

# StirFry Seminars

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## Cultural Competency for Leaders

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Cultural competency encompasses three areas of understanding and proficiency: awareness, cross-cultural communication skills development and the importance of developing relationships through a sense of community and dialogue.

Awareness, by itself, is not enough to create cultural competency. Competency requires not only an understanding of other cultures, but also self-reflection and an understanding of one's own cultural history and its impact on others.

The development of cross-cultural communication skills is essential in the preparation of successfully communicating across cultures. It requires mindfully listening, responding, learning the art of inquiry and acquiring the observational acuity to notice the intent and impact inherent in all of our communications and responses.

Lastly, cultural competency must have as its goal the development of more trusting and compassionate relationships through authentic and open dialogues. When participants feel heard and acknowledged, valued and understood, then relationships are established and a sense of community is created.

When diversity becomes a part of the everyday workplace environment and not just an occasional celebration, then each person can bring their full selves and gifts into the workplace. The lasting benefit is that retention, productivity, and creativity are increased because the leaders represented are culturally sensitive and diverse. When that occurs, workplaces will no longer need a shiny, colorful, diversity brochure that usually has little substance or reality—it will be seen in the faces and daily practices of all their employees.

*Lee Mun Wah*

### **MAY WORLDWIDE CELEBRATIONS**

May 1 - **May Day/International Workers Day** • May 3 - **World Press Freedom Day**  
May 5 - **Cinco de Mayo (USA)** • May 11 - **Mothers Day (Int'l)** • May 15 - **International Conscientious Objectors Day** • May 21 - **World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue & Development**  
May 23 - **World Turtle Day** • May 31 - **World No-Tobacco Day**