Working Effectively Across Cultures: BaFa BaFa

“Cultural patterns provide the lenses through which people come to understand their world.”

(Lustig and Koester, 1999)
Program Purpose

- To offer learning to improve cultural competency in order to reduce the risk of providing inappropriate or insensitive services to Medica members.

- **Part one**: Components of cultural competency and experiential program “BaFa BaFa”.

- **Parts two and three**: Foundational understanding plus a “toolbox” of practical cultural competency skills for day-to-day work.
Objectives

- Define and understand the dimensions of cultural competence.
- Achieve an understanding of entering a new culture through participating in BaFa BaFa simulation.
- Describe differing metaphors of understanding the US cultural make-up.
- Describe the business need for culturally competent employees.
- Identify common challenges to clear cross-cultural communication.
- Use a tool box of techniques for working with ESL speakers over the phone.
What is Culture?

“The deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, social hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relationships, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving.”

Samovar and Porter:
Understanding Intercultural Communication, 2000
What is Cultural Competence?

A set of attitudes, skills, behaviors and policies that enable organizations and staff to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.
BaFa BaFa

Introducing Our Simulation Exercise
BaFa BaFa Goals

• Create a situation that allows the group to explore and experience the impact that culture has on how people perceive and treat others.

• Create feeling similar to those one would likely have when encountering people from another culture.

• Give participants experience in observing and interacting with a different culture.

• Provide a framework for discussing how people who bring differences can work together effectively.
General Outline of Events

1. Participants divide into two cultures: Alpha and Beta.
2. Participants learn and practice their new culture.
3. Each culture selects and instructs an observer.
4. Cultures exchange observers.
5. Observers report back to home culture.
General Outline of Events (continued)

6. Cultures exchange visitors.
7. Visitors report back to their home culture.
8. Simulation ends and we’ll discuss the experience.