**Working in the Community**

**Ten Basic Rules of Intercultural Effectiveness**

To improve relations with others, observe the following rules:

1. Give People the benefit of the perceptual doubt, Assume goodwill. This rule assumes that most individuals seek psychological comfort and congeniality.

2. Minimize confrontations by asking questions such as "How's that?" and "How so?" Or say, "Please help me understand why you see A or B the way you do." Here the emphasis is on giving the "other" an opportunity to explain his or her point of view.

3. Ask for clarifications. "Would you please give me an example of A or B?" or "I'm not sure I understand what you mean, would you elaborate further?"

4. Use "I" instead of "you" to deflect blame. Say, "I'm having some difficulty understanding A or B" rather than "You are not explaining the origins of chopsticks very well"

5. Try to look at people as individuals rather than as members of ethnic groups. Some stereotyping will occur, of course, since we generally do not start each encounter with a clean slate of impressions.

6. Seek common ground. Learn about things that you share in common with others. For example, "My friend Yoshiko and I both love the music group Hootie and the Blowfish."

7. Be flexible in selecting words and actions. Learn how to respond positively to conditions, people, and situations as they arise.

8. Learn how to distinguish between things that happen to you because you are white, Latino, Chinese, male or female, and things that happened to you in spite of your sex or ethnicity.

9. Recognize the fact that people communicate differently. For example, some people smile a lot; others do not.

10. Develop empathy. Try to infer the feelings and actions of others.