

RIO TINTO

Training in cross cultural skills



Valuing our differences

'Valuing our differences' features interactive role play and discussion designed to help employees to be sensitive to the needs of other cultures. The aim is to create a workplace environment that values different backgrounds, abilities and perspectives.



Left: Vicki Taylor, Human Resources adviser, facilitating a break-out session at the VOD workshop in Harare, Zimbabwe.

In 2003, *Valuing our differences* was launched – a half day workshop teaching generic cross cultural skills for application throughout the Rio Tinto Group. The idea is to build an organisational competence in managing cultural difference. The course is part of an emerging suite of initiatives that aim to create a workplace environment that reduces the likelihood of discriminatory behaviour and creates one that values different backgrounds, abilities and perspectives. *Valuing our differences* is run in addition to Group businesses' individual courses on getting to know other cultures.

Valuing our differences features interactive role play and discussion designed to help employees to be sensitive to the needs of other cultures. Key highlights are consistently identified as:

- Introductions – meeting people from other departments and hearing everybody's different cultural background and experiences, and their thoughts on working at Rio Tinto.
- The mix of participants.
- Most people believed their behaviour was aligned with the model – listen, learn, engage and reflect – but being reminded of these messages is always useful.
- The fact this topic is recognised as an area that needs attention is a highlight in itself.

To date, 16 workshops have been held in London with 17 nationalities represented. In 2005, the course was rolled out across the Rio Tinto Group and was adapted to form the basis of the *Valuing our diversity* workshop for Murowa Diamonds in Zimbabwe, where the workshop targeted a wide range of employees and contractors across different levels. Concerns emerging at the workshop in Zimbabwe focussed on age, educational background and sensitivity over traditional differences. These differed from those at the London workshop where the focus was on the complexities around multi-disciplinary and dynamic working environments, nationalities and constant workplace changes.

The workshops are being introduced to Australia and Canada in 2006.



The cross-cultural learning process

Rio Tinto plc

London
Telephone +44 (0)20 7930 2399

Rio Tinto Limited

Melbourne
Telephone +61 (0)3 9283 3333

www.riotinto.com

For convenience only, the expression "Rio Tinto" is used to describe Rio Tinto plc, Rio Tinto Limited and their subsidiary and affiliated companies even though these companies are independently managed, separate, and distinct entities.

Designed by Tor Pettersen & Partners.
Printed in England by Beacon Press
to ISO 14001 environmental standards.

© Rio Tinto 2006