

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Framework

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Culturally Unaware

Defined as: Difference is not understood and may be feared

Culturally Aware/Sensitive

Defined as: Difference is understood; not feared, not acted upon; but respected

Culturally Committed

Defined as: Difference is understood and respected and acted upon

Culturally Capable

Defined as: Difference is respected and acted upon across functions and equity is a focus

Culturally Responsive

Defined as: Cultural difference drives continuous improvement and services are equitable

Cultural Capability Across The Domains Of: • Organisational Readiness • Employment Strategies

Continuous improvement is an element that needs to be applied across a continuum; organisations should aim to become responsive but recognise they may go backwards on the continuum from time to time

Can translate as...

- The dominant culture's way of doing things is okay for everyone irrespective of cultural differences and sometimes this means that policies and practices are destructive to a specific culture and individuals within that culture
- Intentionally racist attitudes and/or ignorance
- The strengths and cultural specificity of minority groups are ignored or not acknowledged
- People that are from different cultural backgrounds, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, are discriminated against

Some examples:

- Visiting communities without permission or invitation
- Asking Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women to provide personal care for an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander man
- No understanding of family needs when a death or emergency presents

Can translate as...

- There is organisational understanding about Aboriginal historical legacies and the impact this has today on many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Reflection on knowledge and beliefs about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and able to take corrective action when culturally destructive biases present
- Employees and the organisation seek to address any power imbalances
- There is an understanding that flexibility is required but it is not practiced

Some examples:

- Use of inappropriate language
- Organisation "knows and will try" but still applies stereotypes and is not flexible or accommodating of cultural difference

Can translate as...

- There is an understanding that beliefs and pre-conceptions can have an impact on equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- There is a commitment to correct balances in power between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the organisation
- The value of employing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees is understood and acted on
- Tools and resources that are developed are adapted specifically for the Region in which they are used

Some examples:

- Developing tools and resources that are accessible and written in 'Aboriginal English' and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees are leading this development
- Management commitment and follow through - leading by example

Can translate as...

- There is a deep understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and peoples and the need to work in different ways so that equity of outcomes can be achieved
- There is localised cultural capability training and a focus on relationship building with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community
- The organisation has a Diversity Statement committing to working in culturally responsive ways

Some examples:

- There are several S50 (d) jobs within the organisation and an active upskilling program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to support career progression
- There is a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in place and being actively implemented; cultural awareness is compulsory and there are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees employed across all levels in the organisation

Can translate as...

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are treated with care and cultural humility
- The needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are understood and responded to appropriately
- Cultural protocols are observed and understanding is linked with action
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples feel accepted and able to be themselves and their cultural uniqueness is respected
- Opportunities to procure services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses are always pursued; supporting these businesses is a priority

Some examples:

- Reflective practice that translates to change within the organisation or continuing practice that is culturally responsive as reported by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Supervision and support is in place to develop staff and on-Country Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness programs are integrated into induction processes