

OBSERVING CULTURAL ORIENTATION

Observation of Cultural Orientation (CO) sessions can be an effective tool to facilitate ongoing professional development of CO providers. It can also serve as an opportunity to identify meaningful ways of enhancing CO delivery at your organization. The following document provides tips for conducting such observations, along with a recommended rubric. Your organization may already have existing internal guidelines in place for conducting monitoring and observation of CO. This document is meant to supplement, not replace, such measures.

BEFORE THE OBSERVATION

Before conducting the observation, consider taking the following steps:

1. Communicate in advance with the CO provider about the date and time of observation.
2. Inform the CO provider about the purpose of the observation and what to expect during the observation (i.e. duration, if in-person, where the observer will sit). If using an observation rubric, provide a copy to the CO provider.
3. Set-up a time for a brief meeting before the observation to answer any questions or concerns the CO provider may have regarding the observation. During this meeting be sure to also schedule a debrief meeting for after the observation.

DURING OBSERVATION

To facilitate a smooth observation during the CO session, consider the following recommendations:

1. Communicate with participants about the observation process. Be sure to inform them that they are not being observed and request that they act as they normally would. Answer any questions they may have about the process.
2. If you are observing, consult with the CO provider and identify a position that will not intrude or disrupt the flow of the CO session.
3. If you are the CO provider, proceed with your session as you normally would. For example, do not disrupt the session to ask the observer a question about your observation.

AFTER OBSERVATION

After the observation, it's critical to conduct a debrief meeting. To make this process beneficial, it's important to create a space for the observer and CO provider to collaboratively discuss and reflect on the session and determine any necessary follow-up. Consider using the following format to assist in this process:

1. Start by having the CO provider answer the following questions: What went well? What could be improved?
2. The observer should then use the rubric to provide feedback. In giving feedback identify the CO provider's strengths and possible areas of development. Provide concrete examples based on the observation. Be mindful to not overwhelm the CO provider by offering too many suggestions or comparing the individual to other CO providers.
3. Close the meeting by asking the CO provider: What are some actions you might take based on this experience? Use this answer to discuss and agree on one to two actions together and identify a plan for additional follow-up.

OBSERVATION RUBRIC

The use of a structured observation rubric can ensure that CO providers and observers have a clear idea of what is being evaluated and what is considered best practice. The following is a recommended rubric for observing CO, which has been adapted from observation forms shared by the International Rescue Committee (IRC), and the following Resettlement Support Centers: Asia, Latin America, Turkey and Middle East (TuME).

	Not Evident (1)	Somewhat Evident (2)	Evident (3)
PREPARATION	CO provider is late and/or is not prepared to begin session on time.	CO provider is mostly prepared and begins session within a few minutes of scheduled time.	CO provider is prepared and ready to begin when participants arrive.
	CO provider has not prepared interpreter for the session.	CO provider has somewhat prepared interpreter for the session.	CO provider has communicated expectations, answered questions and reviewed materials with interpreter prior to beginning the session.
	CO provider has not prepared the physical space for the session in a way that is inviting and intended to promote participant engagement.	CO provider has made attempts at preparing the physical space in a way that is inviting and intended to promote participant engagement.	CO provider has prepared the physical space for the session in a way that is inviting and intended to promote participant engagement.
	CO provider spends significant amount of time searching for session materials (visual aids, realia, handouts, etc.).	Training materials are mostly organized.	Training materials are well organized and easily accessible.
ADDITIONAL NOTES:			

	Not Evident (1)	Somewhat Evident (2)	Evident (3)
CONTENT & TIME MANAGEMENT	CO provider rarely meets CO session objectives.	CO provider mostly meets CO session objectives.	CO provider meets all CO session objectives.
	CO provider often makes factual errors and/or inaccurate generalizations.	CO provider rarely makes factual errors or generalizations.	CO provider presents factual information.
	CO provider relies heavily on isolated anecdotes to teach key points or to answer participant questions.	CO provider rarely uses isolated anecdotes to teach key points or answer questions.	CO provider does not rely on isolated anecdotes to teach key points or answer questions.
	Time and emphasis are given to non-priority information.	Time and emphasis mostly placed on priority information.	Time and emphasis placed on priority information.
ADDITIONAL NOTES:			

FACILITATION & PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT	Not Evident (1)	Somewhat Evident (2)	Evident (3)
	CO provider ignores or leaves difficult questions unanswered.	CO provider acknowledges difficult questions but does not always provide answers or refer to other sources.	CO provider shows initiative to research answers to participants' questions, or refers participants to other appropriate sources of information.
	CO provider presents information predominantly through lecture.	CO provider provides adequate balance of lecture and participant involvement.	CO provider often incorporates opportunities for participants to discover information on their own rather than through lecture.
	CO provider uses mostly yes/no and/or rhetorical questions.	CO provider uses a variety of questioning techniques.	CO provider uses questions which encourage critical thinking and reflection.
	CO provider does not acknowledge participant input and/or does not respond in an appropriate way.	CO provider usually acknowledges participant input and responds appropriately.	CO provider acknowledges input from all participants and responds in a way that encourages participation.
	CO provider allows a few, active participants to dominate the session. Participants who do not actively participate are not encouraged to do so.	Some attempts are made to create opportunities where all participants feel comfortable to participate.	CO provider creates opportunity for all participants to participate, including but not limited to participants with low literacy, disabilities, women, minority language groups, and older adults.
	CO provider does not effectively check comprehension of instructions or other information.	CO provider effectively checks comprehension mostly through questioning.	CO provider effectively checks comprehension through questioning as well as by observing lesson activities.
ADDITIONAL NOTES:			