

Intercultural Communication and Meta-Consciousness in the New Paradigm

The old knowledge paradigms of modernity and post-modernity have run their course. Like all paradigms, they allowed the construction of realities that eventually obsolesced them. Intercultural communication, founded in post-modern relativism, is on the verge of obsolescence unless it can reframe itself in the new quantum constructivist paradigm. This course clearly explicates the new paradigm and shows how interculturalists can use it to guide the development of an intercultural consciousness relevant to current social reality.

The first day of this two-day course will explore the idea of knowledge paradigms in a very practical and accessible way, with a focus on recent developments in the application of quantum thinking to everyday experience (including, of course, intercultural experience). The second day will focus on how a coherent understanding of the new paradigm can be used by interculturalists to reframe intercultural communication as the exercise of *meta-consciousness* (self-reflexive agency), and it will suggest how that approach can be successfully presented to clients in corporate, academic, and social service contexts.

This course (or an equivalent) is a pre-requisite for the IDRAcademy course *Embodied Culture* and recommended (but not required) as preparation for the course *Perceptual Constructivism and Differentness*.

Intended for:

Intercultural educators, trainers, and coaches; administrators of intercultural development and DEI programs in educational, corporate, and agency contexts; and other professionals who want to re-tool for a future that is already demanding new approaches to intercultural issues.

Learning Objectives

- Learn a brief history of traditional and scientific **knowledge paradigms**, enabling an understanding of how these conceptual operating systems create the conditions for their own obsolescence.
- Recognize how **quantum constructivism** reframes intercultural communication as an exercise of meta-consciousness.
- Learn how to make the case for **intercultural consciousness** in corporate, academic, and social service/political contexts.
- Explore how intercultural consciousness can guide action toward **inclusion, equity, and social justice** in ways that transcend post-modern limitations.
- Practice some **techniques of meta-consciousness** such as *de-reification*, *passive volition*, and *coherent intentionality*.
- Engage in group coaching on professional applications of the new paradigm.

Background

Most approaches to intercultural development have emerged from a post-modern, or relativist paradigm. In addition to making the crucial assumption of cultural relativity, a post-modern paradigm rejects claims of objectivity and criticizes the use of power in the service of dominant worldviews. Now, in an ironic turn of events, some wielders of dominant power are using post-modernism to justify “alternative facts” and the violent imposition of them on others.

To avoid enabling this abuse of relativism and to adapt to current social conditions, intercultural education, training, and coaching needs to adopt a more constructivist set of assumptions. For instance, culture should not be considered as something people have, but rather as something people do; intercultural communication should not only be about understanding difference but also about creating new forms of meaning; and intercultural competence should not be considered as a set of traits, but rather as a particular exercise of meta-consciousness.

The course makes the constructivist case that culture is “the coordination of meaning and action among bounded groups of people” and that, therefore, intercultural communication is necessarily a case of *meta-coordination*. It will argue that intercultural communication is a qualitatively different kind of communication that is enabled by meta-consciousness; i.e., that normal conscious communication is insufficient to manage cross-context coordination. The implication of this for interculturalists is that part of our job as teachers, trainers, or coaches is to be facilitators of meta-consciousness development.