

Take a look at these questions and feel free to use any of them to create your own “Interview Guide” of 15-20 questions to ask your interviewee. Just remember the following:

- Use any of the questions below (modify them if you need to) and/or develop your own. BE THOUGHTFUL in considering which questions to use.
- Make sure the questions you use are appropriate for your interviewee and for the culture they are a member of.
- Consider what ORDER you put your questions in and what kind of information/experience you are interviewing about. It is better to start out more general before you get to the more specific/personal questions. Also, depending on what type of information/experience you are getting at, you might “chunk” different sets of questions together.
- Even though you’ll have a list of questions, sometimes the answers might require you to have “follow-up” questions to get more information or clarity with the answer. (But it is not necessary to include all your follow-up questions in the interview guide you submit to me).

#### Questions about culture:

- What are the most important values in your culture? OR What are some values (regarding gender, age, group orientation, status, etc) your culture emphasizes and how do these influence your daily life? (A good follow up to this question: Which of these values will you be sure to pass down to your children?)
- What do you value most in your culture and how do these values get enacted (or illustrated) in your life?
- What holidays, traditions, and superstitions do you feel are important for you in your culture and what is their significance in your life?
- What are some rules your parents had for you while growing up? What values did they teach you and how do they influence your daily life today?
- How do your older family members educate you to the specific rules or roles in your culture?
- How are men and women expected to behave in your culture? How are children and elders expected to behave?
- What are some important cultural rituals performed in your culture? Who performs these? When and where is it appropriate to perform these?
- To what extent is “saving face”, duty and obligation important in your culture? Can you recall a time when any one of these shaped how you acted in a situation?
- What are some common superstitions in your culture?
- What is considered “taboo” or inappropriate in your culture? How did you first learn that this was “taboo”?
- What are you most proud of in your culture?
- What is one thing about your culture that you don’t like and why?
- How has your cultural group been stereotyped? Where do you think they come from? How do you respond to this?
- What is something that is often misinterpreted about your culture?
- When have you been discriminated against? How did you react and handle this?

Good questions that address culture & communication and/or will get the interviewee to talk about their communication interactions and behavior:

- How do your values influence the way you communicate with other members of your community and with individuals outside your community?
- Can you explain some misunderstandings/conflicts you had in America resulting from cultural differences in communication style?
- How has your accent or dialect had an effect on your interactions with others?
- What behaviors in American (or specify another culture if more relevant for the interviewee) culture have led to misunderstandings (or challenges) for you?
- When you communicate with people from other cultures, how do you adjust your communication style?
- Who do you feel most comfortable communicating/interacting with and why?
- What are some similarities that you found between the communication style in your native country and the communication style of Americans? in America? What difference in communication style do you find to be the most challenging (or confusing)?
- In what way, do your religious beliefs affect your daily communication with others?
- How do members in your cultural community communicate with one another (such as with greetings, showing closeness or affection, or demonstrating friendship or family relationships.)?
- What are some typical nonverbal gestures used in your culture?
- How do you adapt your communication style when you talk to \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_?
- When greeting others from your culture, is there a specific style of speaking you use? How is this different if greeting adults vs. someone your own age?
- In what ways do you modify/change your communication style when talking to someone other a member of your own culture?

Questions to ask of those who have immigrated or who have lived in two different cultural environments:

- Why did you immigrate (or move to \_\_\_?)
- What are some challenges you faced when you first live in \_\_\_\_\_? How did you overcome these challenges?
- How did you experience culture shock when you moved here? OR How did you cope with culture shock? How did you adjust and who helped you to adjust? OR How did you adapt to your environment?
- When you first moved to \_\_\_\_\_, what surprised/shocked you the most?
- What aspects or practices from your culture did you retain after immigrating?
- To what extent do you feel pressure to assimilate to \_\_\_\_\_ (identify the culture/cultural group). What behaviors have you had to change in order to assimilate?

- What do you think is the most important thing an outsider should know about your culture?
- What is the primary difference between American culture and yours? (This question might be too general—perhaps a better way to state would be to specify what kind of difference (in terms of communication style or rituals or customs). So, if asking this question, you would want to be prepared to ask a follow up question if necessary.
- What do you think you would need to teach others in your country if they would be immigrating now?
- How do you maintain your native culture while living in this country?
- What are some habits that “American” people do that make you feel uneasy when you interact with them?

### More Questions

- When thinking about your identity, would you associate yourself more with your ethnic background or with your American nationality?
- What culture would you prefer to live in and why?
- What culture do you associate (or **feel comfortable**) with more and why?
- How does your cultural community view males and females? Who is more valued and dominant?
- **OR : How are men and women perceived in your culture? To what extent are men valued more than women? How is this demonstrated in society (with certain rituals, traditions??) OR** As a woman (or man) in your culture, what duties are you expected to do?
- How do you view intercultural dating or marriage?
- ~~Have~~ **Can you tell me about a time** you ~~ever~~ had a clash with someone b/c of differing views/**values**?
- What do you need to teach those in your country now, if they are going to visit the US?
- What are some things a person who has NEVER come in contact with your culture should keep in mind when communicating interacting with your culture?
- What are the advantages or disadvantages of ~~being~~ **identifying with** \_\_\_\_\_ (**more than one culture or as \_\_\_\_\_-American**)?
- What marital customs are performed in your culture?
- How is homosexuality viewed in your culture?
- Since you are multicultural how do you think that has affected your way thinking?
- What are some things that would be considered an accomplishment in your culture? A failure?
- What is your religion and how does this influence your daily life?