

“A Matter of Honor”

Cross Cultural
Communications Skills useful
for working with Hispanic
Families and Communities

A stylized silhouette of a mountain range in shades of teal, located at the bottom right of the slide.

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Background

- ◆ Government terminology define Hispanic or Latino as:

“a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race.”
- ◆ The phrase “Hispanic or Latino Origin” replaces the phrase “Hispanic Origin,” which was used in tabulating censuses prior to 2000.
- ◆ “Hispanic” is not a **race** – it is an **ethnicity**. **Hispanics** can be of any race.

Background

- ◆ Latinos in the United States are a very heterogeneous group that represents over 25 national origin groups.
- ◆ They speak at least 25 dialects or versions of Spanish.
- ◆ Hispanics are the fastest growing minority in this country. These groups are growing most in non-metropolitan areas.

Background



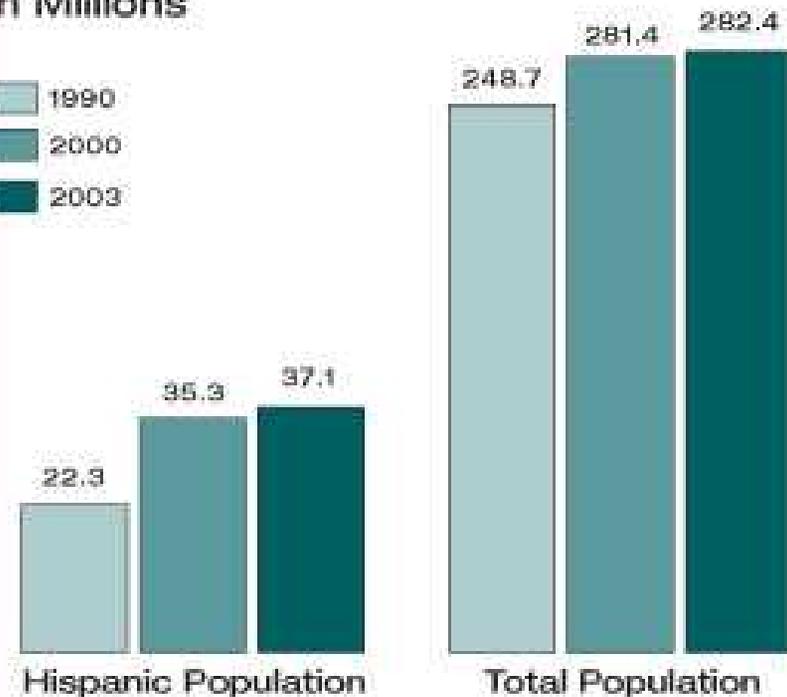
- ◆ There are 23 Hispanics in Congress
- ◆ 1 in every 20 companies in US is owned by Hispanics

Background

- ◆ There are some 38 Million Hispanics and the number is growing. There has been an estimated 9.8% increase since the 2000 census.
- ◆ They will number 98 Million by 2050, making up one quarter of the population of the United States.

U.S. Population Growth 2003

In Millions



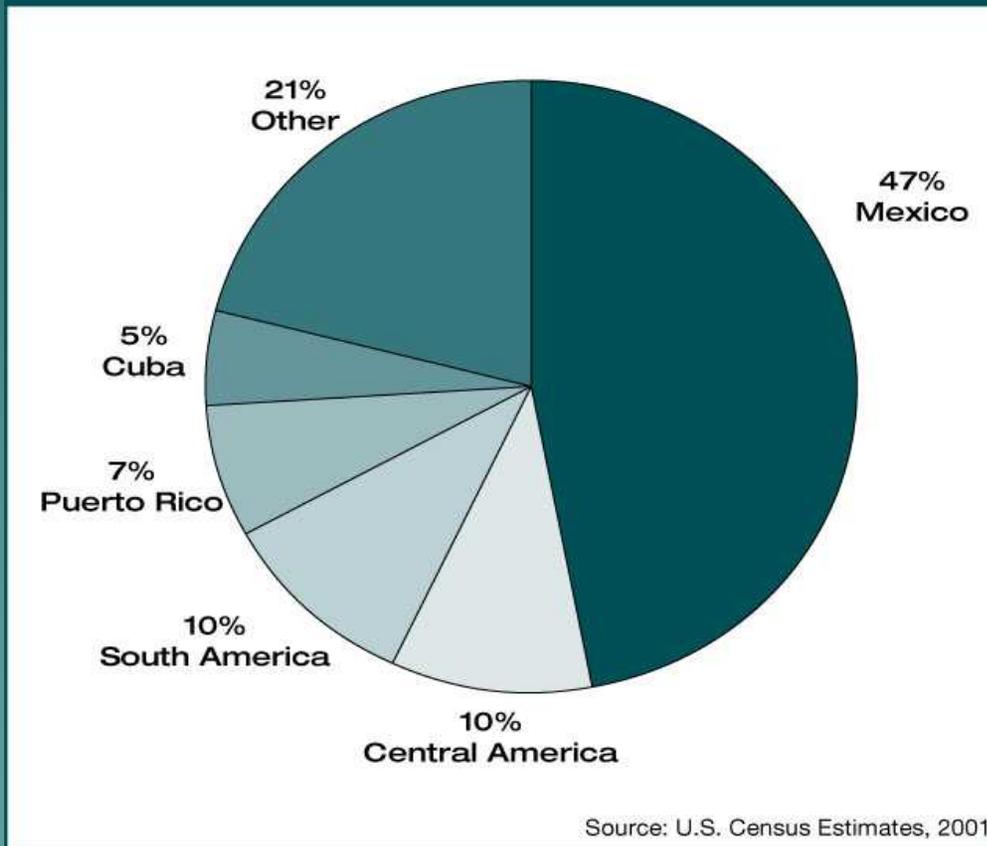
Source: U.S. Census Estimates, 2001

Background

- ◆ Hispanics make up 13% of the US population and represent the largest single minority in the nation.
- ◆ As of last month, growth from native born Latino-Americans had outstripped immigration.
- ◆ Approximately two thirds are native born and 32% are born from parents who were both born in the United States.

Nation of Origin

U.S. Hispanics by Country/Region of Descent



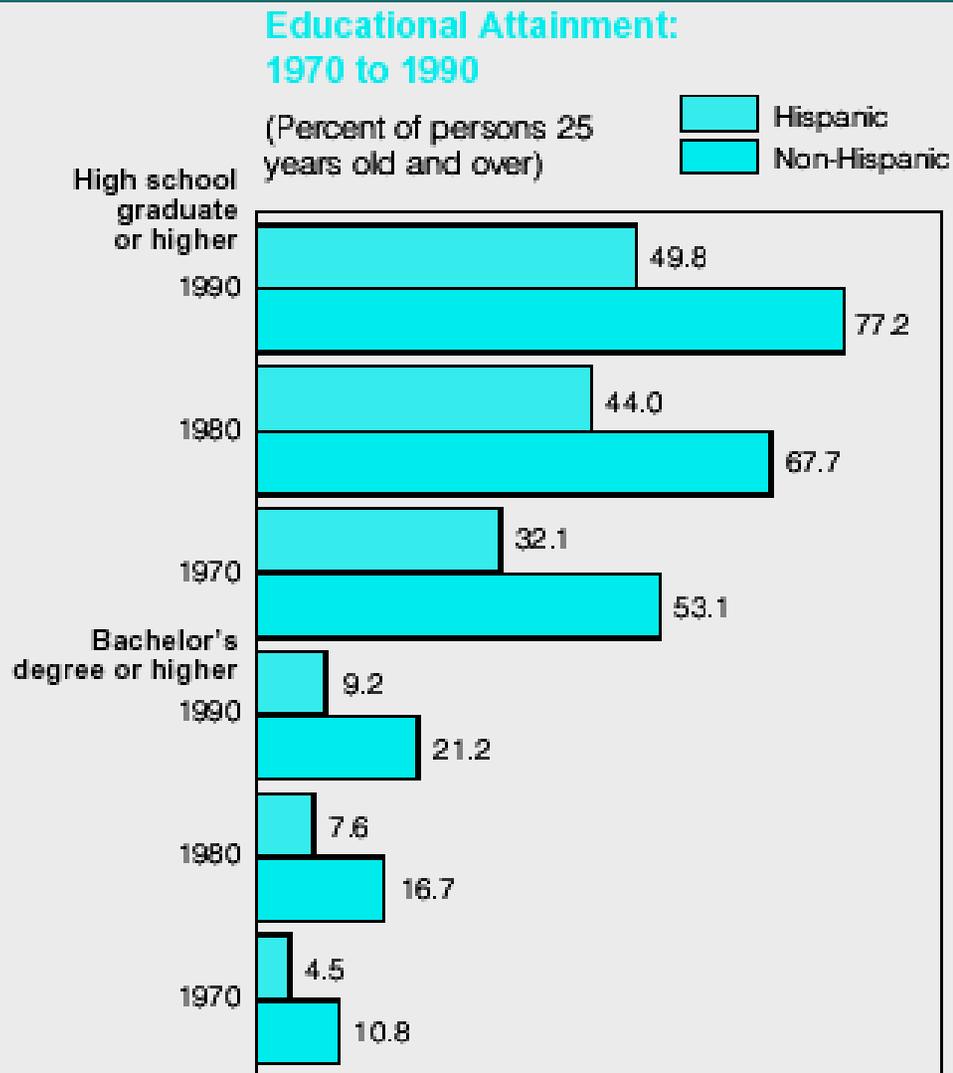
- ◆ There are regional niches among these groups:
- ◆ More persons of Mexican ancestry live in the West.
- ◆ More Cubans and Puerto Ricans live in the East.

Language



- ◆ Contrary to the stereotype, many Hispanics speak only English.
- ◆ While linguistic similarities may exist, Mexican Spanish differs within a state or region.
- ◆ A person from Guatemala fluent in Spanish may have a hard time understanding someone fluent in Spanish from New Mexico.

Education



- ◆ While there are clear differences between Hispanics and other Americans in educational attainments, significant gains are being made.

Age

- ◆ Hispanics are generally a very young population.
- ◆ Non-Hispanic whites are aging, but with the exceptions of Cuban-Americans, 38% of Hispanics are under 18.
- ◆ The median age for Cuban-Americans is 41, but it is 24 for Mexican-Americans
- ◆ The median age for Hispanics 28, while the median age for non-Hispanics is 35.



Income and Family Size



◆ Income

23% of Hispanic families as compared to 49% non-Hispanic white families report full time employment with earnings of \$35K or more.

◆ Family Size

36% of Americans of Mexican heritage have 5 or more people in the household

31% of Hispanics have 5 or more people in the household as compared to 12% of non-Hispanic whites.

Individualism

- ◆ Hispanic cultures often place more value on people than on projects or business.
 - ◆ Competition may be a low priority.
 - ◆ Cooperation is more important in many Hispanic cultures than individual achievement.
 - ◆ Many countries with a Spanish cultural connection score low on the Individualism Index.
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Individualism Index (IDV) values for 50 countries and 3 regions

Score Rank	Country or Region	IDV Score	Score Rank	Country or Region	IDV Score
1	USA	91	28	Turkey	37
2	Australia	90	29	Uruguay	36
3	Great Britain	89	30	Greece	35
4/5	Canada	80	31	Philippines	32
4/5	Netherlands	80	32	Mexico	30
6	New Zealand	79	33/35	East Africa	27
7	Italy	76	33/35	Yugoslavia	27
8	Belgium	75	33/35	Portugal	27
9	Denmark	74	36	Malaysia	26
10/11	Sweden	71	37	Hong Kong	25
10/11	France	71	38	Chile	23
12	Ireland (Republic of)	70	39/41	West Africa	20
13	Norway	69	39/41	Singapore	20
14	Germany F.R.	68	39/41	Thailand	20
15	South Africa	67	42	Salvador	19
16	Finland	65	43	South Korea	18
17	Austria	63	44	Taiwan	17
18	Israel	55	45	Peru	16
19	Spain	54	46	Costa Rica	15
20	India	51	47/48	Pakistan	14
21	Japan	48	47/48	Indonesia	14
22/23	Argentina	46	49	Columbia	13
22/23	Iran	41	50	Venezuela	12
24	Jamaica	39	51	Panama	11
25	Brazil	38	52	Equador	8
26/27	Arab countries	38	53	Guatemala	6

Source: Geert Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations, Software of the Mind*

Our Responsibilities

Public Land Management Agencies are committed to:



Welcoming all visitors.

Recognizing that public land use is a right, not a privilege (within appropriate regulations).

Ensuring that all visitors have universal access to places and information necessary for a safe and enjoyable experience.

The Whole Story

- ◆ Interpretive programs provide complete stories with multiple points of view
- ◆ We have a responsibility for knowing our audiences



Examples from the Real World

USACE Corps of Engineers Ranger Phil Martinez put cultural competencies to work when he became involved in an incident at Abiquiu Lake, New Mexico.



Photo by Dave Dutton.

Park Ranger Phil Martinez stands with students at the National Hispanic Environmental Council's Minority Youth Environmental Training Institute, where he served as a role model and mentor.

- ◆ 30 Bolivian nationals got into a fight with some Mexican nationals over the use of a group shelter.
- ◆ Martinez immediately went and talked with the grandmothers of each side." The grandmothers were able to stop the conflict immediately.
- ◆ His knowledge of this particular aspect of Hispanic culture resulted in the successful ending of the disagreement.

Hispanic Visitors and Law Enforcement



- ◆ Some cultures show respect for persons of authority by avoiding eye contact.
- ◆ In the U.S., law enforcement officers are generally suspicious of persons who will not look them in the eye.

Hispanic Visitors and Law Enforcement



- ◆ The appearance and color of some agency uniforms mimic the Border Patrol.
- ◆ The Border Patrol recently changed the appearance of their Patrol Cars making them almost identical to those of the National Park Service.
- ◆ Both of these situations can create fear and avoidance.

The Hispanic Experience

- ◆ Experiences with dominant population or immigrant populations differs.
- ◆ Immigrant versus native born
- ◆ Immigrant vs. refugee
- ◆ Legal status vs. undocumented status
- ◆ Cuban Americans were given citizenship, economic opportunities, etc., which was not the same as for many Mexican Americans.

A Matter of Honor

- ◆ “Respeto” is a concept that is different than Respect.

Respeto is deference and propriety toward an individual, rather than deference to power or position.



A Matter of Honor



- ◆ Courtesy is very important
- ◆ Be as polite as you can to everyone you can.

Hard Lessons from the Real World

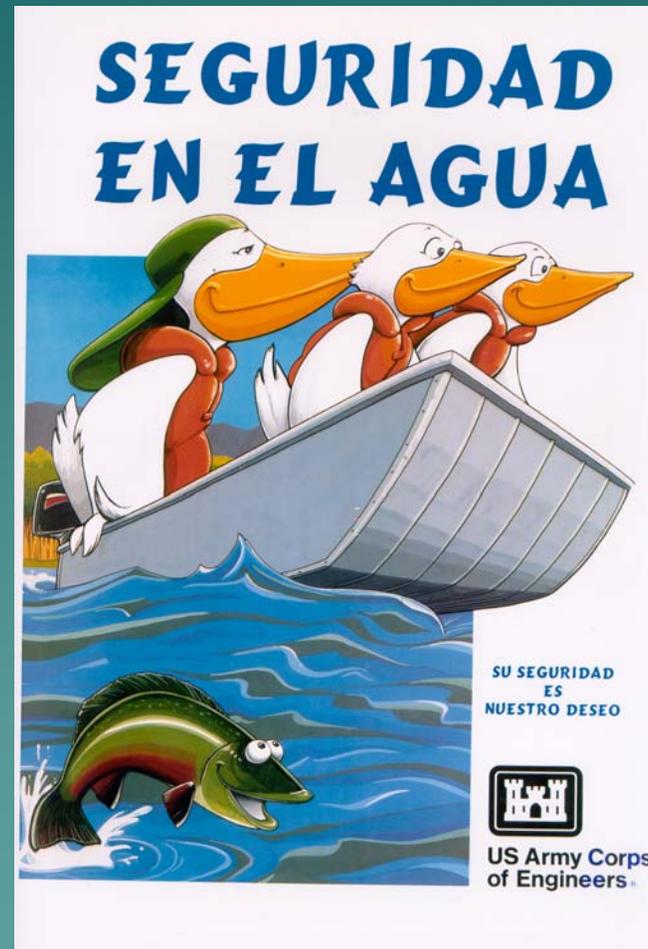


- ◆ The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has had tragic multiple drownings at deep water lakes
- ◆ Non-English speaking Hispanic families failed to recognize the level of danger and left children in charge of younger children.

Taking Action

- ◆ In response to these tragedies, the Corps has issued:

“Seguridad En El Agua” : A Spanish language version of the Water Safety Fun Book providing key water safety messages to Spanish-speaking children and their parents.



Taking Action

- ◆ “Matanzas” are traditional Hispanic pig roasts using a large bed of coals
- ◆ Some parks and lakes are building larger cooking areas that accommodate “Matanzas”



Taking Action



- ◆ Some parks and lakes are building larger group picnic areas and:
- ◆ using more vibrant colors in painting visitor use structures to make them more inviting to different groups

Speaking the Same Language

- ◆ Common language does not equal good communication
- ◆ You must navigate the nuances in dialects, etc.
- ◆ The greatest peril is when we think we understand and we don't
- ◆ Frankness and directness may be considered to be rude in some cultures.
- ◆ When working with Latinos, making small talk is important before moving on to other discussions and decisions.

Speaking the Language

Language is more than knowing the words

For example:

- ◆ The use of You is not always "tu."
- ◆ Never address an elder or leader with "tu".
- ◆ Use "usted" and only use "tu" with permission.
- ◆ You can inadvertently offend by speaking in ways that are too familiar.
- ◆ In referring to a person's mother, the use of "Mama" is to be preferred over "Madre."

Speaking the Language

Language is more than knowing the words!

- ◆ An American T-shirt maker in Miami printed shirts for the Hispanic market to commemorate the Pope's visit.

Instead of "I Saw the Pope" (*el Papa*), the T-shirts read "I Saw the Potato" (*la papa*).

- ◆ Frank Perdue's slogan, "It takes a strong man to make a tender chicken," was translated into Spanish as "It takes an aroused man to make a chicken affectionate."

Speaking the Language

- ◆ When the Parker Company marketed a ballpoint pen in Mexico, its ads were supposed to have read,

"It won't leak in your pocket and embarrass you."

- ◆ Unfortunately the marketing pros who were hired for the campaign used the verb *embarazar* (to impregnate) instead of *dar vergüenza* (to embarrass), so the ad read:

"It won't leak in your pocket and make you pregnant."

Speaking the Language

Language is more than knowing the words!

Conclusion:

- ◆ Learning some Spanish is useful, but it is not the key to understanding cultures or working with the Hispanic public. It is just one element.
- ◆ Do not let the inability to speak or understand the language become a barrier.

Marketing

- ◆ Some televised sports events are already using electronic billboards that allow advertisements to be targeted to specific audiences.
- ◆ National network stations will soon be broadcasting commercials in Spanish.
- ◆ Many magazines and web sites already have Spanish language versions.

Spanish Language Media Contacts

- ◆ Public Service Announcements have been produced by some Federal agencies for:
 - ◆ UNIVISION, Television
 - ◆ Telemundo, Television
 - ◆ Local Spanish language focus television stations
 - ◆ Local Spanish language focus radio stations

Ethnic Specific Media Outlets

- ◆ Findings from the first-ever quantitative study on the reach, impact, and potential of media targeted to minorities in California showed that:
- ◆ "Ethnic television stations, radio stations and newspapers media,...reaches 84% of the three largest minority groups in California"
 - Bendixen & Associates.

Signage

- ◆ Many parks do not have signs in Spanish, even where there is a high use by Spanish-only speaking visitors.



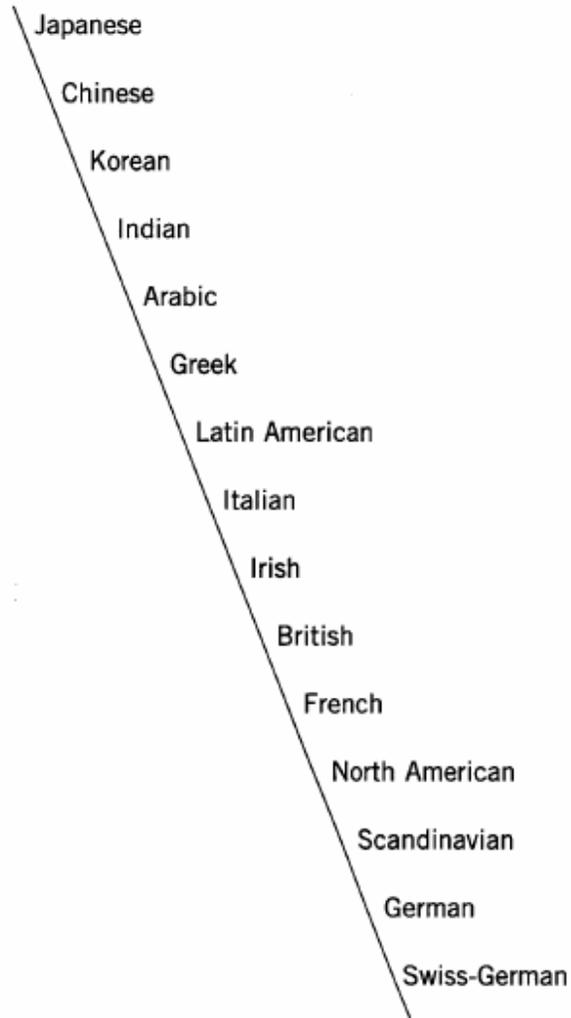
I. Identifying Barriers to Participation

- Intra-personal Barriers
 - Inter-personal Barriers
 - Structural Barriers
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- A stylized, low-poly mountain range graphic in shades of teal, located at the bottom right of the slide.

II. Cross Cultural Communications

- ◆ Know Yourself
 - ◆ Know Your Own Culture
 - ◆ Know the Culture of Others
 - ◆ Communicate using that Knowledge
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- A stylized, teal-colored mountain range graphic is positioned at the bottom right of the slide, extending from the right edge towards the center.

High Context Cultures (Information Implicitly Contained)



Low Context Cultures (Information Explicitly Conveyed)

III. Cultural Competencies

- ◆ Non verbal Communications

Overcoming the Uniform

Body language

Touching Children

Shaking hands

Smiling

Cultural Competencies

◆ Verbal Communications

Know who to talk with first

Try not to yell

Don't let not speaking the language
get in the way of communicating

Cultural Competencies

- ◆ Understanding, appreciating, using appropriate:

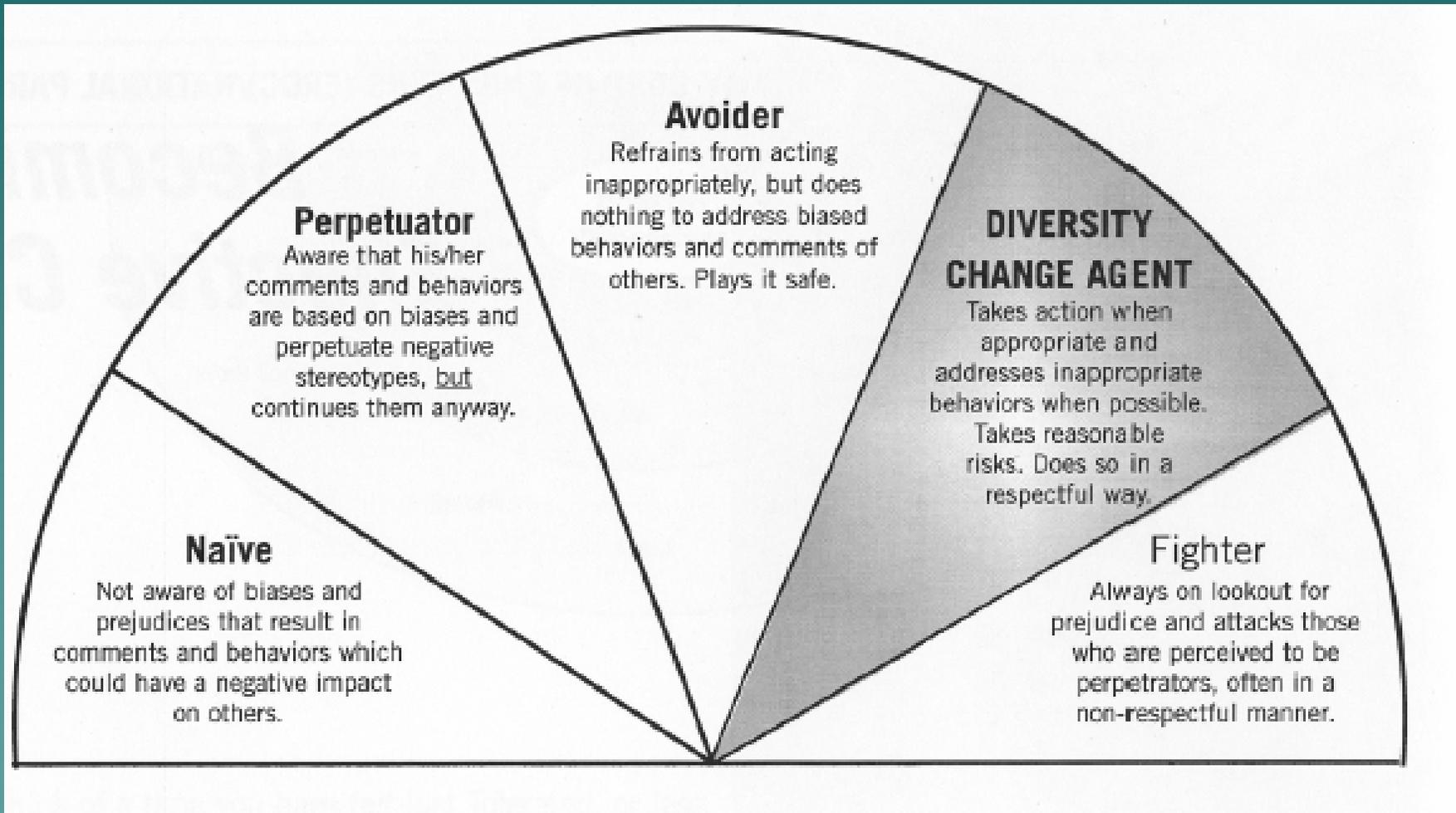
Gestures

Traditions

Idioms



Understanding Ourselves



IV. Conclusion

- ◆ We must build a future for the nation's public places and open spaces that will not just *tolerate* Hispanic families and communities, but that will *embrace* Hispanic families and communities.

V. Discussion and Dialogue

