

CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS IN VETERINARY MEDICINE

NAVIGATOR TOPIC GUIDE

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What is cultural responsiveness in veterinary medicine?

Cultural responsiveness is the ability to integrate strategies, interventions, or responses to improve outcomes for individuals (Plotts, 2020). In other words, it is the ability to incorporate what you know about someone's beliefs, customs, and practices into the way you provide care.

A 15-minute meeting?

The Journey for Teams educational modules are designed for a 15-minute block because veterinary workplaces are busy! We recognize that more than 15 minutes is needed to discuss cultural responsiveness in the workplace in depth. After the meeting, we hope the team will be inspired to explore this topic further as a team or individually. Check out Dr. Craig's resources at the end of this guide.

Let's begin!

Refer to the [Navigator Handbook 1.0](#) and the steps below to help you lead and facilitate discussion about pathway development.

1 To begin the meeting, welcome everyone to the room by name.

2 Remind the group that the culture of a Journey for Teams meeting embodies engagement, open-mindedness, respect, and compassion.



ENGAGED



OPEN-MINDED



RESPECTFUL



COMPASSIONATE

3  Play the "Cultural Responsiveness in Veterinary Medicine" video.

4 Read aloud the 3 take-home messages from the 3-2-1 Discussion Guide:

- **Cultural responsiveness integrates what you know about someone's beliefs, customs, and practices into the way you provide care.**
- **Practicing cultural responsiveness requires self-awareness which includes recognizing and dismantling biases and stereotypes.**
- **Recognize that cultural norms exist for different groups of people, but also understand that people within the same culture may have unique values and beliefs.**

5 Ask for 1-2 comments on the take-home messages. Try to keep it brief to respect the 15-minute time commitment.

6 Read aloud the 2 questions from the 3-2-1 Discussion Guide.

Question for the team:

How can we improve our cultural responsiveness in our workplace to better serve our diverse clients and create a welcoming environment for all team members?

Spend a maximum of 5 minutes discussing the team question.

Question for individual self-reflection:

No need to share answers or thoughts with anyone.

Have there been situations where I've unknowingly made assumptions or exhibited cultural insensitivity, and if so, what can I do differently in the future?

The most important part of the meeting

7 As a team, decide on **1 actionable and measurable behavior change** to implement in your workplace. Consider 1 from the list below, or come up with your own idea.

- Create a welcoming environment that reflects the diversity of your community. This can include displaying posters or artwork that represent different cultures or providing reading materials in different languages.
- Audit online client reviews. If you notice multiple complaints about wait time, service, and inclusivity, these are areas where culturally responsive interventions can be implemented.
- Review your intake form and revise it to include more opportunities for your clients to share information about their hobbies, interests, values, and beliefs.

Our actionable idea

8 Invite the team to self-reflect. Team members may consider and commit to **1 personal behavior change** (no need to share them with anyone).

- Approach interactions with humility and a willingness to learn. Make a point to learn something new about your clients and coworkers and remember to ask about this topic the next time you see them.
- Invest in learning about effective communication strategies that are sensitive to cultural differences. This can include using plain language, avoiding jargon, and being mindful of non-verbal cues. Check out this list of helpful facts and tips: <https://www.scienceofpeople.com/cultural-differences-in-communication/>
- Learn how to say “hello” and “have a good day” in the language of a client or coworker.

9 Thank everyone for contributing, and congratulate yourselves on how much you accomplished in 15 minutes!

RESOURCES

Krause, I.-B. (1993). Book review: Promoting cultural diversity: Strategies for health care professionals Kathryn Hopkins Kavanagh & Patricia H. Kennedy sage publications, 1992. pp. 162, Pb. £13.50; ISBN 0-8039-4657-0. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 39(4), 313–313.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/002076409303900407>

MeetingNotes.com. (n.d.). *10 rapport-building questions to build trust and connection quickly*.
<https://meetingnotes.com/blog/rapport-building-questions>

Minnican, C., & O'Toole, G. (2020). Exploring the incidence of culturally responsive communication in Australian healthcare: The first rapid review on this concept. *BMC Health Services Research*, 20(1), 20. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-019-4859-6>

Plotts, C. (2020). *Cultural intentions*. DBC Publishing.

Twin English Centres. (n.d.). *Learn to say hello in 50 languages*.
<https://www.twinenglishcentres.com/blog/learn-to-say-hello-in-50-languages>

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