Skills for Cultural Competency

When applying the five steps of SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF), culturally competent prevention professionals are able to do the following:

assess needs

* Accurately assess influence: Professionals should assess values, perceptions, opinions, knowledge, and social position on their interactions with others.
* Provide and promote an atmosphere in which similarities and differences can be explored: Professionals should understand that this process is not only cognitive but attitudinal and affective, as well

build capacity

* Learn to be an ally: Individuals should be allies to groups that experience prejudice and discrimination in the community, as well as help others learn to be an ally to their own cultural groups
* Expand knowledge: Help expand other people’s knowledge of their culture, and affirm and legitimize other people’s cultural perspectives

plan

* Embrace unpredictability: Professionals should learn to embrace new, ambiguous, and unpredictable situations, and be persistent in keeping communication lines open when misunderstandings arise
* Encourage: Professionals should encourage community members to see themselves in a multicultural perspective, and encourage skills-building in cross-cultural interactions and communication

implement

* Build on Strengths: Professionals should encourage and accommodate a variety of learning and participation styles, building on community members’ strengths
* Utilize Diverse Perspectives: Professionals should draw upon the experiences of participants or collaborators to include diverse perspectives in any given intervention

evaluate

* Consider: Be skeptical about the validity of diagnostic tools applied to people who are culturally different from those upon whom the norms were based
* Respect: Understand, believe, and convey that there are no culturally deprived or culturally neutral individuals or groups, and that all cultures have their own integrity, validity, and coherence, and deserve respect