



# ICOPROMO

Intercultural competence for professional mobility  
*Compétence interculturelle pour le développement  
de la mobilité professionnelle*



## Where do I belong?

### Relationship building

Group process

### Rationale

In order to work together effectively, people first of all need to find common ground to build on. Having a similar professional background, sharing personal likes and dislikes, or striving to achieve a common goal may provide this common ground. When working in multicultural teams, some people may be able to identify similarities more easily than others, either because they share a similar cultural background or have better linguistic skills to communicate their personal preferences. In these interactions, however, individuals tend to exclude people with whom they do not have obvious commonalities. As a consequence, some team members may remain “outsiders” and withdraw from the team. This is likely to become an obstacle to team progress as the negative emotions felt by the individual will keep him/her from making valuable contributions to the team. In this activity, the trainees become aware of these subtle processes and are encouraged to identify and practice ways of dealing with this issue effectively.

### Learning Outcome

Emotional management: What can I do when I realize the discomfort of a “team member”?  
Coping with temporary exclusion  
Expressing disappointment and needs

### Competences:

Sensing and addressing others’ emotions  
Dealing with the issue of exclusion  
Tactfulness  
Bonding

### Time

20 – 30 minutes

### Participants

Up to 25

### Materials required

Photocopy of tags (cut and placed in an envelope according to the number of participants)  
Flipchart stand, paper, marking pens



## Procedure

1. Preparation: copy the Appendix and cut out the individual tags. Count the exact number of participants. Make sure that there is at least one tag that is not part of a category (the holder of this tag will not be part of a group). Fold the tags and put them in a box.
2. All participants must leave the room. Arrange the classroom in such a way that there is room enough for everyone to move about freely, or assemble all participants by the door and have them draw a tag.
3. Participants are now invited to come back into the room. At the door, they draw a tag.
4. Participants are now instructed to find their “team members” who belong to the same group. One of the challenges for the participants is to find out which group they belong to (guessing the category). They are asked to reduce speech to a minimum during the search for their team members. They are, however, encouraged to use body language and to show their tags to other participants.
5. Once the groups are formed and the outsiders have been singled out, give the groups a few minutes to react to the fact that there are participants who do not belong to any group. After a few minutes ask the participants to go back to their seats and start the debriefing.

## Debriefing

- (1) First, ask the members of the teams to express the feelings they experienced when they found that their team was complete.
- (2) Were these teams aware of the fact that one or two people were unable to find a team?
- (3) How did they feel about these people?
- (4) Now turn to the “outsider(s)”: Ask them to express their feelings when they found that there was no team for them.
- (5) What would they have liked to do? Did they expect the other teams to invite them in?
- (6) Now ask the teams why they did not invite the one person/two people to join them. (In case they did, ask for their motivation to do so.)
- (7) Now, take the reflection to a meta-level and ask team members to cite examples for exclusion. In which context can exclusion occur in a multicultural team?
- (8) How do individuals react to exclusion?
- (9) How can a team deal with issues of exclusion?  
What can the individual team members do when they realize the discomfort of others in a team?  
What cultural knowledge is required if this occurs in a multicultural team?  
What are the dangers of addressing such issues openly in the team?



### Facilitator's notes

Do not tell the participants the objective of the activity. Participants are not aware that there are one or two tags that do not belong to a specific category. The holder(s) of such a tag will not find any partners – and hence remain (an) outsider(s).

Do not tell the participants how many members there are in each group.

Watch the reactions. A **fishbowl observation** would be particularly useful for this exercise.

The participant(s) who do(es) not find a group is/are singled out and should be invited to stand apart.

### Variation

**Fishbowl observation:** It is also possible to choose up to three people as observers. They have to know the purpose of the activity. Ask them to pay attention to verbal and non-verbal communication and behaviour, and report their observations back to the teams. Ask the observers in the debriefing whether they could sense any negative / positive emotions on the part of the participants. How were emotions expressed by the participants?

# Where do I belong?

## Appendix /Annexe (Tags for teams)

### Trees / arbres:

Pine / le pin	Oak / le chêne
Willow / le saule	Ash / le frêne
Beech / le hêtre	Fir / le sapin

### Flowers / fleurs:

Carnation /l'oeillet	Rose / la rose
Tulip / la tulipe	Iris / l'iris
Primrose / la primevère	Daisy / la marguerite

### Tags for participants who do not have a team / badges individuels

Clock / l'horloge	Pizza / la pizza
Cold / froid	Child / l'enfant

**Berries / fruits rouges:**

Strawberry / la fraise	Raspberry / la framboise
Blueberry / la myrtille	Blackberry / la mûre
Elderberry / le fruit de sureau	Cranberry / l'airelle

**Car brands / Marques de voitures:**

Volvo	BMW
Seat	Alfa Romeo
Renault	Toyota

**Colours/Couleurs:**

Blue / bleu	Green / vert
Red / rouge	Yellow / jaune
Orange / orange	White / blanc

**Wild Animals / animaux sauvages:**

Lion / le lion	Wolf / le loup
Tiger / le tigre	Crocodile / le crocodile
Zebra / le zèbre	Elephant / l'éléphant

**Pets / animaux domestiques:**

Cat /le chat	Dog / le chien
Cow / la vache	Parrot / le perroquet
Rabbit / le lapin	Chicken / la poule

**Drinks / boissons:**

Beer / la bière	Wine / le vin
Red Bull	Coca Cola
Champagne / le champagne	Whiskey