Topic 3 - The Silent Shopper Case Study Discussion

Background:
A popular retail chain in Ireland has recently expanded its stores to towns with a growing international community, including Polish, Ukrainian, Brazilian, and Nigerian residents. The store prides itself on friendly service and conversational staff. However, the store manager has noticed that customer satisfaction scores have dropped in these areas, particularly in the "staff helpfulness" category.

Scenario:
Maria, a long-serving team leader in one of the stores, is known for her warm, chatty nature. She believes that talking to customers is key to great service. However, she has recently noticed that some international customers avoid eye contact, decline offers of help or appear uncomfortable when approached.

Maria interprets this as rudeness or disinterest and has voiced her frustration, saying, "If people don't want to talk or even look at you, how are we supposed to give good service?"

A Brazilian customer later left a comment card stating:

> "I prefer to shop in silence and not be asked too many questions. I feel overwhelmed when approached quickly."

Discussion Prompt for Group:
How might Maria's assumptions and approach reflect a lack of cultural intelligence? What small changes could Maria and the team make to better serve a culturally diverse customer base—without compromising the store's values of friendliness and service?

Groups of four.

(10 minute discussion and 10 minute feedback)