The Intercultural Conflict Style Inventory

ICS – developed by Mitch Hammer, Ph.D.

The ICS Inventory is an easy to use, statistically valid and reliable instrument that is suitable for self-evaluation. It can be used to gather knowledge on conflict behavior among individuals, groups, and organizations.

The ICS inventory is a valid gauge for measuring an individual’s approach to intercultural conflicts with other persons. The ICS Inventory focuses on conflict styles that are used by people from many different cultures. By filling out the ICS Inventory and processing the accompanying interpretation workbook, we can gain insights into our own approach to conflicts. At the same time, we can acquaint ourselves with culturally diverse conflict resolution styles.

Hammer describes four different conflict styles that are communicatively formed from a combination of the dimensions of “emotionally restrained – emotionally expressive” on the one hand and “direct – indirect” on the other.

The ICS Inventory can be effectively implemented across a broad spectrum of situations, e.g. in interpersonal communication workshops, in mediation, in preparing individuals and families for overseas assignments, in diversity training, in designing contacts with clients, in international humanitarian programs, and in diplomatic negotiations. A deeper awareness of one’s own conflict style can help us to deal more effectively with the negatively experienced aspects of conflicts.

In addition, mitte consult has developed an interactive exercise that brings people into contact with one another regarding their differences in dealing with conflict situations in order to promote mutual understanding.

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