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ISSUED BY: IIE Rosebank College

## TIPS TO INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS



*September is regarded as heritage month in South Africa and is celebrated annually to mark our nation's diverse culture and heritage.*

### WHAT IS INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION?

Communication across different cultures and social groups.

Intercultural communication skills are important in today's environment. These skills can help you avoid unnecessary misunderstandings and misinterpretations due to ineffective communication. Improve intercultural communication skills by learning about other peoples' cultures, behaviors, and communication styles; unlock the potential for a creative and dynamic cross-cultural environment.

### Here are some tips on how to improve your intercultural communication skills:

#### Be Respectful

Treat others with respect and address them appropriately; this is especially important for closing and opening conversations. If you're unsure of how to address someone, ask first.

#### Ask Questions

Be an attentive listener. Always check for understanding, and ask questions if you have any doubts.

#### Learn about other cultures

To avoid insensitive comments and misunderstandings, research and learn about specific cultures. At the same time, avoid overgeneralising and stereotyping. Each person is an individual, so try not to make assumptions about a person of another culture based on what you have learned. Instead, aim for a better understanding and more effective communication.

#### Be an active listener

Don't dominate the conversation. Allow others to express their point of view and listen attentively. Take notes if you need to make sure that you retain vital pieces of information. When your colleague is done speaking, repeat what you heard to make sure that you have truly understood his/her concern.