**Decoding Objections:**

**Five Coaching Techniques to Overcome Roadblocks,**

**Stagnation and Resistance to Culture Change**

**#1: Tame the Advice Monster**

We are highly practiced in telling others what we think they should do. Coaching is about helping others determine for themselves what they should do. Get into a place of learning first, only offer advice later if it is what they actually seek from you.

**#2: Meet Them Where They Are At**

*Intercultural Developmental Continuum, Mitch Hammer*

**Denial: doesn’t see differences or isn’t interested in noticing and focusing on differences**

*Goal:* Draw attention to basic differences in a supported and reflective way

* Create opportunities to see and reflect on differences such as culture days, international potlucks, art and dance performances from other cultures, etc.
* Promote reflection to highlight differences
  + How might that be different for so and so
  + How does group X do such and such activity?

**Polarization: sees differences and judges them as wrong (preferring own way *or* other way of being)**

*Goal:* Look for commonalities and round out praise and criticism to see strengths and weaknesses of both ways of being

* Listen at Three Levels
* Verify Values
  + *What do you have in common? What IS the same? What are the strengths AND weaknesses?*

**Minimization: ignores differences by focusing on assumed similarities**

*Goal:* Develop self-awareness of one’s own culture and ways of thinking and being and help them see differences amongst people they had assumed to be similar

* Promote acquisition of culture-general information
* Use Powerful Questions
  + *What were you taught about X? What assumptions are you making? What are different ways of being? How could you discover if we are the same vs. assume we are the same?*

**Acceptance: sees differences and values them, wants to be inclusive**

*Goal:* Encourage experimentation with curiosity and humility and promote acquisition of culture-specific information

* Stop focus group-ing and just try something!
* Use Powerful Questions
* Embrace the complexity of grey areas and ethical dilemmas by fully analyzing cultural values for each group
  + *What could you try? Who can help you experiment to learn more?*

**Adaptation: bridges differences by shifting to meet people where they are at**

*Goal:* Foster ongoing growth and learning of culture-specific

* + Practice shifting to meet people where they are at
  + Design events taking into account identity, culture and larger systemic context
  + Ongoing curiosity and humility as well as confidence to try adaptations and learn from them
  + *What is your role? What is your goal? How can you do this without losing your soul?*

**#3: Listening at Three Levels:**

1. Focus is inside your own head, your reaction, your response, the advice you are preparing to share, etc
2. Focus is on what’s being said, really getting the words and meaning of the message
3. Focus is on the entire message, verbal and non-verbal, the energy, gestures and other modes of communication

**#4: Verify Values:**

Step 1: Identify your values at play in the situation

Step 2: Name what your expected demonstration of those values are

Step 3: Get curious about the value under the behavior you are seeing that doesn’t match your expectation

Step 4: Compare your values and seek a solution that honors both

**#5: Powerful Questions**

* + Short: 7-10 words max
  + Require more than a yes/no answer
  + Start with How, What, Where, Who, When, but not WHY
  + Move individual to action or reflection to interrupt complacency
  + Come without shame and promote growth and possibilities
  + Connect to self and own experience