Creating Inclusive Workplaces: See Bias, Block Bias
Caroline Simard, PhD
Sr. Director Research
60% of undergraduate and master’s degrees

44.48% of graduate degrees in business, law, and medicine

34.3% of all physicians and surgeons

18% of the U.S. Congress

16% of boards of directors of major corporations

15% of equity partners in law firms

14.6% of executive level positions

4.5% of Fortune 500 CEOs
Women in Science

Black: 4% of engineers, 3% physics

Hispanics: 6% engineers, 5% physics.

Asian: 13% engineers, 15% physics.

National Science Foundation 2015
Motivations to focus on Diversity and Inclusion

1. Talent
   • The new majority: as of 2014 census, over 50% of children are non-white
   • 56% of the US population by 2060

2. Marketshare
   • Global markets, global products

3. Innovation
“Finding new and better solutions, innovating, requires thinking differently. That’s why diversity powers innovation.”

Scott Page
Professor of Complex Systems, Political Science, and Economics
University of Michigan
Team Science

Study: 5 million papers published between 1985 and 2008 in 11 scientific fields.

- Papers authored by homogeneous teams of authors are less impactful.
- Papers with authors of multiple culture/ethnicities have 5-10% more citations.

Papers with four or five authors of multiple ethnicities have, on average, one to two more citations than those written by authors all of the same ethnicity.

Freedman & Huang, 2014; Nature, Vol 513
THE MERITOCRACY PARADOX

Those who think they are meritocratic and objective are the most likely to exhibit bias:

“I think it, therefore it is true”.

If we do not inspect meritocracy, we open the door to bias.

Source: Castilla & Benard, 2013
Bias is an error in decision making.
Stereotypes are the Content of Bias

Stereotypes are generalized beliefs about a particular group or class of people.
Stereotypes function as “cognitive shortcuts.”
Example: Think Tall, Think Leader

Tall people are more likely to be perceived as leaders and more likely to perceive themselves as leaders.

- US population: 14.5% of men are over 6 feet.
- Fortune 500 CEOs: 58% are over 6 feet.

Tall people make more money than short people: $800 per inch more across occupations.

Sources: Gladwell, 2010; Judge and Cable, 2004
Implicit Association Test (IAT)

Studies show that both men and women implicitly associate leadership with men.

70% of people in 22 countries implicitly associate science and engineering with male.

https://implicit.harvard.edu
Bias Comes from Stereotypes


- K-2nd grade (n=235): 58%
- 3-5th grade (n=649): 73%
- 6-8th grade (n=620): 75%

Source: Barman, 1999
How do we interrupt these biases?
Bias: Cognitive Function
Bias 2.0: Organizational Function
Bias affects how we evaluate talent
Stereotypes affect the **standard** we use to evaluate the performance of individuals.
Race Stereotypes in the US

15 resumes = 1 response
9% ↑ response with better resume

10 resumes = 1 response (↑ 50%)
30% ↑ response with better resume
White name = 8 years experience

Source: Bertrand and Mullainathan, 2004
LGBT Stereotypes

Mary gets 23% more calls for interviews than Emily (2014). Up to 40% difference in certain parts of the country (2011).

Source: Equal Rights Center and Freedom to Work, 2014
Gender stereotypes in the US

John

4.0 rating
$30.3K
↑ hire, ↑ mentor

Jennifer

3.3 rating
$26.5K

Source: Moss-Racusin et al., 2012
Brian Miller

79%

Karen Miller

49%

Sources: Correll, 2013; Steinpreis, Anders & Ritzke 1999
“I would need to see evidence that she had gotten these grants and publications on her own.”

“It would be impossible to make such a judgment without teaching evaluations.”
Thomas Meyer
Seniority: 3rd Year Law Associate
Alma Mater: NYU
Race/Ethnicity: Caucasian

Source: Reeves, 2014
Thomas Meyer
Seniority: 3rd Year Law Associate
Alma Mater: NYU
Race/Ethnicity: Caucasian

3x more edits /comments
2x more likely to find mistakes

Source: Reeves, 2014
Thomas Meyer

Seniority: 3rd Year Law Associate
Alma Mater: NYU
Race/Ethnicity: Caucasian

Score: 4.1 out of 5
“generally good writer but needs to work on…”
“has potential”
“good analytical skills”

Thomas Meyer

Seniority: 3rd Year Law Associate
Alma Mater: NYU
Race/Ethnicity: African American

Score: 3.2 out of 5
“needs lots of work”
“can’t believe he went to NYU”
“average at best”

Source: Reeves, 2014
Stereotypes affect the criteria we use to evaluate the performance of individuals.
More education ✔

More experience

Source: Uhlmann & Cohen, 2005
More education

✔

More experience

Source: Uhlmann & Cohen, 2005
More experience

✔

More education

Source: Uhlmann & Cohen, 2005
“Cultural Fit” Criteria Can Introduce Bias to Evaluation

“Cultural matching” process leads to homogeneity:
- Elite universities
- Lifestyle
- Hobbies
- Self-presentation

75% identified “fit” as the top criteria.

Source: Rivera, 2012
More Competent

Less likeable

Source: Rudman, 1998
Likeability Penalty

Likeability – Competence Tradeoff
Double Bind
Power of Criteria

Create fairer evaluations
Identify Bias in Evaluations: Criteria

Patterns of Bias

✓ Higher Bar
✓ Leniency
✓ Shifting Criteria
✓ Preferring a Narrow Style of Leadership
✓ Notions of “Fit”
✓ Likeability penalty
Block Bias in Evaluations: Criteria

Tools

- Discuss and agree to criteria in advance
Block Bias in Evaluations: Criteria

- More Experience
- More Education

Source: Uhlmann & Cohen, 2005
Block Bias in Evaluations: Criteria

**Tools**

- Discuss and agree to criteria in advance
- Notice higher bar and insist on universal application
Let’s see teaching evaluations for all the candidates.
Block Bias in Evaluations: Criteria

Tools

- Discuss and agree to criteria in advance
- Notice higher bar and insist on universal application
- Notice when someone is given a “pass” and ask what criteria was used
Block Bias in Evaluations: Criteria

Brian Miller

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Block Bias in Evaluations: Criteria

Tools

- Discuss and agree to criteria in advance
- Notice higher bar and insist on universal application
- Notice when someone is given a “pass” and ask what criteria was used
- Discard unnecessary or narrow criteria
Block Bias in Evaluations: Criteria

Tools

- Discuss and agree to criteria in advance
- Notice higher bar and insist on universal application
- Notice when someone is given a “pass” and ask what criteria was used
- Discard shortcuts or unnecessary criteria
- Block undue criticism of personality
Block Bias in Evaluations: Criteria

Tools

- Discuss and agree to criteria in advance
- Notice higher bar and insist on universal application
- Notice when someone is given a “pass” and ask what criteria was used
- Discard shortcuts or unnecessary criteria
- Block undue criticism of personality
- Focus on top criteria