The Hidden Biases of Good People: Managing and Mitigating Bias

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Days of our lives…

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The Week

Put the following days of the week in alphabetical order (10 seconds; 3-letter abbreviations are OK)

- Monday_____Friday
- Tuesday_____
- Wednesday_____
- Thursday_____
- Friday_____
- Saturday_____
- Sunday_____

- Think of a color
- Think of a tool (in a toolbox)

The Week: Answers

Put the following days of the week in alphabetical order (10 seconds; 3-letter abbreviations are OK)

- Monday_____ Friday_____
- Tuesday_____ Monday_____
- Wednesday_____ Saturday_____
- Thursday_____ Sunday_____
- Friday_____ Thursday_____
- Saturday_____ Tuesday_____
- Sunday_____ Wednesday

How did I read your mind?

- Our minds like to think in categories

- For colors, red has been shown to be the default example of the "color" category

- For tools, it's a hammer

- When under time restraints, duress, or a mentally challenging task (putting the days in alpha order), we default to the typical representations of categories.

- This also applies to people. When under time restraints, duress, or trying to split attention (e.g., multi-tasking at a conscious level), we default to characteristic(s) that we associate with various groups. These characteristics are often based on stereotypes or personal experiences.

Overview of the Day

- Quick review of implicit bias (IB)

- Discussion of homework assignments from IB 101

- Review and discussion of implicit bias in the employee life cycle

- Strategies for managing and mitigating bias

- Three step model for addressing implicit bias in organizations: assessment, awareness, taking action

- The three components of an action plan: transparency, objective standards, and accountability

- Additional recommendations of how to reduce bias at the individual level.

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Implicit Bias Defined

- **Implicit (unconscious) Bias:** stereotypes (group-trait associations) that affect how we think, evaluate/feel, or behave in an unconscious manner. These biases, which include both favorable and unfavorable perceptions, are activated involuntarily and without an individual's awareness or intentional control.
  - Thinking: judgment and decision making
  - Evaluation (prejudice): positive or negative attitude toward someone or a group
  - Behavior (discrimination): positive/negative treatment of someone or a group

The Bases of Bias

- We favor those with whom we share group membership—the ingroup. Ingroup bias is based upon various criteria
  - **Observable** via the senses: race, age, gender, weight, height, attractiveness, income, accent
  - **Non-observable** via the senses: hometown, college, military service, fraternity/sorority, criminal record, income, common interests, name

- Once formed, these groups can take on a feel of us vs. them or "similar to me" and "different than me", which can affect perceptions, feelings, and behavior .

The Bases of Bias

- **Over-exposure**: we are all disproportionately exposed to certain groups and traits (Asian=smart), and certain groups in certain roles (U.S. President=White male) that are subconsciously recorded in memory .

Implicit Bias Findings

- We all have biases, but the impact of our biases on others depends on the roles we play in society

- Implicit bias is more prevalent than explicit bias because our minds are cognitive machines that encode and store many associations between groups and traits that we have not consciously processed
  - numbers, shapes, colors
  - In the U.S.: race, gender and age is automatic

- Implicit bias is a stronger predictor of day to day behavior than explicit bias because much of our behavior/thoughts are automatic

- The potential impact of implicit bias on behavior can be over-ridden by conscious effort

Reflections

Did you…

1. talk to someone close to you about your biases?

Another way to identify IB

Talk to a close other:

- Think about someone in your life who knows you really well

- Give them a "pass" to give you honest feedback about the biases they think you have

- And then you listen without becoming defensive

- Sometimes, other people can see your biases before you do.

Reflections

Did you…

1. talk to someone close to you about your biases?
   – Who did you talk to?
   – Did they provide evidence/examples?
   – Did you agree with the bias they identified?
   – Have you (will you) do anything different going forward?

2. take 5% of your downtime to expose yourself to difference?

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Please take out your cellphones
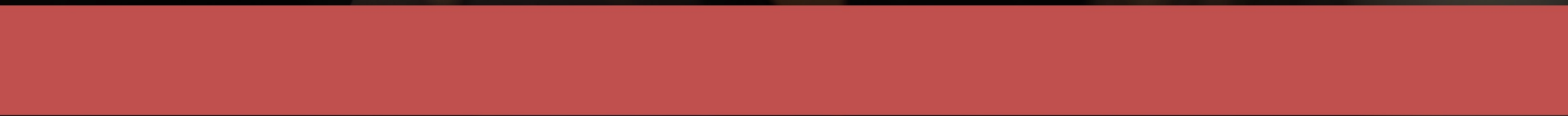
What was your gender/career IAT result?

Strong association of women with home

Moderate association of women with home

Slight association of women with home

No preference

Slight association of women with the workplace

Moderate association of women with the workplace

Strong association of women with the workplace

What one word would you use to describe yourself?

Implicit Bias in the Workplace

The Employee Life Cycle

1. *Hiring*

2. *Talent/Skill Development*

3. *Promotion*

4. *Exit*

IB in the Workplace: Hiring

- *Sourcing/Recruiting*: IB can show up when selecting search firms, temp firms, online job sites, newspaper outlets, employee referral programs, and nat'l organization e-mail blasts.

- IB can affect the criteria of who makes the *first cut*: ethnicity and gender of name, schools attended, felonies, political or social organizations

- *Interviewers*' IB may be activated by simply seeing and categorizing candidates into devalued groups, which can affect the interview itself (e.g., more cold or awkward) and subsequent evaluations.

- *Offers/negotiations*: IB can affect opening offers and willingness to negotiate.

Which of the following relationship(s) do you have at work:

mentor

mentee (you're mentored by someone)

both a mentor and a mentee

neither a mentor or a mentee

IB in the Workplace: Talent/Skill Development

- *Mentoring*: IB can affect a manager's comfort level with or perceived potential of certain groups, and thus, undermine the manager's willingness to mentor them.

- *Assignment*: IB can influence assignment allocation, which can place some employees on a faster track than others.

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https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JFW2cfzevio

IB in the Workplace: Promotion

- "*Grooming*": IB can affect the personnel identified by management as the future leaders of the organization.

- *Succession Planning*: similar to grooming, IB can affect management's willingness to provide a long-term, concrete strategy (e.g., series of key assignments/promotions) that maximizes the likelihood of certain people rising to senior management

- *Diversity Push*: IB can influence employee's willingness to carry out the directives of managers perceived to be diversity or affirmative action hires/promotions

IB in the Workplace: Exit

- Why are your employees leaving?
- Conduct exit interview whenever you feel employee will be most honest
  - Before last day
  - After last day but before obtaining new job
  - After obtaining new job
- The interviewer should be someone with whom the employee can be very candid
- Have quantitative and qualitative questions that can be statistically analyzed
- Try to find patterns among subgroups (women, Latinos, etc.)

**Bias
Mitigation
Strategies**

Managing/Mitigating IB: Fundamental Questions

1. Does your organization have data that allow determination of whether its employees are receiving equal treatment?

2. Does your organization have data that allow determination of whether those to whom it provides services are receiving equal treatment?

3. Does your organization have someone with technical data-analysis skills sufficient to identify existing disparities and determine whether they are discriminatory?

4. Does your organization have an officer who has oversight for all DEI activities—someone who would know enough about your organization to answer the three preceding questions?

5. Has your organization ever identified a previously unrecognized discriminatory disparity?

6. Has your organization ever followed up on evidence for a discriminatory disparity by (a) implementing fixes expected to eliminate that disparity and (b) determining the extent to which the disparity was eliminated?

(Greenwald et al. 2021)

Recommended Bias Management/Mitigation Strategies: Organizations

1. **Make Disparity-Finding a Standard Practice (i.e., assessment**) (Greenwald et al. 2021)

- Analyze existing data to identify systemic implicit bias in organizations
- Potential IB within an organization
  - **Diversity**: lack of representation at all levels relative to demographics of qualified pool, local population, or industry

  - **Equity**: consideration of circumstances beyond one's control (e.g., commuting via public/private transportation; nursing mother; wheelchair accessibility)

  - **Equality**: hiring, promotion, pay, assignments (assuming equal qualifications)

  - **Inclusion**: feeling welcomed, respected, valued, supported

Recommended Bias Management/Mitigation Strategies: Organizations

1. **Make Disparity-Finding a Standard Practice (i.e., assessment)** (Greenwald et al. 2021)

- Potential IB in service delivery and impact on customers the public

- Disparities in customer/client outcomes by demographic

  – Healthcare: diagnosis, treatment plans, outcomes for patients

  – Criminal justice: citizen complaints, stops, arrest, bail, charges, sentences

  – Social services: reported abuse, intake into foster care, adoptions, visits

  – Education: suspensions, expulsions, special ed/gifted recommendations, access to AP classes, lab equipment, advanced computers/software

- Disparities in customer perceptions by demographic

  – quality of service

  – respect from employees

  – feeling treated differently because of their race, gender, etc.

Your Turn

- Write down a concrete strategy for **finding disparities** in your role or in your organization

- Write down the first three action steps needed to make it happen

- Write down up to three key people that would have to support the effort

- Write down the most likely obstacle to implementing the practice and at least one potential solution

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Recommended Bias Management/Mitigation Strategies: Organizations

2. Removing the Basis of Bias ("Decision Blinding")

- Remove bias cues (e.g., remove names from resume or work product before giving it to evaluator)

- Avoid bias cues (e.g., doctor attempts to diagnose and design treatment plan based on test results before speaking directly to patient; not seeing applicant until absolutely necessary)

- Challenges
  - Inconvenient: takes time and coordination; new processes
  - Impractical for certain evaluators: judges, juries, voters, CEO selection committee

(Greenwald et al. 2021)

Your Turn

- Write down a concrete strategy for removing or avoiding the basis of bias in your role or in your organization

- Write down the first three action steps needed to make it happen

- Write down up to three key people that would have to support the effort

- Write down the most likely obstacle to implementing the practice and at least one potential solution

Recommended Bias Management/Mitigation Strategies: Organizations

3. Discretion Elimination/Reduction (Greenwald et al. 2021)

- *Structured Interview:* decision makers pre-commit to decision-appropriate and objectively specified qualification criteria before evaluating applicants.

- 3 Components of a structured interview:

  1. a set of questions selected because the answers should be informative about qualifications for the available position

  2. interviews conducted by asking these questions in the same fashion of all applicants, with responses fully recorded

  3. interview responses scored using a standard protocol to produce summary measures that have been established (empirically) as predictive of successful job performance

- Challenges: time intensive; costly; feels mechanical/too formulaic. Shortcuts are often taken resulting in opportunity for discretion to remain.

Recommended Bias Management/Mitigation Strategies: Organizations

3. Discretion Elimination/Reduction (cont'd) (Greenwald et al. 2021)

- *Objective testing of aptitudes and skills*
    - base hiring/admissions/evaluation decisions on validated, objective tests of needed aptitudes or acquired skills (e.g., I.T., MDs, accountants)

- Challenges:
    - Exams can be biased (e.g., test validated on majority population; experiences/access to resources may differ by race)
    - Expert evaluator's judgment of any subjective component (e.g., writing style) may be influenced by applicant's demographics
    - Stereotype Threat: certain groups may underperform due to the testing environment activating a negative stereotype about their group

Recommended Bias Management/Mitigation Strategies: Organizations

3. Discretion Elimination/Reduction (cont'd) (Greenwald et al. 2021)

- *Objective scoring of written materials*

  - Objective scoring protocols for evaluating potential or existing personnel

- Challenge: Objective protocols for certain written material may not exist (e.g., letters of recommendation, personal statements, resume/CVs)

- *Artificial Intelligence*

  - Machine Learning: data-mining method that can be applied to large databases of past decisions to make future, automated decisions (e.g., hiring or admissions)

  - Recently researched; awaiting validation, unlikely to be anytime soon

- Challenges: found to have race and gender bias in hiring and admissions decisions due to bias in variables included in the algorithm. (e.g., access to advanced placement courses)

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4. Accountability

- Organizational: laws, policies, practices (e.g., mandatory body cameras for police; annual assessment of racial disparities by department; baseball umpires)

- Personal: book club; accountability partner; equity coach; anti-bias journal

Your Turn

- Write down a concrete strategy for **eliminating/reducing discretion or enhancing accountability** in your organization or your role
- Write down the first three action steps needed to make it happen
- Write down up to three key people that would have to support the effort
- Write down the most likely obstacle to implementing the practice and at least one potential solution

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Promising Bias Management/Mitigation Strategies: Organizations

Bias Mitigating Strategies Based On:

5. Education

- Learning about positive achievements of targets of bias (Black Africans created writing, math, astronomy, etc.)

- Understanding the history of targets of bias (e.g., 400-year history or racism toward African Americans)

Promising Bias Management/Mitigation Strategies: Individuals

6. Mindfulness (keeping bias reducing practices top of mind)

- Language: using the phrases "in my experience", "I believe" or "some"

- Anti-bias reminders: screen-savers, wristband, t-shirt, affirmations on post-it notes

Your Turn

- Write down a concrete way to **enhance education or mindfulness** for yourself or among personnel that might reduce implicit bias at the individual or organizational level

- Write down the first three action steps needed to make it happen

- Write down up to three key people that would have to support the effort

- Write down the most likely obstacle to implementing the practice and at least one potential solution

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Recommended Bias Management/Mitigation Strategies: Organizations

7. DEI Leader: appoint a Chief Diversity Officer (DL) who is much more than a figurehead.

- Locate the DL near the top of the organization's administrative hierarchy

- Give the DL unrestricted access to data on outcomes to all of the organization's staff and to all of its service recipients.

- Provide the DL with staff competent to do data analyses that can discover previously unrecognized demographic disparities, to determine whether those disparities are discriminatory or not, and to track the disparities over time.

- Give the DL authority to recommend new policies or practices to other units in the organization.

- Make the DL's performance evaluation dependent on success in reducing documented discriminatory disparities

(Greenwald et al. 2021)

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Reducing IB:
Organizational Level (the AAA model)

- **A**ssessment: Analyze existing data to identify systemic implicit bias in organizations
    - Potential IB within an organization
    - Potential IB in service delivery and impact

- **A**wareness (Buy-in): Discuss results of assessment that suggests IB with leadership, personnel, and stakeholders

- **A**ction: Creating bias-reducing practices and policies built on: **T**ransparency, **S**tandards, **A**ccountability (TSA)

Reducing IB : Action

Action: Creating bias-reducing practices and policies built on: **T**ransparency, **S**tandards, **A**ccountability (TSA)

- **Transparency**: a willingness to share data, rationale for policies and practices, good news and bad news (internally or externally as appropriate)

- **Standards**: there should be clear, evidence-based, procedures and standards that guide behavior and practice that are easily available and can be reasonably assessed

- **Accountability**: there should be policies/practices that *consistently and explicitly* assess whether standards and goals are being met and *consistently* provide rewards or corrective feedback

Homework (cont'd)

- Keep a **media journal** for at least one week. Keep track of:
  - Race and gender of lead characters, heroes, villains
  - Type of program: sports, movie, series, documentary
  - Type of TV show/movie: comedy, drama, action, etc.
- Watch: *When They See Us (Netflix), and America to Me (Starz), John Leguizamo's Latino History for Morons*
- *Read: Be the Person You Mean To Be, How Good People Fight Bias,* by Dolly Chugh
- Give thought to implementing the techniques and strategies you've discussed today

Reading List: Implicit Bias and Race Relations

Implicit Bias

- **Blindspot**, by Mahzarin Banaji and Anthony Greenwald
- **Be the Person You Mean to Be**, by Dolly Chugh
- **Thinking Fast and Slow,** by Daniel Kahneman

Race and Race Relations

- **Democracy in Black: How Race Still Enslaves the American Soul,** by Eddie Glaude Jr.
- **The New Jim Crow** by Michelle Alexander
- **Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America**, by Ibram Kendi
- **A People's History of the United States,** by Howard Zinn
- **White Fragility,** by Robin DiAngelo

African and African American History and Culture

- **The African Origin of Civilization,** by Chiek Ante Diop
- **They Came Before Columbus**, by Ivan Van Sertima
- **From Slavery to Freedom,** by John Hope Franklin

Videos/Movies: Implicit Bias and Race Relations

Race/Ethnicity, Racism and Colorism (skin-tone bias)

-History of Racism in the U.S. (3 parts; 2hrs 30 mins)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0-AxOROms0A&list=PLhh73_CM5GHQ2ZibTV2zEi18F6wLR3187&index=7

-Japanese American Internment Camps (4 mins):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cZTioTkHcB0&list=PLhh73_CM5GHRUYWhUa1VtqMJxtGw6r-Iu&index=85

-Immigration Patterns in the U.S. (3 mins):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6yiQAmgI5s4&list=PLhh73_CM5GHQ2ZibTV2zEi18F6wLR3187&index=3

-Caste System in India (3 mins):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P8idvu5zJ8c&list=PLhh73_CM5GHRxxNG_BYnIGhxwXxl5JZ9S&index=4&t=9s

-Anti-Semitism Around the World (3 mins):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JvmKNtffobE&list=PLhh73_CM5GHRUYWhUa1VtqMJxtGw6r-Iu&index=61

-Gender-Bias (5 mins): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JFW2cfzevio

-*13th* (Netflix; 1hr 30mins)

-*When They See Us* (Netflix; 4 parts; 5 hrs)

-*John Leguizamo's Latin History for Morons* (Netflix; 90 mins)

African and African American History and Culture

-Africans in the Western Hemisphere Before Columbus:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K-FG2oWl-2k&list=PLhh73_CM5GHQJ8EHBYFcvC1gzMz29RiXC&index=40

DANKE!
THANK YOU!
MERCI!
GRAZIE!
GRACIAS!
DANK JE WEL!

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- Want to be a trainer with us or added to our e-mail list? Send email to admin@national.training
- Books:
  - *Blindspot,* Banaji & Greenwald
  - *Be the Person You Mean to Be,* by Dolly Chugh

- Online bias-mitigation platform coming this fall!

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