

Developing Partnership Between Internationals and Americans

Developing and strengthening partnership between internationals and Americans isn't something we can complete in a one-time training, nor can trainings alone lead to strong partnership necessarily. We need to weave cross-cultural values and experiences into the fabric of our ministry. Each training, cross-cultural experience, and even subtle message on partnership builds on each other. Here are some ideas.

Do one activity (or more) below and debrief afterwards

- Attend an international event on campus together.
- Bring a few key students to visit a first-generation immigrant church, an ISM chapter, or an ethnic-specific chapter (if different from cultures of American students). *Note: Depending on the size of the chapter or church, more than 3-4 may be overwhelming or distracting for the hosts.*
- Ask international students to pick a film that represents their culture or is from their country. Watch it together.
- (You get the idea... brainstorm more ideas!)

We need to weave cross-cultural values and experiences into the fabric of our ministry.

Sample Debrief Questions:

1. What did you like about your experience?
2. What surprised you? What did you learn?
3. What questions did the experience raise?
4. In what ways did you feel uncomfortable or sense dissonance? (If applicable).
5. Put yourself in their shoes. How do you think a person from this culture would feel if they were to visit your chapter?
6. How does leadership in this setting differ from your culture?
7. How changes might we make in our leadership community?

Trainings & Leadership Meeting Ideas

- Study passages on partnership and unity. Ex. Acts 6:1ff, Ephesians 2:11ff etc.
- [Crossing Cultures with Jesus](#) - chapters 3, 4, 5, 6, & 8, use discussion questions in book
- East vs West cultural Values - In each pair, share which value you identify more with. Discuss potential conflicts or miscommunication: What do you value more? Place yourself on the scale:

Collective decision-making-----	5	-----Individualism
Restraint-----	5	-----Expressiveness
Right/Privilege-----	5	-----Duty/Obligation
Hierarchy-----	5	-----Equality
Citing Accomplishment-----	5	-----Humility
Fatalism-----	5	-----Self-Determination
Self Control/Discipline-----	5	-----Spontaneity
Direct Communication-----	5	-----Indirect Communication/Text

Other Ideas to Build Partnership

- Create space for relationships to deepen outside of ministry. Ex. Invite a small group of leaders (4-6) - equal number of Americans and internationals - over for dinner
- Facilitate one-on-one interactions between Americans and internationals. Ex. Pair them up as prayer partners or to lead a particular activity etc.

See also [Ideas for Large Groups](#)