Understanding Unconscious/Implicit Bias

Tuesday, April 3, 2018
1:00 p.m. – 1:50 p.m.

NIH Natcher Conference Center
Bldg. 45 - Rooms C1&C2

Presented by
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HHS ERG Program Manager
Objective

To build the capacity to recognize, address and manage the ways unconscious bias negatively influences the work culture.
How Does Unconscious Bias Show Up?
Business Reasons for Focusing on Diversity & Inclusion in the Workplace

Today’s economy is global and interdependent.

U.S. Demographic Changes

By 2020, more than half of the children in the United States will be expected to be a part of a minority race/ethnic group.

By 2060 just 36% of all children will be a single-race non-Hispanic white, compared to 52% today.
Between 1995 and 2050, the U.S. population will increase unequally, as follows:

- Numbers of women increasing
- White, non-Hispanic people, 7.4%
- People of Hispanic origin, 258.3%
- Black, non-Hispanic people, 69.5%
- American Indians, 83.0%
- Asian and Pacific Islanders, 269.1%
Defining Unconscious Bias

Implicit attitudes, actions or judgments that are controlled by automatic evaluations without a person’s awareness.

We often make instinctive decisions/ preferences about other people.

Play a significant part in the way we engage people and the decisions we make about them.
Defining Unconscious Bias

• **Micro-behaviors**
  Subtle behaviors that send positive or negative messages

• **Micro-Messages**
  Small but highly impactful

Unconscious thoughts reveal...

• **Micro-inequities** – Slights that cause others to feel devalued, slighted, discourage and excluded.

• **Micro-Affirmations** – Support signals that cause others to feel valued, included, and encouraged.
Examples of Micro-Behaviors/Micro-Inequities

• Constantly being interrupted while you are talking.
• Being left out of a discussion/project.
• Trying to speak with someone who is reading or sending e-mails during conversation.
• Talking with someone who keeps looking at his/her watch.
• Not being introduced in a meeting and then being ignored.
• Avoidance of eye contact.
Examples of Micro-Behaviors/Micro-Inequities (cont’d.)

• Cutting down ideas before they can be entertained.
• Staying on the cell phone with no explanation.
• Mispronouncing your name or misspelling your name.
• Change in voice pitch, volume or rate.
• Change in body posture.
• Change in hand movements and gestures.
• Fake, masked or forced smile.
Examples of Micro-Affirmations

• Situational.

• Giving positive feedback on a job well done.

• Congratulating someone on their promotion or contribution.

• Recognition of a coworker’s importance to THE TEAM.
The Brain
The Brain (cont’d.)

• The brain sorts out 11 million pieces of information.

• Our brains rely on past experience to “fill in the blanks” between the things we think we see.

• We “understand” by weaving together the information we have with the threads of information that our brains remember.
## Why Do We Have Unconscious Biases?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unconscious (System 1)</th>
<th>Conscious (System 2)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Characteristics</strong></td>
<td><strong>Characteristics</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fast Brain</td>
<td>Slow Brain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto Pilot</td>
<td>Pilot</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cannot turn it off</td>
<td>Deliberate thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fast thinking</td>
<td>In charge of self</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schema</td>
<td>Concentration</td>
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</tbody>
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3/30/2018 Understanding Unconscious/Implicit Bias 13
Why Do We Have Unconscious Biases? (cont’d.)

Nobel prizing winning neuroscientist, Eric Kandel, estimates that 80-90% of our mind works non-consciously.

Must use shortcuts and past knowledge to make assumptions, aka “Mind Habits.”

These habits influence our thoughts, judgment, and interpretations.
Why Do We Have Unconscious Biases?

Freud compared the mind to an iceberg.
Why Do We Have Unconscious Biases?

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YQXe1CokWqQ
What Does This Tell Us?

• Bias is natural and largely unavoidable.

• People are pre-disposed to being biased against people unlike them... it is not all about being negative.

• People will often not have insight into their own biases.

• People under emotional or cognitive load are more likely invoke bias behavior.

• Unconscious bias affects our behavior in subtle and unintentional ways.
RAM MODEL
(Recognize, Address and Manage)

Recognize:
- Become more aware through training, self-examination and admission.
- Seek opportunities to learn more about people/cultures that are unfamiliar.
- Actively engage others and support diversity and inclusion events.
RAM MODEL (cont’d.)

Address:

- Call it out.
- Assess training needs.
- Be open to constructive criticism via 360s and/or FEVS results.
- Provide feedback about the behavior not the person.
RAM MODEL (cont’d.)

Manage:

- Expose yourself to positive images/stories before you make major decisions.
- Encourage yourself to be open to more diverse candidates by using System 2 vs. System 1 approach.
- Take unconscious and make it more conscious.
RAM MODEL (cont’d.)

Manage (cont’d.):

- Ask yourself if you are spending enough time getting to know the staff or allowing them to get to know you.

- Create and ensure enhanced opportunities for employee engagement and team-building.
“We need to give each other the space to grow, to be ourselves, to exercise our diversity. We need to give each other space so that we may both give and receive such beautiful things as ideas, openness, dignity, joy, healing, and inclusion.”

- Max de Pree
At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

• Recognize, address and manage the ways unconscious bias negatively influences the work culture;
• Identify business reasons why Diversity & Inclusion are important in the workplace;
• Employ the RAM Model (Recognize, Address and Manage) to combat unconscious bias.
RESOURCES

For additional information, please visit:

https://hrsa.connectsolutions.com/p6089ohpj1h/

(Video Recording of Understanding Unconscious/Implicit Bias Workshop conducted by B. Winona Chestnut, Diversity and Inclusion Technical Advisor and Training Manager, HRSA who prepared content for this presentation).
RESOURCES (cont’d.)

Cherry, Kendra - The Conscious and Unconscious Mind (2014)
   http://psychology.about.com/od/theoriesofpersonality/a/consciousuncon.htm

Kahneman, Daniel - Thinking, Fast and Slow. Farrar, Straus and Giroux (2011)

Ross, Howard J. Reinventing Diversity: Transforming Organizational
   Community to Strengthen People, Purpose, and Performance. SHRM/Rowman &
   Littlefield Publishers, Inc. (2011)


Vendantam, Shankar - The Hidden Brain: How Our Unconscious Minds Elect
Contact Information

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EVALUATION SURVEY

• Your feedback is important to us. Therefore, we ask you to take a few minutes to complete the online evaluation for this session:

  https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HRClinic-Bias

• Your feedback is voluntary and completely anonymous and will be used to help plan upcoming sessions, compile priorities, action items, and/or next steps.