

Working Effectively with Muslims



Imani Jaafar, Esq.

Presentation Outline

- Islam 101
- Demographics
- Misconceptions
- Practical Tips
- Interactive Exercise



ISLAM



- Meaning: Peace through submission to God (Allah)
- Islam is the faith
- Muslims are the followers
 - Muslims are multi-cultural
- Common root word: S-L-M (peace)

5 Pillars of Islam

- Declaration of Faith (Shahadah)
- 5 Daily Prayers (Salat)
- Fasting during Ramadan (Sawm)
- Charitable Giving (Zakat)
- Pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj)



Shahadah

- Muslims' affirmation that God (Allah) is worshipped alone and Muhammad is final messenger of Islam
- Monotheism
- No beings or entities associated with God (Allah)



5 Daily Prayers (Salat)

- Approximately 2-4 hours for each prayer
 - 5-10 minutes for prayer
- Need clean, quiet room
 - Can pray anywhere
- Wudu- ritual cleansing
- Friday congregational prayer (Jumma)



Fasting (Sawm)

- Ramadan is the most sacred month of the Islamic calendar
- Fast sunrise to sunset (if able)
 - No water, gum, mints, etc
- Purifies body and soul
- Family and community gatherings
- Possible accommodations for meeting times and breaking fast



Charitable Giving (Zakat)



- 2.5% of one's wealth (if able)
- Given first to family, then locally, then abroad
 - Can give to any person or organization in need
- Purifies wealth and helps better society
- Clients in need may be able to get assistance from local Masjid or community members

Pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj)

- Required once in a lifetime for those who are able
- Attended by millions each year
- Commemorates trials and tribulations of Hagar
- Emphasizes bonds of humanity
- Lifetime sins forgiven



Quran (Holy Book of Muslims)

- Written in Arabic
- Includes stories of Prophets and Islamic history
 - Similar to Old Testament and Torah
- Not changed since it appeared 1400 years ago
- Recitation is an art form
 - Millions of Muslims memorize the entire Quran
- Copies of Quran should be kept in a respectful manner



Islamic Holidays - Eid

- Festival of Fast-Breaking (Eid-ul-Fitr)
 - celebrated at the end of Ramadan
- Festival of the Sacrifice (Eid-ul-Adha)
 - celebrated at the end of Hajj
- Congregational morning prayer
- Day spent celebrating with family with friends
- Gifts optional



Culture and Religion

- Many different cultures fall under the banner of Islam
- Cultural practices are often intertwined religion
- Important differences between culture and religion
- Voluntary Immigrant and Refugee dynamic



Demographics

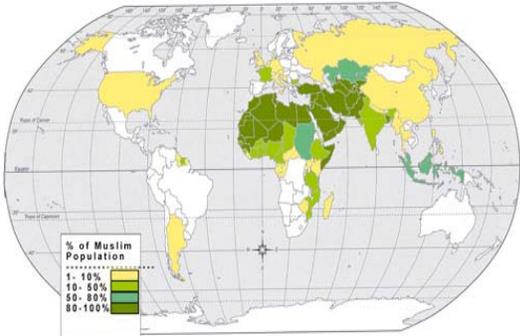
- 3 largest Muslim populations:
 - India/Pakistan/Bangladesh (400-450 million)
 - Africa (400 million)
 - Middle East (280 million)
 - Muslims in Europe, Asia, and Australia in large numbers

- US Muslim population: 7 million
 - Evenly divided between African Americans, Southeast Asians, and Arabs
 - Twin Cities: 150,000 (50,000-70,000 est. to be Somali)

- Total World Population: 1.5 billion (1/4 of world population)



Muslim Population Map



■ www.islamproject.org

Misconceptions

1. Terrorism is not condoned or supported.
2. "Holy War" does not exist in Islam. The real meaning of Jihad is "struggle"
3. The Quran includes progressive steps towards women's rights – see marriage, divorce division of assets, and voting rights as examples.
4. Hejab (head covering) means "protection" and women wear hejab for many reasons including worship, modest, and regional norms.
 - Hejab is a concept in Islam and not just a scarf. Men also have hejab requirements.



Practice Tips

- Be educated
- Evaluate both culture and religion as needed when addressing an issue
- Be open to accommodations
- Non-judgmental environment
- Find common ground



Interactive Exercise

■ You are advising a Muslim co-worker who is new to the position. She is concerned about praying at work as she works in a semi-private cubicle. She wears a headscarf and is worried that people may make judgments that make her uncomfortable. She asks for your advice and assistance.

- How could you help her accommodate her prayer needs?
- How could you ease her fears about her attire in the workplace?
- Anything else you could help her to settle into her new position?