Diversity, Inclusion, and Implicit Bias

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Content Disclaimer

- The information presented is general in nature and is intended to present an overview of employment practices. The written and verbal contents of the presentation are not intended to constitute consulting and/or advice and no client relationship is established between the presenter and attendees.

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Agenda

A. What is Diversity?
B. Is bias really an issue in the Workplace?
C. How to move past bias and encourage others to do the same.
D. Fostering an environment of inclusion.
E. Questions

Polling Question

My company champions diversity and inclusion in all aspects of employment.

a) TRUE, we've got it all figured out.
b) FALSE, we've got it all wrong.
c) MAYBE, sometimes we get it right, but there's still work to do.
d) I don't know.

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Definitions

- Diversity = people or the quantitative experience.
- Inclusion = the qualitative experience, the "environment" those people are in.
- Implicit Bias = Unconscious beliefs that form our judgments, decisions, and behaviors.
- Diversity and Inclusion can easily become just more "buzz-words" or acts of "political correctness" to check off a box. The value of Diversity cannot be recognized without the component of Inclusion.

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Bias in the Workplace

It's important to understand how bias affects us in the workplace, especially related to hiring decisions. It's important to understand the different types of bias, know the danger of bias both in the workplace and during the hiring process and know how to address bias in your workplace.

Bias in the Workplace

- In a Deloitte survey, 64% of workers surveyed felt they had experienced bias in their workplaces during the last year and of those,
- 61% felt they experienced bias in the workplace at least once a month.
- Of the majority who felt they witnessed or experienced bias in the past year, 83% categorized it as indirect and subtle compared to 32% who categorized bias as blatant and obvious.

Polling Question

On the previous slide I saw:

a) Good.
b) Evil.
c) Both Good and Evil.

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STEREOTYPES

- Non-rational
- Resistant to change
- Self-fulfilling prophecy
- Thrive on generalization – with limited experience
- Two-sided coin

Is it Implicit Bias

- Reflexively laughing at an offensive joke.
- Thinking, “That overweight person shouldn’t be eating that”.
- Having an uncomfortable reaction when you see two people of the same sex showing affection.
- Refusing to make eye contact with a young male of color.
- Hiring a younger candidate who is more familiar with technology than an older candidate who is more experienced in the field.

MISINTERPRETATIONS

1. We describe what we see
2. We interpret the behavior
3. We make a judgement

Culture = Behavioral Software

Culture = Software

Awareness + Knowledge = Choices

All human beings are programmed by cultural "software" that determines our behavior and attitudes.

Once we recognize what our programming teaches us, we have the capacity to control our choices.

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Moving Past Bias

- The more you are exposed to stereotypes, the stronger the unconscious association becomes.
- Impacts quick decisions.
- Forced to play against stereotypes.
- When triggered and we do not hold ourselves accountable, it is usually because of diminished empathy.
- Understanding the situational nature gives us power over it.

What if

You're evaluating a job candidate to lead a new office. On paper, this is by far the more qualified person you've seen. Her responses to your interview questions are flawless. She has impeccable social skills. Still, something doesn't feel right. You can't put your finger on what – you just have a sense. Do you hire them?

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Polling Question

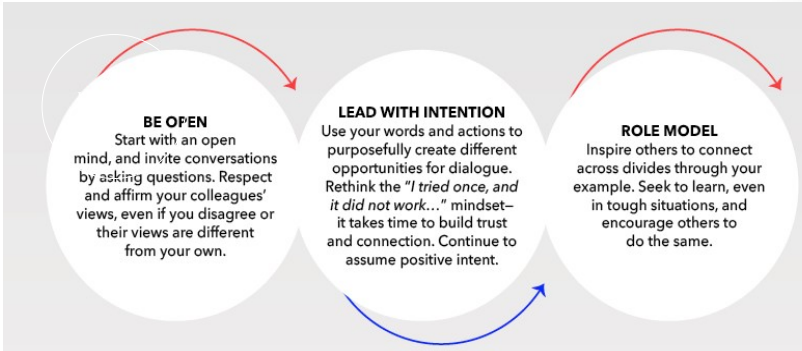
Are you going to give this candidate a chance?

a) No. I'm going to go with my gut.
b) Yes, I'm going to give her a chance.
c) I don't know.

So, now what?

- Awareness is not enough – you have to do something about it.
- Work has to be conscious and intentional.
- We know what works when it's evaluated. In ourselves, we can continue to test.

Identify	Identify instances where implicit biases may be impacting your behavior. Be specific – like always baking with your daughter and playing basketball with your son.
Act	Act friendlier. Behavior influences thoughts.
Be	Be aware of your positive stereotypes. They may seem harmless, but they can still register as offensive to those on the receiving end.
Hang out	Hang out with people with expanded viewpoints.
Expose	Expose yourself to media that aims to break down prejudice.
Make	Make your circle bigger – positive contact with equal status, working together,
Try	Try not to make quick decisions, slow down, take time, use algorithms, examine where your reactions come from.



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Confronting Bias in the Workplace

- Learn how to recognize it.
- Make the invisible, visible .
  - Can this be done now? Or should it wait until later?
  - In cases where it needs to be done later, Disarm the situation.
  - Educate the person by shifting from the intent of what the person intended to the impact of the comment.
- Another way to get people to understand that what they said may come from a place of bias, is to ask them to be more specific about their remark.

Inclusion

- The practice of providing everyone with equal access to opportunities and resources.
- Efforts include creating opportunities for historically marginalized groups a means to be equal in the workplace.
- Companies with more ethnically and gender diverse executive teams are more likely to outperform their competition.
- Glassdoor found that 76% of employees and job seekers consider diversity an important element of their workplace which affects recruitment and retention.

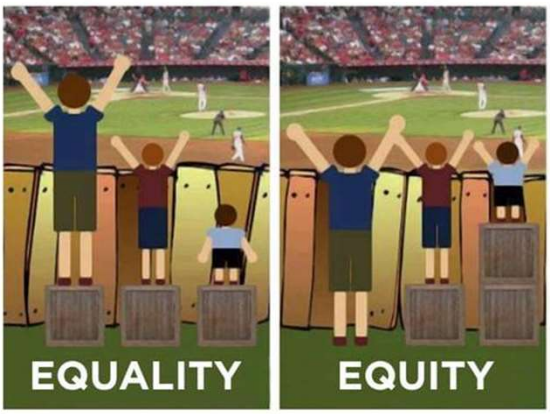
Inclusion

Inclusion requires buy-in from everyone and it needs to be an intentional priority in the heart of the company – it isn't accomplished in the Human Resources office alone.

"We can't give some employees special treatment."

All employees deserve workplaces that enable them to feel welcome and do their best work. Characterizing accommodations as "special treatment" reinforces the stigma for individuals with disabilities by describing their needed accommodations as a burden or exception to the rule.

Equality vs. Equity



Tools for Awareness

- Challenge assumptions
- Check your reality
- Be flexible
- Ask questions
- Assume positive intent
- Generate multiple interpretations
- Is it a difference that makes a difference?

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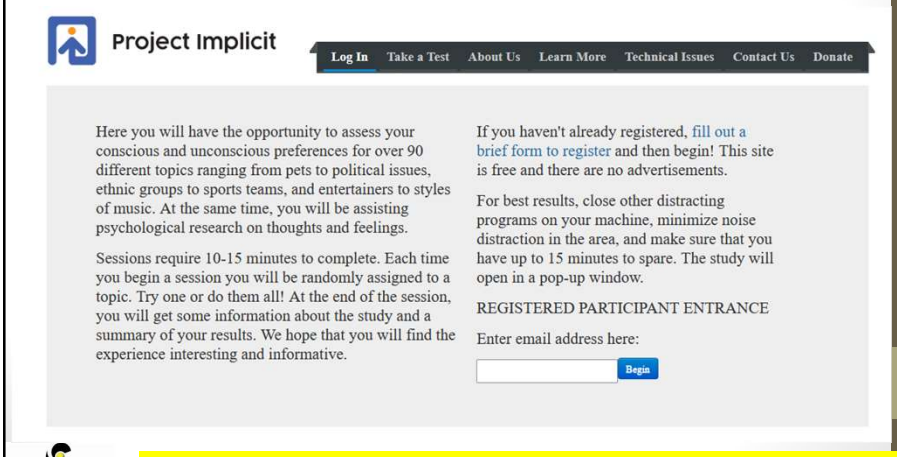
Harvard Implicit Bias Tests

https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/research/



Be not the slave of your own past. Plunge into the sublime seas, dive deep, and swim far; so you shall come back with new self-respect, with new power, and with an advanced experience that shall explain and overlook the old.

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

Discussion and Questions

Thank You!

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