

Collegial Advice: Step-by-Step Guide

For reflecting on a Critical Incident (CI)

This structured method helps you reflect on a critical incident from your time abroad. The aim is to explore different perspectives, learn from each other, and develop strategies for handling intercultural challenges.

1. Opening the Session

Clarify group rules:

- Confidentiality/discretion
- Respectful and non-judgemental communication
- Open-minded listening

2. Presentation of the Critical Incident (10 min)

One person (the CI-author) shares a specific incident they experienced. The rest of the group listens silently – no questions, comments, or interruptions.

3. Clarification Questions (10 min)

The group asks questions to better understand the situation (no comments or solutions yet).

The CI-author responds to clarify details and context.

4. Group Discussion without CI-Author (10 min)

The CI-author steps back and just listens silently.

The group discusses the incident as if the author weren't present, using "I" statements to share personal impressions.

Develop hypotheses:

- What might be going on beneath the surface?
- Are there visible patterns (behaviours, emotions, thoughts)?

Important: Do not give advice or share solutions yet.

5. CI-Author Responds (5 min)

The CI-author rejoins the group and reflects on what they heard:

- What felt accurate or helpful?
- What stood out?
- Any clarifications or thoughts?

6. Intercultural Connection & Brainstorming (15 min)

As a full group, discuss what the incident reveals about cultural differences and intercultural learning.

Connect with relevant intercultural theories, such as:

- Hofstede's cultural dimensions
- Hall's high-/low-context communication

ICOS Module

Intercultural Competences for Outgoing Students



- Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner
- Ethnocentrism vs. ethnorelativism, paternalism, etc.

Then brainstorm:

- What strategies might have helped?
- What could be done differently in the future?

Use a whiteboard or similar to collect all ideas.

7. Final Reflection Round (10 min)

The group reflects on the process.

Each person shares:

- What did I take away from this session?
- What did I learn about intercultural communication?