











HOW TO BUILD CULTURAL COMPETENCE IN ASSESSMENT

In partnership with Linda McGhee, JD, PsyD



Cultural competence is a lifelong dedication to understanding and respecting people's different lived experiences. In educational and clinical settings, cultural competence allows us to reflect on our assumptions, avoid misdiagnosis, foster authentic collaboration, and center people's strengths.

How can we build our cultural competence when evaluating students?

REFLECT	&	RESPECT
 <p>Explore your beliefs, behaviors, and biases. Becoming culturally responsive takes time, and the journey requires courageous self-reflection.</p>		<p>Talk plainly and honestly with students and families about what to expect from the process.</p> 
 <p>Adopt a strengths-based, holistic view of the student rather than focusing only on challenges.</p>		<p>Explain who will see the assessment results and how they will be used. Ask about the recipient's communication preferences.</p> 
 <p>Select assessments appropriate for the student and referral question. Ensure that a student's background is a good match for the test's normative sample and consider language and technology needs.</p>		<p>Commit the time for detailed interviews, family histories, and observations to understand why an evaluation is needed. Multiple sources and approaches may be needed to gather cultural contexts.</p> 
 <p>Create a welcoming and non-judgmental testing environment by considering several factors including body language, office entry and security, and aspects of decor.</p>		<p>Gather qualitative and quantitative data from different sources. Include those who know the student in different contexts.</p> 
 <p>Use caution when including information about race, gender, sexuality, migration status, and trauma details in a report.</p>		<p>Identify and address barriers, including transportation, language, scheduling, and the ability to access the report.</p> 

And finally, if you make an error that causes a rupture with the student or family, apologize. Seek peer support or supervision to keep moving toward greater cultural sensitivity.

To learn more about cultural competence and assessment, explore Dr. McGhee's podcast, [The Multicultural Psychologist](#), or earn continuing education (CE) credits through one of her ProLearn® webinars.