

URL: <https://ecorner.stanford.edu/in-brief/adjust-for-the-culture/>

If you're breaking new ground as a minority, observes author and board director Shellye Archambeau, biases and preconceptions are going to be a part of a culture you're entering. In some ways, she adds, it's not unlike doing business in another country. To succeed, she finds, it's important to figure out how you can adjust and flourish without sacrificing who you are.



Transcript

- I know that frankly, being a minority female, 00:00:05,870 whenever I walk into a new situation, people already have a set of assumptions in their mind.. Now, you just can't let that be a barrier to how you approach things, but just realize it's the case, and then do what you need to do.. So, let me give you examples.. One of the things that I've found is many times being, you know, I'll call it super direct, it's tough for women, because people will think that, all right, you're being just too aggressive, right? If you're super direct.. So, figure out how to be direct and just not super.. (laughs) I mean, one of the things that I found is being direct a lot of times it can be in your voice.. So, I actually found that if I really want people to pay attention, I start talking.. But then as I finished my point, my voice actually gets softer.. Now, what happens? Why do I do that? - People have to listen closer.. 00:01:08,830 - That's right, they have to listen closer..

00:01:09,663 And oh, by the way, then I'm not allowed black woman, right.. So, there are things that you can do in terms of to still stay true to who you are.. But just realize how to adjust for the culture.. And that's what I call it.. It's just like, if you were to go to Tokyo, or you were to go to France, or you were to go to South Africa, and you're trying to do business, you don't have to change who you are.. But you do need to learn how to fit within the culture and be heard and understood within the culture.. Well, frankly, working in a male dominated environment, same thing.. It's just a culture...