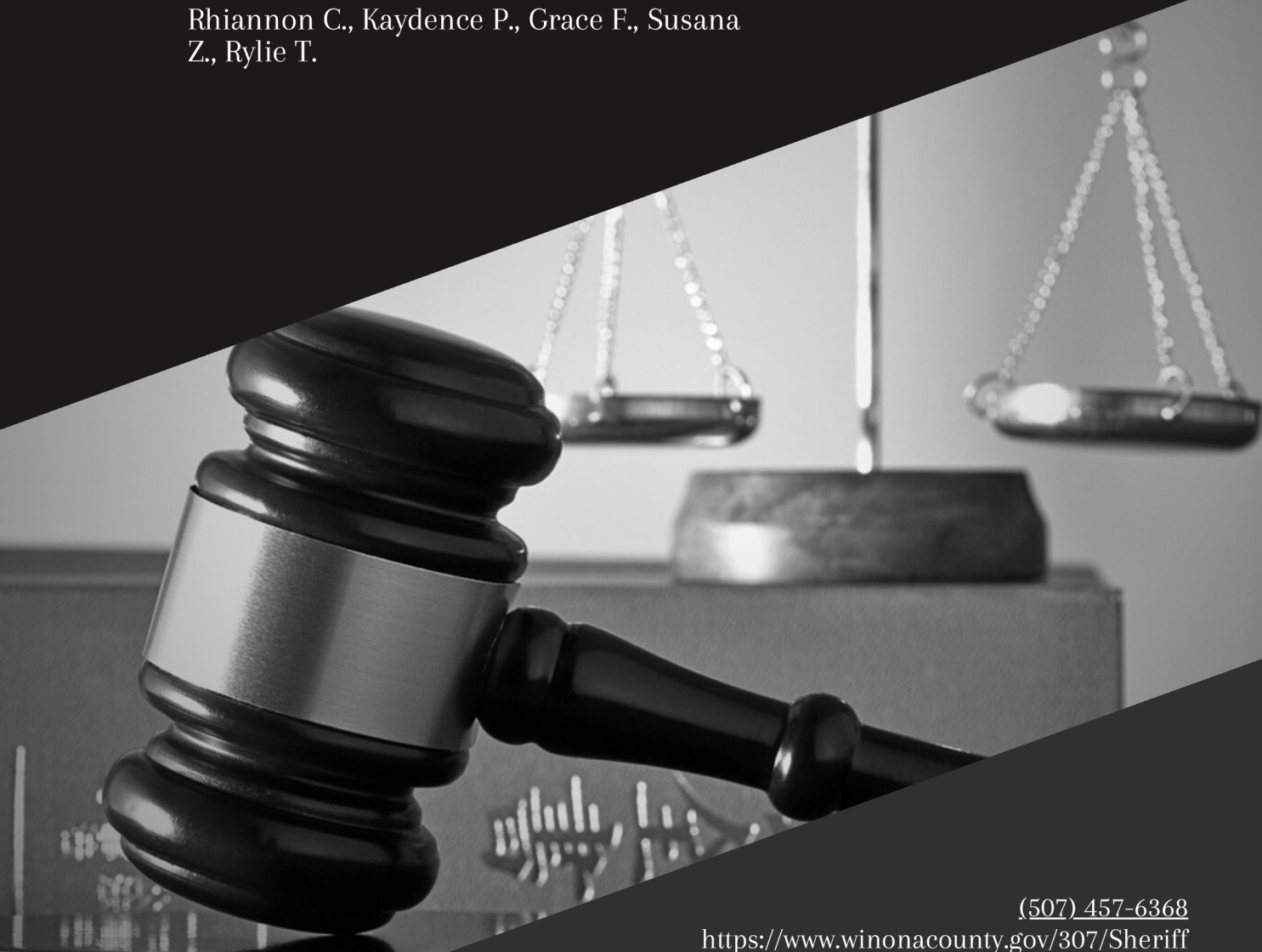


Winona County Sheriffs Department

# International Teams

## INTEGRATION PLAN

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## Introduction

# Overview of Winona County Sheriff's Department

“

It is the duty of the Winona County Sheriff to keep and preserve the peace of Winona County. In furtherance of this goal, the Winona County Sheriff's Office provides law enforcement coverage throughout Winona County's 625 square miles. In addition to providing law enforcement coverage, the Sheriff's Office:

- Operates and oversees the County Jail
- Maintains communication and dispatch services between the public and law enforcement, fire, and ambulance personnel
- Patrols the waterways within Winona County, including the Mississippi River
- Coordinates with Winona County Emergency Management Service
- Coordinates numerous public safety and community programs
- Oversees a dedicated staff of 76 employees and 56 volunteers
- Performs Search and Rescue operations

”

## Purpose

This plan will explain the process of integrating Singaporean employees. It will propose ways in which will help them adjust to American correctional facilities and also ways the Sheriff's Department can aid them in adapting to a new culture. This plan helps Singaporean employees adjust socially, emotionally, and professionally to life in an American correctional facility. It focuses on gradually adapting to U.S. culture while preserving essential parts of their Singaporean identity. It connects real-life examples to ideas from *Intercultural Communication: A Contextual Approach (8th ed.)*, by James W. Neuliep.

## Successful Hiring Strategies

# Characteristics For Successful Hire

Neuliep discusses how personality influences how people adapt to new cultures. (p. 421). The “Big Five” PERSONALITY DIMENSIONS (traits) help predict how well someone might adapt:

Trait	What It Means	Why It Matters
<b>Openness</b>	Curious and willing to try new things	Helps learn new communication styles
<b>Conscientiousness</b>	Responsible and careful	Suitable for following safety rules
<b>Extraversion</b>	Outgoing and Social	Easier to connect with coworkers and inmates
<b>Agreeableness</b>	Friendly and cooperative	Builds team trust
<b>Emotional Stability</b>	Stays calm under stress	Important in high-pressure correctional work

### Example:

A Singaporean corrections officer who is *open-minded* and *emotionally stable* may adjust more quickly because they view challenges as opportunities for learning.

## Procedures

In order to ensure that employees have all five of these traits, we recommend a series of hiring procedures that can be used to demonstrate integrity and ethical boundaries. These procedures are adapted to consider common Singaporean expectations and cultural norms. Implementing this plan will offer a new approach specifically designed for their culture. It will integrate the strict and rigorous dimensions of Singapore’s Correctional Facilities while maintaining an encouraging and adaptive environment.

# Successful Hiring Strategies

## STAR

*(SITUATION, TASK, ACTION, RESULT)*

The STAR method is a structured approach to asking questions about emotional control, adaptability, teamwork, etc. It is a common practice in American interviews, as it allows for structured responses. However, it should be made clear that the expectation is a response that includes a description of the situation, the task, the action, and the result. The candidate's questions can be rated on verbal response and behavioral response.

## Example:

"Describe a time that you have had to resolve a conflict."

## Example:

During a morning briefing, a U.S. correctional officer gives direct feedback to a Singaporean colleague in front of the team, unintentionally causing embarrassment. The Singaporean officer becomes quiet and withdrawn, which the U.S. officer misinterprets as resistance, creating tension between them.

## Cross-Cultural Awareness

This method will assist in evaluating the candidate's awareness of United States culture and government. The hiring team should present a realistic scenario that illustrates a cultural misunderstanding. Then, ask two questions: "What cultural and/or communication issues occurred in this scenario? How should the situation be addressed or prevented?" This process will allow the Hiring Team to evaluate their ability to recognize, navigate and adapt to cultural differences.

## Personality and Integrity Tests

The inclusion of structured tests and assessments should be considered. Due to the strict nature of Singaporean law enforcement, they often prefer to have standardized results. Doing so will not only reduce bias and promote fairness, but it also serves as another opportunity to receive stable insights. One test in particular that may be beneficial is the Hogan Integrity Assessment. Situational Judgement Tests (SJTs) can also be tailored for critical situations that Winona Sheriff's Department sees often.

## Example:

"While monitoring inmates in the recreation yard, one inmate becomes verbally aggressive toward you after being told to follow the rules. Other inmates begin to watch the exchange closely.

A. B. C. D. E.

# New-Hire Training Process

## Cultural Dimensions

Neuliep discusses Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, explaining how cultures differ. These differences explain why certain aspects may feel unfamiliar when working in a new country. (p. 42-80). Understanding these four dimensions will clarify upcoming policies, strategies, and support initiatives.

Dimension	Singapore	United States	Impact at Work
<b>Power Distance</b>	Respect for authority; decisions made at the top	More equal; people speak up	Singaporeans may wait for instructions, while Americans expect initiative
<b>Individualism vs. Collectivism</b>	Team and group harmony are important	Focus on independence and personal goals	Americans might appear more competitive or self-focused
<b>Uncertainty Avoidance</b>	Prefer clear rules and structure	More flexible with rules	Singaporeans may want clear guidelines
<b>Long-Term Orientation</b>	Think ahead and plan for the future	Short-term focus; results now	Different pacing and expectations for progress

## Communication Styles

Singapore	United States
Hybrid: Not totally individualistic, not totally collectivistic	Values individualism, minimal reliance on relationships
Respect: hierarchy, harmony, "saving face"	Openly expresses opinions, do not solely rely on hierarchy, eye contact, forward lean
Indirect, very high context, avoid confrontation	Direct, low context, high sociability, direct feedback

# New-Hire Training Process

## New-Hire Policies:

### **Organizational Culture Orientation**

*Purpose: Ensure Singaporean officers can comprehend the key differences between United States workplace culture and Singapore's workplace culture.*

Incoming employees who have worked in, lived in, or have adapted to Singapore workplaces long term must attend a two-day training initiative that will cover (but not limited to) differences in communication, decision making protocols, organization structure, and managerial standards and expectations.

Supervisors for this training initiative must have completed the training courses outlined in "Training and Support for Our Existing Team: Strategies, Support Initiatives, & Policies". They must maintain a non-biased, transparent communication.

### **Ongoing Cultural Support Integration**

*Purpose: Ensure Singaporean employees have support long-term to assist them in whichever areas are needed.*

Singaporean officers will be paired with a correctional officer who is trained in cross-cultural support. The Singapore employee will be required to mentor under their leadership for at least 45 days in order to gain field experience.

Supervisors of the appropriate department must do weekly check-ins with both the mentor and the mentee to monitor progress, build trust, and ensure that cultural adjustments are going smoothly.

### **Open Dialogue and Psychological Safety**

*Purpose: Create an open environment in which all staff members feel comfortable and safe to ask questions, and bring up matters, concerning any situation, that could have an impact on their mental health and well being.*

Supervisors will conduct bi-weekly supervision meetings focused primarily on the mental health, well-being, and overall adjustment of employees, both inside and outside the workplace. These meetings are not to be used for assigning unnecessary tasks or "busy work." Supervisors are expected to model servant leadership, prioritize the needs of their team, and maintain open, supportive dialogue that encourages employees to express concerns, ask questions, reduce uncertainty and seek assistance without judgment.



# Training and Support for Our Existing Team

## Strategies, Support Initiatives, & Policies

**Intercultural Communication Competence** means being able to communicate effectively and appropriately with people from other cultures. (p. 34)

Neuliep explains that it includes four parts:

1. *Motivation* – Wanting to connect with others.
2. *Knowledge* – Understanding cultural values and behaviors.
3. *Behaviors* – Adapting how you speak or act in new situations.
4. *Context* – Knowing how culture and power affect communication (important in corrections).

### Example:

An officer from the United States learns that speaking softly and avoiding confrontation is normalized as a sign of respect in Singapore. Instead of assuming it is a lack of confidence, they listen more carefully, give private feedback, and address their Singaporean colleague in a calmer tone.

We want to motivate our current team to *want* to understand Singaporean culture. Encouraging intercultural communication competence will help our developing team to become more efficient, build trust, and construct an all-inclusive common goal that all of our team members understand. The following policies and programs are already in place, however, we recommend that all employees take them again and that there is an emphasis on Singaporean culture throughout these leadership and behavioral programs.

The following strategies and programs can be referenced at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC)

### Law Enforcement Supervisors Leadership Program

“The program focuses heavily on human capital development disciplines and their interaction with the law enforcement mission and culture. Topical areas include leadership skills through understanding and adapting to human behaviors, communication skills, team building, conflict management, human resource management, legal responsibilities, stress management, workplace diversity, performance skills, public speaking and situational decision-making skills. Taking into consideration life and work experience, participants will explore these topics and develop skills by means of an adult learning model that employs lecture, practical exercises, case studies and self-directed learning.”



# Training and Support for Our Existing Team

## Leadership Through Understanding Human Behavior

“The Leadership Thru Understanding Human Behavior (LTUHB) allows participants to develop a better understanding of themselves, interpersonal dynamics, and how their strengths, weaknesses, and roles within workgroups and teams affect a mission's outcome. Participants learn how to adapt to and capitalize on each other's strengths in order to have more effective mission outcomes. The program starts by developing self-awareness and the ability to recognize behavioral styles in order to build relationships. As workgroups/members start to develop an understanding of the strengths and benefits associated with behavioral styles and value systems, collectively they start to develop strategies to effectively accomplish goals. This information can be used to establish more effective workgroups and teams by capitalizing on the strengths each individual brings to the group. More specifically, training can yield valuable information on the particular aspects of the team's development process.”

## Leadership In Crisis

“The Leadership in a Crisis Training Program (LICTP) is a research-based curriculum to help law enforcement officers and emergency managers from Federal, State, Local, and Tribal agencies hone the leadership skills that will be needed during a critical event. Because critical events can vary widely in size, scope and impact, this program focuses on core concepts of communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and decision-making that are applicable in virtually any situation. Through the use of innovative technology, LICTP creates an immersive environment that challenges the participants' ability to apply leadership, interpersonal and decision-making skills in a crisis situation. LICTP addresses Homeland Security and OPM competencies in the areas of Influencing/Negotiating, Interpersonal Skills, Problem Solving, Crisis Management, DHS Joint Enterprise Perspective, Critical and Creative Thinking, and Collaborating. LICTP complements FEMA ICS and NIMS training and procedures.”

We want to motivate our current leadership team to *want* to understand Singaporean culture. Encouraging intercultural communication competence will help our developing team to become more efficient, build trust, and construct an all-inclusive common goal that all of our team members understand. The following programs are already in place, however, we will require that all Managers, Directors and Supervisors take them again and that there is an emphasis on Singaporean culture throughout these leadership and behavioral programs. These programs should also be made available as “strongly recommended” for any other employees working in our organization.

The following strategies and programs can be referenced at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC)

# Training and Support for Our Existing Team

## Policies for Existing Team

### **Intercultural Awareness Training for Staff**

*Purpose: Eliminate confusion by ensuring that United States employees working at the Winona County Sheriffs Department understand Singaporean communication styles, hierarchy, and organizational norms. This is particularly helpful during beginning stages of integration process.*

All staff at Winona County Sheriff's Department that will be working directly with Singaporean employees must complete a mandatory 2-hour briefing that will cover the following: power distance and hierarchical interactions, formality in communication through indirect communication, stereotypes and assumption elimination, and other behavioral norms useful to the existing team.

### **Open Dialogue and Psychological Safety**

*Purpose: Create an open environment in which all staff members feel comfortable and safe to ask questions, and bring up matters, concerning any situation, that could have an impact on their mental health and well being.*

Supervisors will conduct bi-weekly supervision meetings focused primarily on the mental health, well-being, and overall adjustment of employees, both inside and outside the workplace. These meetings are not to be used for assigning unnecessary tasks or "busy work." Supervisors are expected to model servant leadership, prioritize the needs of their team, and maintain open, supportive dialogue that encourages employees to express concerns, ask questions, reduce uncertainty and seek assistance without judgment.

# Phased Integration

Our goal is to implement a plan to incorporate a diverse correctional officer community into our Winona County jails by adapting socially, emotionally, and professionally while keeping their cultural identity. We will implement an acculturation-style training plan that fairly includes both cultures across a variety of job-related scenarios. In doing so, we will successfully mitigate cultural clashes through quarterly training and educational interventions.

## Phase 1: Weeks 1–3 — Orientation & Support

- **Social:** Assign a U.S. mentor; team introductions and welcome lunches.
- **Emotional:** Weekly check-ins and reflection journals to process feelings.
- **Professional:** Orientation on rules, communication, and safety procedures.
- **Theory Link:** Reduces uncertainty and eases early culture shock.

## Phase 2: Months 1–3 — Adjustment & Connection

- **Social:** Mix teams; share cultural observations in meetings.
- **Emotional:** Group wellness activities; acknowledge adjustment stress.
- **Professional:** Workshops on U.S. communication styles; feedback practice.
- **Theory Link:** Supports the adjustment stage of culture shock and builds intercultural competence.

## Phase 3: Months 4–6 — Confidence & Cultural Balance

- **Social:** Mentoring new hires; sharing experiences in team meetings.
- **Emotional:** Monthly check-ins to discuss well-being and goals.
- **Professional:** Leadership training, skill-building, career growth opportunities.
- **Theory Link:** The mastery stage of culture shock strengthens bicultural competence.

## Expected Results

- Gradual adaptation strikes a balance between U.S. integration and cultural preservation.
- Mentorship, team-building, and structured guidance reduce uncertainty.

Supports **social, emotional, and professional growth** while maintaining cultural identity.

# Phased Integration

## Theoretical Framework

When people move to a new country, they often go through stages of culture shock. It's completely normal and happens as they adjust to new rules, values, and ways of communication. (p. 414)

Stage	What Happens	Example in correctional setting
<b>Honeymoon</b>	Everything feels new and exciting. People are happy and curious about the U.S. work culture.	Feeling impressed by how open and friendly American coworkers are.
<b>Crisis(Culture Shock)</b>	Frustration and confusion kick in. Things feel harder, and communication may feel awkward.	Feeling stressed by how direct or assertive Americans sound.
<b>Adjustment</b>	People begin learning the culture and feel more at ease.	Understanding how to speak up with confidence and read coworkers' tone.
<b>Acculturation</b>	They can work well in both cultures and feel confident.	Being able to guide new Singaporean staff on how to adapt.

*These policies and procedures should not be interpreted as a determinate or an immediate termination, demotion, or dismissals of employment. This integration plan is solely to improve our staff and new hires professional development.*

## Questions or Concerns? Contact Us

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