

# Appendix B: Guidelines for intercultural resource production with Indigenous consumers

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- Work with local registered interpreters as much as possible and / or other community members with relevant knowledge and skills (just because someone speaks the language this does not mean they necessarily have the skills for interpreting which is a highly specialised job and requires specific training and skills development)
- Identify existing resources and evaluate these for relevance to the target group – avoid redoing what is already available.
- The most important consideration in resource development is how to ensure *effective communication* with the target group. There are many factors you will need to explore with your co-workers and potential users.

## **The format of the resource**

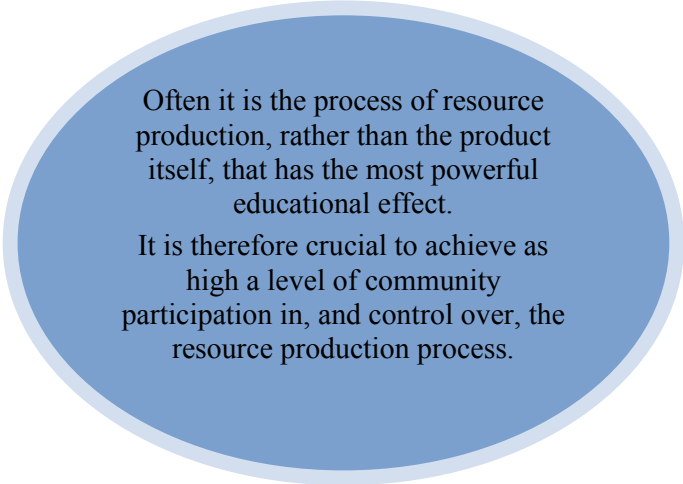
- Through consultation with the target group identify the preferred language or languages to be used in the resource.
- Do the majority of people read this language or does it need to be spoken?
- What communication style is most appropriate? For example, should the content be directive or informative? A resource which lists ‘do’s and don’ts’ can be interpreted as ‘controlling’ or offensive to some people. An ‘informative’ approach which provides a clear and detailed explanation might be more effective to enable people to make genuinely informed decisions based on a strong understanding of the information. (A simplistic approach can be interpreted as deliberate with-holding of information from the consumer)
- Identify what approach to sharing information is most appropriate e.g. one option is to use a ‘narrative’ approach which is story-based. For example, use of case studies, interviews and role-play can provide a powerful means of contextualizing information and strengthening understanding.
- What learning strategies are preferred in this group? For example, do people use a lot of repetition? Illustrations? Do people prefer audio only (e.g. tapes, audio CD or audio plus visual (video, DVD, computer CD)?
- If you use text-based resources (book, pamphlet, flip chart) – will the users be sufficiently literate in the language you chose for the resource?
- Does this format suit learning preferences? (e.g. with a flipchart the previous page ‘disappears’ – review and repetition is therefore difficult unless each ‘page’ remains visible e.g. laid out one by one or concertina style which allows for a narrative or ‘storytelling’ structure, repetition and revision.)
- What delivery mechanisms are available? VCR? (In some communities DVD players are now more common in homes). Computers? CD players? Many communities now provide computer access to community members - schools, council, knowledge centres etc.

### **The resource content**

- What skills and knowledge is this resource intended to develop? It is crucial to recognise and build on existing knowledge and skills and not to make incorrect assumptions about the extent – or lack of – existing skills and knowledge. Identify and include relevant information/knowledge from the community perspective.
- Information from a non-local source (e.g. Western health services) needs to be fully explained in a way that is meaningful. It is common practice in resource development to use ‘simple English’. However, Yolngu strongly state that they want the ‘full story’ not the ‘tip of the story’. Incorrect assumptions about the extent of shared understanding of underlying concepts result in ineffective communication.
- Present the information in clear (not simple) English that is as ‘culturally neutral’ as possible to enable accurate interpretation. Culturally-specific metaphors, terms and concepts need to be avoided or fully explained.
- Working closely with one or more skilled interpreters throughout the planning and development of the resource is the most effective way to ensure effective communication will be achieved. Working with a small group can provide a range of perspectives as well as a range of cultural and linguistic expertise.
- Discuss each concept or idea to find out the best way to achieve a shared understanding – look closely at the cultural knowledge underlying each concept and ensure that prerequisite knowledge is fully explained.
- Ensure that visual images are consistent with, and enhance, the oral message – from the users’ perspective.
- Trust local knowledge about the most effective approach to education.

### **Community participation**

- A clear explanation of unfamiliar concepts or information is necessary to enable people to make an informed choice. As well, concepts and cultural knowledge from the local perspective related to the aim and content of the resource must be recognised and integrated for the information to be credible and relevant.



Often it is the process of resource production, rather than the product itself, that has the most powerful educational effect.

It is therefore crucial to achieve as high a level of community participation in, and control over, the resource production process.