her curve to the group.
3. State or adapt the following:

*Thank you (insert returnee's name). Does anyone have any questions? We are now going to break up into small groups and everyone should chart their re-entry curve. After all of the members of your group have finished, each person will present his or her chart to their small group. After that, please summarize any themes that arose in your presentations, striking similarities or differences in experiences, or whatever important learning you feel arose from this activity. Choose one person to then share your summary with the large group when we reconvene in 25 minutes.*

4. Divide the large group into groups of 4 – 5 indicating where each group should position themselves and provide them with a set of markers and paper.

*Hint — If there are only 4 – 5 returnees present, do that activity as one group.*

5. If you have enough returnee facilitators present at the orientation, assign one to each small group and have them chart/present their own course along with the recent returnees. They will also serve to ensure that the group stays on task and within the timeline specified, or to notify the orientation leader that more time is needed. If you do not have enough returnee facilitators have those who are present float between the groups performing the same function.
6. After 15 minutes have passed, tell the groups they have ten minutes left before the group reconvenes.
7. Reconvene the group and ask each group in turn to present their summary.

8. After all groups have presented, encourage a discussion by asking the following questions:

*So, what common experiences or issues do we see?*

*In what ways do your experiences differ?*

*Were you surprised by anything during this discussion?*

*Can anyone explain the four phases of re-entry?*

9. Complete any explanation of the four phases by stating or adapting all or part of the following:

### **Phase 1 —Honeymoon**

*Similar to when you first arrived in the host country, upon return to the U.S. you may experience a “honeymoon” phase characterized primarily by positive feelings and excitement about being back home, seeing friends and family, sleeping in your own bed, eating your favorite foods, etc. You may even have a heightened sense of awareness of your surroundings, almost as if you are seeing things for the first time, in slow motion, or watching a movie. This temporary shift in perspective may also cause you to be surprised by things that were once so familiar to you: the spaciousness of your room, the huge variety and quantity of things found on the shelves of the supermarket, an ice-cold soda or the abundance of hot water.*

### **Phase 2 — Reverse Culture Shock**

*In this stage the “honeymoon” is over and you experience a let down. You may feel frustrated, alone, and/or like an outsider or a foreigner in your own country. You may also find yourself irritated with others for no apparent reason and frustrated at not being able to express yourself in English as well as you would like. You probably feel “homesick” for your host country, disoriented and maybe even resentful about the fact that you are back home. The U.S. will be different from how you remembered it. The pollution may be worse, the pace more hurried and hectic, etc. You may also find that many of your friends and family members have lost interest in hearing about your time overseas and you will really feel the need to connect with others who can relate to what you are going through.*

### **Phase 3 — Recovery**

*This stage is characterized by a gradual readjustment to life at home. Less and less about life “back home” surprises, angers or frustrates you. Any self-imposed isolation subsides and you can more easily express yourself in English. You begin to fall into familiar or new routines which provide rhythm to your daily life.*

### **Phase 4 — Reintegration**

*At this point you will have found your place, so to speak, back home. You will have established or reestablished relationships with a circle of people with whom you feel comfortable and have a more balanced perspective on both life in the U.S. and your host country. You may find that your behaviors, beliefs, attitudes and values have shifted a little or a lot as a result of your cross-cultural encounter.*

*We also hope at this stage you will recognize the many ways in which you have grown as a result of your AFS experience and actively seek out ways to use the knowledge, skills and attitudes that you gained in the process.*

10. Close the session by stating or adapting the following:

*As we hope this activity has shown you, readjusting to life in the U.S. can be as challenging as adjusting to a new culture. While everyone's experience is unique, there are some predictable highs and lows which are a normal part of the process. Rest assured, you are not the only one experiencing these feelings and they will pass.*



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## Coping Tools: Common Problems and Solutions

### **Goals**

This activity introduces several common scenarios sojourners often face upon returning home and encourages them to problem solve around these situations.

### **Objectives**

By the end of this session participants will:

1. Reflect on common problems/challenges encountered after returning home; and
2. Identify ways to resolve/cope with these common problems/challenges.

### **Time**

60 minutes, depending on the number of returnees present and total time available for the event.

### **Group Size**

4 or more

### **Materials**

- Flip chart or butcher paper
- Markers
- Envelopes (at least seven)
- Stack of note cards (at least seven note cards per participant)
- Pens or pencils — one per participant
- Tape
- *Common Problems and Solutions* worksheet — one per participant

### **Preparation**

1. Write one scenario on each envelope.
2. Arrange for seating so participants are seated in small groups (no more than seven groups).

### **Instructions**

1. Ask participants to sit in small groups. Rearrange participants from the last activity to encourage meeting new participants. Ensure each participant has a pen or pencil at this time.

*Hint — If there are only 4 – 5 returnees present, do this activity as one group, covering as many scenarios as time will allow.*

2. Introduce the activity by stating or adapting the following:

*Although each person's experience of returning home is unique, returned sojourners are often challenged with similar situations and frustrations. In this next activity we will explore some common situations as well as create and explore possible solutions.*

*We are passing out now at least one envelope per group on the outside of which is written a scenario, and a small stack of blank note cards for each group. Once your group has both an envelope and note cards, one person in the group should read aloud the scenario given on the back of the envelope. For each envelope or situation, write a potential solution on a note card and slip this in the appropriate envelope.*

*Do not look at other suggested solutions already inside the envelope. Please work quietly and do not discuss your ideas with your group members. Each person should make a separate contribution to each envelope. This will encourage feedback from everyone and give some time for reflection. After several minutes, the envelope or envelopes currently in your group will be passed to the group to your left (direction depends on seating arrangement). We will let you know when it is time to switch envelopes.*

3. Pass out at least one envelope per group and a small stack of blank note cards. Note the time so you can remind participants to pass envelope(s) to the neighbor group. Encourage quiet reflection and writing.
4. Once every person has had the opportunity to contribute a solution to each envelope, or as many envelopes as time will allow, collect all envelopes.
5. Next explain:

*Now we will distribute at least one envelope per group. As a group, you will review the scenario and all the suggested solutions. Your objective is to synthesize the repetitious solutions and write these solutions out on flip chart paper to present to the entire group, adding any solutions your group feels appropriate. You will have about 20 minutes to complete this next step.*

6. Once the groups have finishing summarizing the solutions, distribute the *Common Problems and Solutions* handout. Tell participants they may take notes on the handout as each group presents their suggested solutions.
7. Have each group present the suggested solutions that they transferred to flip chart paper. Once each group is finished, ask for a volunteer from the group to read aloud. Allow for additional feedback and clarification from the group.




## Common Problems and Solutions Worksheet\*

Common Problems	Notes	Possible Solutions
<p>You may feel confused, especially in the first few weeks after your return, because the values, attitudes, and lifestyles you learned in your host family conflict with predominant patterns at home.</p>		<p>Deep differences in cultural patterns require time to explore and understand. Take time to evaluate both cultural perspectives before deciding on your preference and integrating it into your lifestyle.</p>
<p>Sometimes friends and family at home do not seem interested in hearing about aspects of your AFS experience that you find meaningful and important.</p>		<p>You should realize that they may be adjusting to the changes that have taken place in you. Furthermore, they may never have had an experience comparable with yours and so may have difficulty sharing your enthusiasm. Be patient and seek other returnees who can help put your experience in perspective.</p>
<p>Friends and family may treat you as the same person you were before you left without recognizing the changes you have been through. But as a result of these changes, you might feel a need for new or modified personal relationships that acknowledge the changed or expanded dimensions of your personality.</p>		<p>Remember that your friends and family may be feeling uncertain about how you have changed or grown. Discuss your feelings about yourself and others with them, trying to encourage positive changes in old relationships. Also seek out new friendships with people who are compatible with the “changing you.”</p>
<p>You may feel uncomfortable talking about your feelings or affection for your host family because your own family feels left out or possibly jealous. Friends might also seem to be envious or jealous of the experience you have had.</p>		<p>Be sensitive to the feelings of others who have not had the opportunity you have had. If necessary, try to tone down your discussions; perhaps you are encouraging these feelings in others by dwelling too much on your own experiences. Try to listen to what has happened to them while you were gone, too.</p>

Common Problems	Notes	Possible Solutions
<p>You might be anxious or apprehensive about your academic situation because the subjects you enjoyed studying abroad have little relevance to your education at home. You might also be confused about future educational and career plans in light of new or uncertain goals and priorities.</p>		<p>Take advantage of the wide range of educational opportunities and alternatives available to you by finding informal and nonacademic ways to continue the study of your favorite subjects. Take time to consider educational and career plans that include your areas of interest. Seek out the advice of your counselors or mentors.</p>
<p>If you find that your attitudes and opinions have changed considerably during your stay abroad and are not widely shared in your home community, you may also feel isolated or rejected. Furthermore, you may feel highly critical of your home country because you have new perspectives on it; you may be criticized by others for your “negative attitude.”</p>		<p>Try to keep perspective on your feelings: remember that your opinions and ideas may initially be greatly influenced by the perspectives of your host culture and may not present your final balanced viewpoint. Share your feelings with others, but be cautious in choosing situations in which to bring up controversial issues.</p>
<p>You may become frustrated because people at home are uninformed about, or uninterested in, other peoples and cultures, including those of your host community. Faced with this lack of concern, you might feel that there is no way for you to take an active role in helping solve the problems of others in the world community.</p>		<p>Attempt to generate local interest in other peoples and their concerns. Use your special status as an intercultural traveler to educate others through private conversations or by public speeches and presentations.</p>

\* *The AFS Study Guide*. (1979). Washington D.C.: AFS International/Intercultural Programs.



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## Outcomes from an International Experience

### **Goals**

In this activity, participants will review 75 positive long-term outcomes from an international experience to encourage them to reflect on the ways they have grown as a result of their AFS exchange.

### **Objectives**

By the end of this session participants will:

1. Identify at least one or more positive outcomes from their AFS exchange experiences; and
2. Reflect on and share how these outcomes could impact future choices and experiences in their lives.

### **Time**

45 minutes, depending on the number of returnees present and total time available.

### **Group Size**

Any

### **Materials**

- 75 Positive Long-term Outcomes from an International Experience — one per participant
- Pens or pencils — one per participant

### **Preparation**

1. Before the event, make copies of handout, one per participant and facilitator.
2. Arrange chairs in a circle.

### **Instructions**

1. Introduce this activity by stating or adapting the following:

*In this activity, each of you will receive a handout with 75 positive outcomes from an international experience. These positive outcomes are categorized into four groups including Intercultural and Communication Skills, World View, Personal Capabilities, and Own Culture.*

*As individuals, quietly read through this list and check off the outcomes that you believe apply to you. Out of the outcomes you have checked off, select two and describe how you believe these changes in you will impact your life and future decisions. Take about ten minutes to complete this task. Then, I will ask everyone to share with the group.*

2. Pass out handout and encourage a quiet atmosphere.
3. After ten minutes, ask participants who are not finished to raise their hands. Give several more minutes if necessary.





4. Ask each participant to share his or her two outcomes and their potential future impact on his or her life.
5. At the end of activity, thank everyone for their contributions.

<b>75 Positive Long-term Outcomes from an International Experience*</b>	
<b>Intercultural/Communication Skills</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have a greater capacity to accept differences in others and to tolerate other people's actions that may be vastly different from my own.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am more knowledgeable about another culture and lifestyle.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have improved my ability to communicate with people in a second language (or understand better the variety and peculiarities of a version of "World English").
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have a greater ability to empathize (i.e., to sense how an event appears and feels to someone else).
<input type="checkbox"/>	I understand that there are many ways to accomplish the same task and that those approaches are only "different," not necessarily better or worse.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have learned to improve interpersonal communication through increased abilities in listening well, speaking clearly, and paying attention to nonverbal cues.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have more curiosity about, and respect for, new ideas.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am more flexible and able to adjust to changes in others.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am more tolerant of ambiguous situations, that is, of situations that are confusing and open to differing interpretations.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I realize why stereotypes can be so harmful and hurtful, both to others and myself.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have learned how to recognize when I have made a cross-cultural mistake and can use culturally appropriate language and measures to repair any damage.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I understand and appreciate how much educational systems can differ across cultures.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have a greater willingness to take on roles and tasks to which I am unaccustomed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I can adapt and cope in vastly different settings.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am more able to accept as valid others' values and lifestyles.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am more balanced in my judgments (i.e., less likely to judge things as "good" or "bad," "right" or "wrong").
<input type="checkbox"/>	I think more critically: I am more discriminating and skeptical, particularly of stereotypes.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have generally improved my observation skills.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I realize the importance of time to be alone to think.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I find myself regularly reflecting about the overseas experience and its meaning for me.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am confident that I can meet and make friends abroad.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have an increased motivation to go abroad again.
<b>World View</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	I understand better another country's role in world affairs.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have a better understanding of how and why political policy differs abroad.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have the ability to see situations and issues from more than one perspective.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I understand more clearly how U.S. Americans and the United States are viewed overseas.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I see the world as more interconnected than ever before.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I value human diversity and respect others from a variety of backgrounds different from my own.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have greater sympathy for the struggles of international students and immigrants as a result of my experience.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have deeper understanding of the common problems and issues that confront all human beings on this planet.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have greater awareness of political, economic, and social events occurring around the world.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I seek out international news and want to know what is going on in the world more than ever before.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am aware that cultural changes can have unexpected consequences.
<b>Personal Capabilities</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	I understand more fully my own strengths and weaknesses.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I feel more confident in undertaking new travels or projects.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I can accept failures and shortcomings in myself more easily.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am more confident and assertive when facing new situations.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have become a more patient person.

<b>75 Positive Long-term Outcomes from an International Experience*</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am more willing to share my thoughts and feelings with others, and to be open when others wish to share theirs with me.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am less afraid of making mistakes or being laughed at than I used to be.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I can see myself objectively (i.e., I see my own day-to-day problems in a broader, more realistic context).
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have increased my perseverance and self-discipline.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I can “analyze” a social situation more quickly than before (i.e., figure out what is going on and react appropriately).
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am more deeply committed to an idea, cause, or goal.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have the ability to create personal peace and satisfaction in my life.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have a greater sense of responsibility for other people.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am more able to express deep emotions freely.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am more able to ask for and receive help from others.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have increased my capacity to experiment and take risks.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have a clearer notion of what I wish to do with my life.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am more aware of opportunities in life that are open to me.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I feel greater respect and appreciation for my natural family.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am more independent in my relations with family and friends.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I can accept the shortcomings of my family members in an understanding way.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I think that I need fewer friends but deeper (more intimate and more trusting) friendships.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am more aware of the way I use and structure time.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am interested in, and capable of, making long-range plans.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am more determined to develop fully my skills and talents, especially those recently gained through overseas living.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I feel a greater need to have diverse experiences and friends.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I feel that being abroad helped clarify my goals and values.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am more likely to do things spontaneously (i.e., to do things without undue concern about the possible consequences or any advanced planning).
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am more capable of solving life’s day-to-day problems and accomplishing necessary tasks.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I can set more realistic priorities, both short-term and long-term, for myself.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am more confident about the decisions I make.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have a greater appreciation for what I have.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have the ability to make clear personal choices and goals for my life rather than complying with what others expect and want from me.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have learned to place a lower value on material things.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I want to be able to use my skills in future work and can articulate what those are to a prospective employer.
<b>Own Culture</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	I see my own cultural values more clearly and understand how and why they differ from others.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I can evaluate advantages and disadvantages of my own culture and society more objectively (i.e., from the perspective of an outsider).
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am sensitive to subtle features of my own culture that I had never seen before.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have both a greater appreciation for U.S. American culture and a clearer critical sense of its limitations and problems.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have a deeper understanding of (if not necessarily commitment to) the values and lifestyle of my native community.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I appreciate U.S. American efficiency, but miss the different pace of life abroad.

\*LaBrack, B. (2003). What’s Up With Culture?: On-line Cultural Training Resource for Study Abroad website – 75 Positive Long-Term Outcomes from an International Experience. Retrieved March 16, 2005 from <http://www3.uop.edu/sis/culture/index.htm>



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## Reflecting on the Experience

### **Goals**

The goal of this activity is for participants to perform a self-assessment of where they fit within Geert Hofstede's four dimensions of culture. They will then reflect on a problematic situation they encountered while overseas and reexamine it in light of Hofstede's and other models of comparing cultures.

### **Objectives**

By the end of this session participants will:

1. Build awareness of ways in which cultures may differ using Geert Hofstede's four dimensions of culture;
2. Build awareness of their own and former host culture; and
3. Reflect on how this awareness has changed them and how it may impact their relationships with others.

### **Time**

90 minutes, depending on the number of returnees present and total time available for the event.

### **Group Size**

Six per group. If ten or fewer are present, conduct the activity as one group.

### **Materials**

- Flip chart or butcher paper, markers, tape
- Pens or pencils — one per participant
- *A Culture Survey* — one per participant
- Hofstede's *Dimensions of Culture* — one per participant
- Hofstede's *Dimension Values Around the World* — one per participant
- *Reflecting on the Experience* — one per participant
- *Comparing Cultures* — one per participant

### **Preparation**

1. This is a fairly complex activity. All group leaders should have ample time to review and discuss it with the Orientation Coordinator before the session.
2. Make appropriate photocopies and gather materials and writing utensils.
3. Copy goal and objectives of session on to flip chart paper and post somewhere for all to see.

4. Copy Hofstede's definition of culture on a flip chart and put aside.

*"Culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one human group from another."*

## **Instructions**

### **Part I (15 minutes)**

1. Ask participants to quickly brainstorm ways in which they have observed that cultures may differ. Record their answers on a flip chart.
2. State or adapt the following:

*We are now going to look at a framework for comparing cultures developed by a Dutch social psychologist by the name of Geert Hofstede. Hofstede defines culture as follows:*

3. Reveal flip chart prepared with the definition:

*"Culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one human group from another."*

*By this definition, he emphasizes that culture is not a property of individuals, but of groups. It is a collection of more or less shared characteristics possessed by people who have been conditioned by similar socialization practices, educational procedures, and life experiences. Because of their similar backgrounds, the people in any given culture may be said to have similar "mental programming." Thus, one can speak of the culture of a family, a tribe, a region, a national minority, or a nation; culture is what differentiates the people in a given collective from people in other collectives at the same level (other families, other tribes, and so forth).*

*Hofstede is a native of the Netherlands and acquired his doctorate in the field of social psychology there. Beginning in 1966, he undertook a massive research project involving a major multinational corporation identified only by the pseudonym HERMES. In the course of the project, some 116,000 questionnaires were completed by HERMES employees at all levels (unskilled workers to top managers) located in 50 developed and less developed nations.*

*The questionnaires were administered in the language of each country; a total of 20 languages were employed. The principal difference among the respondents was culture; all of them were otherwise similar because they were carefully matched for other characteristics such as age, sex, and job category and all worked for the same corporation.*

*Using this unprecedented quantity of data, Hofstede was able to distinguish four key elements, or "dimensions," of culture: Individualism, Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, and Masculinity. In other words, Hofstede specified four major dimensions along which the dominant value systems in the 50 countries can be ordered and described. A fifth dimension, Confucian Dynamism, was added later after additional research.*

*You will have the chance to take an abbreviated form of Hofstede's survey to get an idea of where you fall within these dimensions and you will be able to compare your score with that*

*of 50 other countries/regions. If you already completed part or all of this survey before departure, please do it again. It will be interesting for you to see whether your values have shifted at all now that you have completed your AFS experience.*

## **Part II (45 minutes)**

1. Ask participants to break into small groups, no bigger than six participants per group. Encourage participants to look for people with whom they have not yet had the opportunity to share.

2. Distribute the handout *A Culture Survey* and state or adapt the following:

*By looking at this handout, you will see that there are four parts which coincide with Hofstede's four dimensions of culture. For each part, you will compare five sets of two statements which begin with "I feel most comfortable in a country where..." To indicate the degree of preference for one statement over another or if you have equal preference for both statements, you will circle 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5. Circling 1 means that you have the greatest preference for the statement on the left side of the paper; circling 5 means that you have the greatest preference for the statement on the right side of the paper; circling 3 means that you have equal preference for both statements.*

*At the end of each part, you will add up the five numbers you have selected and put the sum of these numbers into the equation in the space with the bold underline and calculate the result.*

*Please take five minutes to complete the survey.*

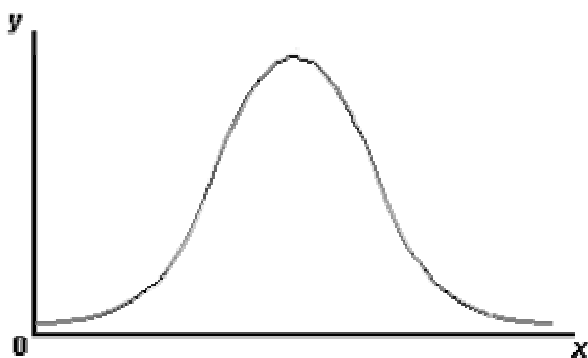
3. Once five minutes have passed and most participants appear to have completed their calculations, distribute the handouts, Hofstede's *Dimensions of Culture* and Hofstede's *Dimension Values Around the World*. Then, ask participants to take several minutes to read through Hofstede's *Dimensions of Culture*.
4. Using the handout Hofstede's *Dimensions of Culture* as a guide, present an explanation of the Power Distance scale. Check for questions and address them as needed.
5. Ask participants to place an "X" on the scale above the explanation of the Power Distance dimension, representing where they fall on the continuum and an "O" which represents where their host country or region lies. U.S. scores have already been charted.
6. Ask for a show of hands for those participants who scored between 30 and 50 on the Power Distance dimension. Then, ask for these individuals to call out their scores. Explain to the participants that these returnees fall within the range where most Americans fall.
7. Ask for a show of hands for those participants who scored less than 30. Explain to the participants that responses in this range demonstrate a tendency of smaller Power Distance or a smaller acceptance of unequal power distribution.
8. Lastly, ask for a show of hands for those participants that scored more than 50. Explain to participants that responses that fall in this range demonstrate a tendency towards larger Power Distance or a larger acceptance of unequal power distribution among individuals.

*Hint — If you would like, you can prepare four continuums, one for each dimension of culture in order to chart participants' responses.*

9. State or adapt the following:

*As this group demonstrated, it is important to keep in mind that these scores only represent the general tendency of a particular culture. Within each culture there will be a range of difference. This can be illustrated by a bell curve, which you may remember from Culture Trek. Could I have a volunteer draw a bell curve and explain in your own words how it represents this concept?*

10. Provide the volunteer with something on which and with which to draw the curve. If nobody volunteers, draw it yourself using the example below as a model.



The X axis represents the range of scores and the Y axis represents the number of people who fall within a given range.

11. State or adapt the following:

*Keep in mind that when considering these dimensions of culture, or other models of comparing cultures, there is room for much variation. Therefore, it is important that we do not stereotype a culture and expect all members of that culture to be exactly the same.*

*Proceed with the other three dimensions by repeating steps 4 – 8, changing the ranging of numbers for a show of hands as follows:*

*The first range given corresponds with where most Americans tend to fall (the fat part of the bell curve); the subsequent ranges correspond to either end of the continuum.*

*Uncertainty Avoidance — UAI: 36 – 56, less than 36, more than 56*

*Collectivism vs. Individualism — IDV: 70 or above, 69 – 35, less than 35*

*Masculinity vs. Femininity — MAS: 52 – 72, less than 52, more than 72*

### **Part III (30 minutes)**

1. Distribute the handouts *Reflecting on the Experience* and *Comparing Cultures*.
2. Ask participants to take 5 – 10 minutes to reflect on and describe in writing a difficult situation or incident they experienced while overseas and complete the handout as indicated. Tell them that you will ask for volunteers to share what they have written once

everyone is finished. Encourage them to refer to the “O’s” on the continuum to gain insight on what culture differences may have been at play. Also encourage them to incorporate other aspects of cultures described in the handout *Comparing Cultures*, when applicable.

3. Check with the group after five minutes have passed and give them more time if needed.
4. Ask for volunteers to share part or all of what they have written with their groups. Encourage discussion of the points raised.
5. Close by stating or adapting the following:

*We hope that this activity has helped you to continue to build the self and cultural awareness that is key to becoming an effective global citizen, capable of fostering peace one person, one family, and one community at a time. Whether in the context of your personal interactions with family and friends, or others you will meet as you continue your academic or professional careers, being able to see and understand the world from more than just one point of view is an invaluable skill and one that we hope you will continue to use and develop long after today.*

## A Culture Survey

This activity is based on Mr. Geert Hofstede's research on cultural differences and is taken from "Promoting a European Dimension of Intercultural Learning - Developing School Materials," EFIL Seminars, Vienna, 17 – 20 April, and Lisbon, 26 – 29 June, 1997.

With every statement circle the number which describes the country in which you would feel most comfortable.

### Part 1 (Power Distance — PDI) I feel most comfortable in a country where ...

Children in a family are taught that their opinion counts as much as the parents'.	1   2   3   4   5	Children in a family are taught that the authority of the parents is not to be questioned.
Children in a family are encouraged to learn that nothing is to be taken for granted.	1   2   3   4   5	Children in a family are taught that statements from older or more important persons are to be accepted.
Inferiors should find their working task at a job and their position in a company themselves.	1   2   3   4   5	The responsibilities of every staff member and employee are clearly defined.
Staff members continually challenge their superiors and where it is sometimes difficult to make out who is in charge and who should be told what to do.	1   2   3   4   5	The superior at a place of work decides and closely leads and controls his or her staff members and the staff members accept this because they respect him/her and consider this to be his or her responsibility.
The view dominates that the political system can be changed best step by step and through discussions and democratic votes.	1   2   3   4   5	The view dominates that the political system can be changed best by exchanging the positions of power.

Add together the five numbers you have circled above. Write the sum of these five numbers in the equation below in the space with a solid underline. Then, calculate the final result for Part 1 by using the equation to multiply your sum by five and then subtract 25. Your answers should fall in a range of zero to one hundred. If your result falls outside this range, please check your calculations.

Result: \_\_\_\_\_ x 5 = \_\_\_\_\_ - 25 = \_\_\_\_\_

Repeat these steps to obtain results for Parts 2, 3 and 4 on the following pages.

**Part 2 (Uncertainty Avoidance — UAI)**  
**I feel most comfortable in a country where ...**

People express their sympathy with the less successful and the successful are envied.	1 2 3 4 5	People adore the successful and blame the less successful.
Motivation at a place of work results from a pleasant environment, warmth and friendliness.	1 2 3 4 5	Motivation at a place of work results from clearly defined goals and a great deal of responsibility as responsibility is a proof for success.
People at a place of work endeavor to accomplish agreement and colleagues do not compete with each other.	1 2 3 4 5	Confrontations are valued as something positive and leading to achievement: either you face competition or you perish.
Both men and women can be modest and understanding, thinking about the quality of life.	1 2 3 4 5	Men pursue material success and women are rather modest and understanding, thinking about the quality of life.
Love means intimacy.	1 2 3 4 5	Love means emotional support.

Result: \_\_\_\_\_ x 5 = \_\_\_\_\_ - 25 = \_\_\_\_\_

**Part 3 (Collectivism vs. Individualism — IDV)**  
**I feel most comfortable in a country where ...**

People in their groups have strong and lasting relationships.	1 2 3 4 5	People choose their friends because of similar interests or sympathy.
Communal spirit and social solidarity predominate.	1 2 3 4 5	Loneliness and freedom predominate.
People concentrate mainly on not losing face and in maintaining that of others.	1 2 3 4 5	People concentrate on coming up to their own views and standards.
Promotion is granted because of loyalty and age.	1 2 3 4 5	Promotion is granted because of performance and not because of age.
A superior who does not make use of his or her power in order to get a job for a member of the family in need is regarded as immoral.	1 2 3 4 5	A superior who makes use of his or her power in order to get a job for a member of the family in need is regarded as immoral.

Result: \_\_\_\_\_ x 5 = \_\_\_\_\_ - 25 = \_\_\_\_\_

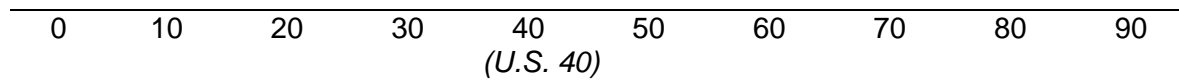
**Part 4 (Masculinity vs. Femininity — MAS)**  
**I feel most comfortable in a country where ...**

Children are taught in families to live in chaos and uncertainty.	1   2   3   4   5	Children are taught in families to create clear structures and to avoid ambivalent situations.
People with a general knowledge are admired because they know how to deal with most every situation.	1   2   3   4   5	Specialists and competent leaders are admired.
You don't always have to have your identity card with you.	1   2   3   4   5	You always have to carry your identity card with you.
You are not supposed to show feelings in public.	1   2   3   4   5	You are supposed to show feelings in public (at the right place and at the right time).
There are only a few rules to be obeyed in society.	1   2   3   4   5	There are many rules to be obeyed in society.

Result: \_\_\_\_\_ x 5 = \_\_\_\_\_ - 25 = \_\_\_\_\_

## Hofstede's Dimensions of Culture

### Power Distance (PDI) — (Part 1)

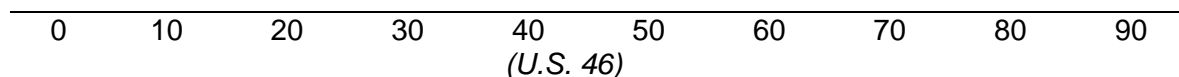


The Power Distance dimension is like all four of Hofstede's dimensions of culture. It is a continuum with two extremes. Only very few national cultures, if any, are wholly at one or the other extreme. Power Distance indicates the extent to which a society accepts the fact that power in institutions and organizations is distributed unequally among individuals.

<b>Small</b>	<b>Large</b>
Low dependence needs	High dependence needs
Inequality minimized	Inequality accepted
Hierarchy for convenience	Hierarchy needed
Superiors accessible	Superiors often inaccessible
All have equal rights	Power-holders have privileges
Change by evolution	Change by revolution

A higher score corresponds with a larger Power Distance, and therefore, the larger the acceptance of unequal power distribution among individuals. Under the word Large in the chart above are characteristics commonly found in countries with a tendency towards a larger Power Distance. Conversely, a lower score indicates a smaller Power Distance, and therefore, the smaller the acceptance of unequal power distribution among individuals. Listed under Small are characteristics of cultures with a tendency towards smaller Power Distance. The U.S. (40) has a relatively low Power Distance compared to many Asian and Latin American cultures. It is not surprising that some of the lowest scores in this area can be found in Scandinavia.

### Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI) — (Part 2)

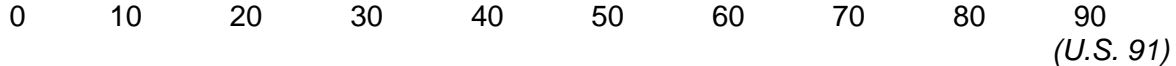


The Uncertainty Avoidance dimension indicates the extent to which a society feels threatened by ambiguous situations and tries to avoid them by providing rules, believing in absolute truths, and refusing to tolerate deviance.

<b>Weak</b>	<b>Strong</b>
Relaxed, lower stress	Anxiety, higher stress
Hard work not a virtue <i>per se</i>	Inner urge to work hard
Conflict and competition seen as fair play	Conflict is threatening
Acceptance of dissent	Need for consensus
Willingness to take risks	Need to avoid failure
There should be few rules	Need for laws and rules

A higher the score correlates with a stronger urge to avoid uncertainty. Common characteristics of such a society are listed in the chart above under Strong. The lower the score, the weaker the urge to avoid uncertainty as associated with the characteristics under Weak. The U.S. (46) lies about in the middle of this continuum. In Jamaica (13) people tend to be comfortable with ambiguity; while in Japan (92) we see a very strong desire to avoid ambiguity.

### Collectivism vs. Individualism (IDV) — (Part 3)

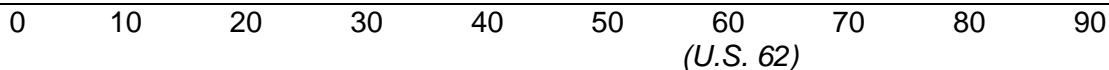


The Collectivism vs. Individualism dimension indicates the extent to which a society is a loosely knit social framework in which people are supposed to take care only of themselves and their immediate families, instead of a tight social framework in which people distinguish between in-groups and out-groups and expect their in-group to look after them.

Collectivism	Individualism
"We" conscious	"I" conscious
Relationships over tasks	Private options
Fulfill obligations to group	Fulfill obligations to self
Loss of "face," shame	Loss of self-respect, guilt

A higher score indicates a more individualistic orientation and is characterized by the traits listed under Individualism. On the other hand, a lower score indicates a more collectivist society and is often characterized by the traits listed under the word Collectivism. The U.S. (91), Australia (90) and Great Britain (89) are characterized as having a high level of individualism, whereas we generally see very low scores throughout Latin America and in Arab cultures.

### Masculinity vs. Femininity (MAS) — (Part 4)



The Masculinity vs. Femininity dimension indicates the extent to which the dominant values in a society tend toward assertiveness and the acquisition of things, and away from concern for people and the quality of life. The dimension was labeled "masculinity" because, within nearly all of the 50 countries, men were more likely to score higher on these values than women. This was true even in societies that, as a whole (that is, considering both men and women), tended to be characterized by the set of values labeled "femininity." Hofstede found that the more a nation as a whole is characterized by masculine values, the greater is the gap between the values espoused by men and women in that nation.

Femininity	Masculinity
Quality of life, serving others	Ambitious and a need to excel
Striving for consensus	Tendency to polarize
Work in order to live	Live in order to work
Small and slow are beautiful	Big and fast are beautiful
Sympathy for the unfortunate	Admiration for the achiever
	Decisiveness

A higher score indicates a more masculine culture as characterized by Hofstede. The traits associated with a more masculine culture are listed in the chart under Masculinity. Conversely, a lower score indicates a more feminine culture and tends to demonstrate the traits listed in the chart under Femininity. U.S. culture is more masculine (62) than feminine, and Switzerland (70), Italy (70) and Austria (79) are more masculine than the U.S. Extremely feminine cultures include Sweden (5), the Netherlands (14) and Norway (8).

## Hofstede's Dimension Values Around the World

Country	PDI	UAI	IDV	MAS	Country	PDI	UAI	IDV	MAS
Arabic World	80	68	38	52	Italy	50	75	76	70
Argentina	49	86	46	56	Jamaica	45	13	39	68
Australia	36	51	90	61	Japan	54	92	46	95
Austria	11	70	55	79	South Korea	60	85	18	39
Belgium	65	94	75	54	Malaysia	104	36	26	50
Brazil	69	76	38	49	Mexico	81	82	30	69
Canada	39	48	80	52	Netherlands	38	53	80	14
Chile	63	86	23	28	New Zealand	22	49	79	58
Columbia	67	80	13	64	Norway	31	50	69	8
Costa Rica	35	86	15	21	Pakistan	55	70	14	50
Denmark	18	23	74	16	Panama	95	86	11	44
Eastern Africa	64	52	27	41	Peru	64	87	16	42
Ecuador	78	67	8	63	Philippines	94	44	32	64
El Salvador	66	94	19	40	Portugal	63	104	27	31
Finland	33	59	63	26	Singapore	74	8	20	48
France	68	86	71	43	South Africa	49	49	65	63
Germany	35	65	67	66	Spain	57	86	51	42
Great Britain	35	35	89	66	Sweden	31	29	71	5
Greece	60	112	35	57	Switzerland	34	58	68	70
Guatemala	95	101	6	37	Taiwan	58	69	17	45
Hong Kong	68	29	25	57	Thailand	64	64	20	34
India	77	40	48	56	Turkey	66	85	37	45
Indonesia	78	48	14	46	United States	40	46	91	62
Iran	58	59	41	43	Uruguay	61	100	36	38
Ireland	28	35	70	68	Venezuela	81	76	12	73
Israel	13	81	54	47	West Africa	77	54	20	46

*This abbreviated version of the survey does not allow for scores over 100; however the rating scale of the abbreviated version is roughly equivalent to the scale above.*




## Reflecting on the Experience

1. Take a few minutes to reflect on and briefly describe below a difficult situation, misunderstanding, or conflict that took place while you were overseas.
2. At the time, what did you think was at the root of the conflict or misunderstanding?
3. Knowing what you know about ways of comparing culture, what cultural difference may have been at play? Use Hofstede's dimensions and/or those listed in the table *Comparing Cultures* as a basis for your analysis.
4. What did you learn/have you learned as a result of the situation?
5. How did you change/have you changed because of what you learned?
6. How has this change affected your relationships with others since and/or how might it impact your relationships with others in the future?

<b>Comparing Cultures</b>			
<b>Polychronic</b>	Time is seen as flexible and circumstances and/or people are a consideration in how you will do things. Consequently, you may have to attend to several things at once if circumstances allow — and you may not get to everything.	<b>Monochronic</b>	You tend to favor doing one thing at a time. You like to plan your next path and finish one activity before starting another. You place value on using your time efficiently and see interruptions as a nuisance.
<b>Indirect communication</b>	Communication is more indirect and relies on the intuitive understanding learned through shared experiences.	<b>Direct communication</b>	Communication is very direct, as in the U.S. We don't like to "beat around the bush" and instead "get straight to the point."
<b>High context</b>	Reading between the lines... You are more of a high context person which means that you rely on the information from the context a person is providing (i.e., nonverbal clues, the situation itself) more so than on what they say. Many collectivist (group-oriented) cultures are high context since they emphasize community and shared experiences.	<b>Low context</b>	Reading the headlines... This means that you not only value communication that is spelled out directly, but that you do not assume a shared, or implicit, understanding of what things mean. You get information less from the contextual clues a person is providing and more from what they actually say.
<b>Tradition is positive</b>	You are content with and desire stability in your life; you value tradition and feel connected to the past through your family and community.	<b>Change is positive</b>	Stability is not valued as highly as it denotes stagnation; change means growth and progress.

<b>Comparing Cultures</b>			
<b>Past perspective</b>	Change can be too risky, especially if the rewards in the future are unclear.	<b>Future perspective</b>	Planning for the future is more important than contemplating the present or the past. Consequently, you will risk things now for a change and possible future benefits.
<b>Subjective</b>	Having a subjective approach means your experiences influence your response. Consequently, favoritism is possible and rules can be bent in the right circumstances.	<b>Objective</b>	An objective approach is one in which all people are treated equally and favoritism is undesirable. Likewise, this choice shows a tendency to adhere to the rules and not break them under any circumstances.
<b>Hierarchical</b>	There should be an order of inequality in which everyone has a rightful place. Superiors are inaccessible and power holders are entitled to special privileges. Conformity is valued.	<b>Equal treatment</b>	Inequality in a society should be minimized. Superiors are accessible. People at various power levels are not necessarily threatened by others and are more prepared to trust them. Independence is valued.
<b>Nature over people</b>	This denotes an acceptance of the limitations that nature puts upon us. Likewise, there is a belief that external factors guide and control our ability to achieve certain tasks. It is best to accept these limitations, as it is folly to fight against them.	<b>People over nature</b>	This demonstrates a feeling that people can conquer and alter the natural environment. All that is needed is the internal desire and fortitude to do it. This latter type of perseverance is an internal drive that supports the belief that you can do anything as long as you put your mind to it.



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## Launching an International Club

### **Goals**

This activity encourages participants to reflect on what they have learned up to this point during the orientation, synthesize these ideas and apply them to a plausible future scenario of proposing the formation of an International Club on a high school or college campus.

### **Objectives**

By the end of this session participants will:

1. Review the knowledge and skills they have gained from their AFS experience;
2. Practice articulating the skills and knowledge they have gained from their AFS experience; and
3. Explore one way in which they can apply this knowledge and these skills while facilitating intercultural learning experiences for others.

### **Time**

75 minutes, depending on the number of returnees present and total time available for the event.

### **Group Size**

6 or more

### **Materials**

- Flip chart or butcher paper
- 8 1/2 x 11 paper for making notes
- Pens or pencils
- Markers
- Tape
- *Launching an International Club* — one per participant

### **Preparation**

1. Make appropriate photocopies and gather materials and writing utensils.

### **Instructions**

1. Divide returnees into groups of three.
2. After returnees are settled in their groups, begin the activity by stating or adapting the following:

*In this activity your team will prepare a presentation proposing to start an International Club at your school. This presentation will be given to a hypothetical high school or college administration. To prepare for your presentation, use the instructions in the handout (pass*

out handout) as a guide. You are welcome to use flip chart paper and markers to prepare any visual materials for your presentation; however, it is not required.

*In preparation for this presentation, please reflect on our day together as this activity should help you review what knowledge and skills you have gained from the AFS experience and provide you the opportunity to practice articulating this growth.*

*Ultimately, we hope this activity will help you think about ways to integrate the AFS experience and what you have gained from it into your daily life.*

*You will have 30 minutes to prepare for this presentation. Each presentation should be about five minutes long.*



3. Encourage returnee groups to spread out in order to prepare for their presentations. Ask other helpers to circulate amongst the teams in order to provide feedback and keep groups on task.
4. After 20 minutes, announce that there are ten minutes remaining to complete presentation preparation.
5. Once 30 minutes have passed and most of the teams have completed their preparation, call returnees back and ask them to set up chairs in a semi-circle.
6. Prior to the first group presenting state or adapt the following:

*Before the first group starts, I would like to announce that you are welcome to pose questions to the presenters, but please wait until the end of the presentation.*

7. After completing the presentations and discussion, thank the returnees. If possible, summarize the highlights of the presentations and any salient points/ideas that emerged during the presentations, questions, and discussion.

## Launching an International Club

1. Create a brief mission statement for your club.
2. Give your club a name which you feel reflects its mission and tell us why you feel it does.
3. Describe at least one cross-cultural challenge related to school, family, and/or social life that you encountered while abroad and share the skills and knowledge that you gained that would make you good candidates to create and run an International Club. Each member of the group should give an example.
4. Give at least one example of a monthly activity or special event that you would run to bring international students and U.S. students on your campus together. Explain why you think this activity would be successful and beneficial for intercultural learning.
5. Give an example of an on-going/*as-needed* service that members of the club could provide to international and/or U.S. students in the area of intercultural learning.
6. Give an example of a fundraiser run by the club, the proceeds of which would benefit a particular international/intercultural organization in your community and help finance the cost of running the club.

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## Weaving the AFS Experience into Your Life

### **Goals**

This activity encourages participants to explore how they can integrate their AFS experience into their daily and future lives.

### **Objectives**

By the end of this session participants will:

1. Share and identify strategies for integrating their AFS experience into their present and future lives.

### **Time**

45 minutes, depending on the number of returnees present and total time available for the event.

### **Group Size**

4 or more

### **Materials**

- Flip chart or butcher paper
- Markers

### **Preparation**

1. Write each of the following questions on a separate piece of flip chart paper:
  - What can I do to continue the activities I enjoyed abroad (i.e., language, sports, art, etc.)?
  - How can I educate community members, peers, friends, family about different cultures and the importance of cultural difference?
  - How can I find like-minded people and other returned sojourners?
  - Based on my international/intercultural experience, what career and educational options might I consider that I had not thought of before?
  - How can I continue to fulfill the AFS mission of working towards a more just and peaceful world?
2. Do not post these questions in a visible place at this time.

3. Prepare a flip chart containing the following *Tips for Brainstorming*:
  - Withhold criticism and evaluation of each other's ideas during brainstorming — ideas are simply placed before the group.
  - Practical considerations are not important at this point — “wild” ideas are expected in this spontaneous and freewheeling activity.
  - The quantity of ideas is the most important goal — a great number of ideas will increase the likelihood that the group will find good ones.
  - Build on the ideas of others when possible — pool your creativity and combine ideas.
  - Focus on a single problem or issue — do not try to address multiple or complex problems in a single brainstorming activity.
  - Promote a congenial, relaxed, and cooperative atmosphere.
  - Make sure all group members, no matter how reluctant, have a chance to contribute their ideas.
  - Record all ideas and record them in the words used by the group members.
4. Arrange for seating so participants are divided into three groups.

### **Instructions**

1. Divide participants into three groups. If your group is small, divide in half, or if very small, conduct the entire activity in one group.
2. Introduce activity by stating or adapting the following:

*For this activity, you will be divided into three groups and each group will receive one or two questions written on flip chart paper. As a group you will brainstorm as many responses to your group's question(s) as possible. In order to make the most of this session and to ensure that everyone has a chance to contribute, during this session we would like you to adhere to the following guidelines for brainstorming.*
3. Reveal and present the ground rules for brainstorming from your flip chart.

*Please identify one person in each group to write the responses at this time. Scribes, raise your hand once you have been identified. Once we have passed out the questions, you will have ten minutes to record as many responses as possible.*
4. Pass out questions and urge participants to begin brainstorming. Once five minutes have passed, inform participants that five minutes remain.
5. After ten minutes have passed, ask each group to present their ideas to all participants. Encourage participants to ask clarification questions or share additional ideas. Post ideas in a visible place once they have been discussed.



# EVALUATION

## Evaluating the Orientation

An important and often overlooked aspect of an orientation is evaluating it when it is over. In order to improve the orientation for the next cycle, it is helpful to analyze the successes and difficulties just experienced. This remains as true for people who are experienced at organizing and running orientations as it is for those who are new to the process.

A good evaluation will contain feedback from everyone involved in the orientation. As the facilitator, your own feedback is important, especially because you have been involved in all phases of the organization. Others who helped should be encouraged to give their feedback, whether they had a narrow or a broad role. Finally, a good participant evaluation will include questions about the organization as well as the content and delivery of the orientation. In all cases, feedback may be either written or verbal or a combination of the two.

For participants, build the evaluation into the orientation agenda so that it is not forgotten. For yourself and other organizers, seek out feedback after the participants have left or at a later time when people have had a chance to reflect. Encourage everyone to suggest solutions or alternatives when they are identifying organizational difficulties as this will increase the usefulness of the evaluations.

To help in the evaluation process, we have created the required *Closure and Evaluation* activity (see page 25) Compiling the results of the written evaluations from both returnees and group leaders you receive during this session will aid in the creation of a summary report, which will help guide the direction of future orientations in your *Area Team*, and we hope across the nation. **We ask that you post some form of your evaluation summary on the Orientation Discussion of AFS Online.** This will allow other volunteers and staff to benefit from your experience when designing their own REO and editing future versions of the REO Leader's Guide. Please contact your Regional Support Staff should you need assistance with this.

## Evaluating the Orientation — Checklist

- Write down your own feedback about the organization of the orientation.
- Obtain written and/or verbal feedback from the orientation participants.
- Obtain written and/or verbal feedback from other people who helped organize the orientation.
- Summarize the feedback for a final evaluation and send to your Regional Travel and Logistics Coordinator and/or post on the Orientation Discussion of AFS Online.



## MY RESOURCES