



SECTION 2: RESPONDING EFFECTIVELY IN THE MOMENT

Understanding your own communication patterns and preferences.

Below is a series of statements. Check all that apply to you and then respond to the reflection questions on the next page. There is no right or wrong way to respond. Each statement represents a different way of communicating or a different experience. After completing, compare your responses with those of a colleague.

- I TEND** to think out loud.
- I NEED** time to process before I speak.
- I AM** not easily offended.
- I CAN** keep my emotions in check.
- I GET** easily stirred up.
- I OFTEN** “take over” when there are a lot of people talking and trying to make decisions.
- I OFTEN** stay quiet when there are a lot of people talking and trying to make decisions.
- I PREFER** to work independently, as I take ownership of my tasks and know how to see them through efficiently and effectively.
- I PREFER** to work collaboratively because it promotes diverse ideas and shared ownership.
- I COME** from a culture where people tend to talk over each other, or talk all at once.
- I COME** from a culture where people tend to take turns talking.
- I COME** from a culture where it is considered disrespectful to ask questions to people in charge.
- I COME** from a culture where trust needs to be earned.
- I COME** from a culture where it is considered disrespectful to not look someone in the eye when talking with them.
- I COME** from a culture where it is considered disrespectful to look someone in the eye when talking with them.
- I COME** from a culture where it is disrespectful for men and women to shake hands.
- I COME** from a culture where it would be disrespectful for men not to shake a woman’s hand.
- MY PARENTS** typically knew what questions to ask the school and were comfortable speaking with the school and district staff.
- AS A PARENT OR CAREGIVER**, I have been treated with disrespect at school. Or, I have seen my parents or family members treated disrespectfully at school.
- I AM** sometimes treated differently at MCPS because of my accent.
- I AM** sometimes treated differently at MCPS because of my racial or cultural background.
- I OFTEN** think a bad interaction between someone else and me is due to our different backgrounds (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability).



Reflection Questions

1. What did you learn about yourself in this activity?

2. Which statements had you never considered before?

3. Based on this activity, what do you need to work on to implement great customer service in your school or office?*

**For support:*

- Contact your assigned family engagement specialist or equity specialist for support on improving communication.
- Find resources on the cultures in your community on the Division of Equity and Organizational Development website. Learn which holidays your community celebrates by using the MCPS Holidays and Commemorations Calendar, www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/equity/.