

Creating an Inclusive Workplace: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Kimalee Dickerson, JD, PhD

How to Help Your Colleagues
and Community Thrive

~~Creating an Inclusive Workplace~~ ~~Diversity, Equity and Inclusion~~

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5 Things – At Your Table

Find 5 *interesting things* you have in common and 5 things that are different.

Five thing we have in common

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Five things that are different

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Agenda

- Welcome & Overview
- What is inclusive leadership?
- Why is it important?
- How do I become an inclusive leader?
 - Individual and Organizational Actions



Guidelines for Working Together



Share your
experiences
(use “I”
statements)



Commit to
confidentiality
(Vegas rule)



Step up,
step back



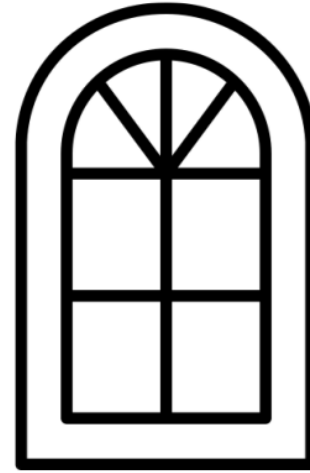
Be present &
limit
distractions

An Invitation to Hold this Metaphor



LOOKING IN A MIRROR

Insight into myself – my
beliefs, identity, experiences,
assets, fears, limitations



LOOKING OUT A WINDOW

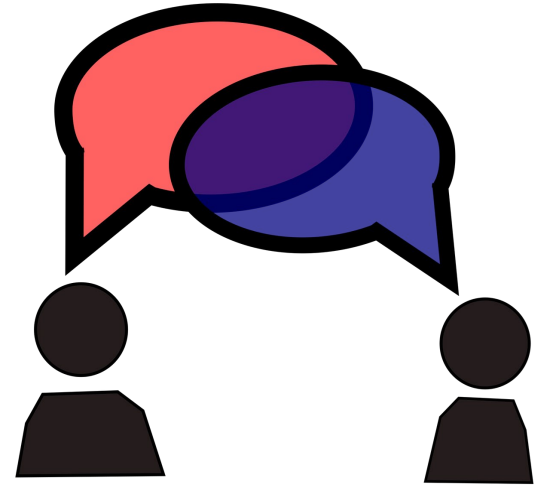
Insight into my context – my
colleagues, organization,
community

Activity: Think and Share in Groups of 3

Take a moment to think, then turn your group and share (3 min each).

- A time at work where you felt included, connected, and valued for who you are.
- A time at work when you felt like an outsider, unwelcome, ignored, or dismissed.

What factors made you feel included or excluded?





1. What is inclusive leadership?

Definitions



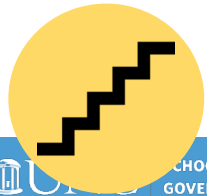
DIVERSITY Representation of human differences that make a difference



INCLUSION Creating an environment where everyone is valued and respected



BELONGING Feeling connected, accepted, and valued just as you are



EQUITY Fair treatment, opportunity, and access so every person receives what they need to thrive

“Diversity is having a seat at the table, inclusion is having a voice, and belonging is having that voice be heard.” Fosslien and West
Duffy



Inclusive Leaders

- Value all team members and treat them fairly
- Invite different perspectives in their decision making
- Create an atmosphere where people feel their opinions and contributions matter

Feeling Included Versus Excluded

Employees feel INCLUDED when they experience both:

- A sense of **uniqueness**—that they are recognized and valued for their specific attributes and contributions.
- A sense of **belonging**—that they are welcomed and valued as part of their workgroups and among their colleagues.

Employees feel EXCLUDED when they feel:

- **Devalued, dismissed, or ignored** for the unique qualities they bring to the table.
- Like **outsiders** because of their differences (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity, nationality, age, religion, sexual orientation, sometimes job role or formal position of power).

Experiences of inclusion and exclusion often coexist in day-to-day interactions

6 Characteristics of Inclusive Leaders

- **Visible commitment:** They articulate authentic commitment to inclusion as aligned with personal and public service values
- **Courage:** They admit mistakes, challenge the status quo, and creating space for corrective actions
- **Awareness of bias:** They show awareness of personal blind spots and biases as well as biases in larger systems.
- **Curiosity:** They demonstrate an open mindset and deep curiosity about others, listen without judgment, and seek with empathy to understand those around them.
- **Cultural humility:** They commit ongoing self-exploration and self-critique along with a willingness to learn from others and recognize and address power imbalances.
- **Effective collaboration:** They empower others and seek to include others in discussions and decisions, esp. those most excluded

Inclusive leadership is not about occasional grand gestures, but regular, smaller-scale actions.



Example Leader Behaviors

Inclusive

- ***Shares personal weaknesses:*** “[This leader] will openly ask about information that she is not aware of. She demonstrates a humble unpretentious manner. This puts others at ease, enabling them to speak out and voice their opinions, which she values.”
- ***Learns about cultural differences:*** “[This leader] has taken the time to learn the ropes (common words, idioms, customs, likes/dislikes) and the cultural pillars.”
- ***Acknowledges team members as individuals:*** “[This leader] leads a team of over 100 people and yet addresses every team member by name and knows the work they do.”

Exclusive

- ***Overpowers others:*** “He can be very direct and overpowering which limits the ability of those around him to contribute to meetings or participate in conversations.”
- ***Displays favoritism:*** “Work is assigned to the same top performers, creating unsustainable workloads. [There is a] need to give newer team members opportunities.”
- ***Discounts alternative views:*** “[This leader] can have very set ideas on specific topics. Sometimes it is difficult to get an alternative view across, and his team may hold back from bringing forward challenging and alternative points of view.”



2. Why is inclusive leadership important?

Challenges in the Public Sector/Social Services

- Changing demographics
 - **Uneven growth:** overall NC population increased 9.5% from 2010-2020, faster than the U.S. overall (7.4%) but only 49 of the state's 100 counties growing
 - **Aging:** the population of people 65 and older increased by 3.7% from 2020-21
 - **Growing BIPOC population:** individuals identifying as Multiracial (two or more races) more than doubled, growing by 161%
 - **Multiple generations in workplace**
 - Millennials (1980 - 2000) largest cohort in the country's workforce (35%)
 - Boomers retiring at record rates, Gen X is taking over managerial roles
 - 1/3 adults in NC (29%) have a disability (mobility, cognitive, hearing/vision, etc)
 - 5% of NC workforce identifies as LEBTQ
- High turnover & vacancy rates
 - Some county DSS offices in NC have more than 1-in-3 positions vacant
 - One-in-four counties has a turnover rate higher than 40 percent

Why does inclusive leadership matter at work?



HIGHER
PERFORMING
TEAMS



REDUCED
ABSENTEEISM



HIGHER RETENTION
AND LOWER INTENT
TO LEAVE



INCREASED
EMPLOYEE WELL
BEING

Diversity ≠ Inclusion



“Greater team diversity does not automatically yield an inclusive climate. Inclusive leadership is needed to support an inclusive climate in which different team members are valued for what they bring to work practices. **Inclusive leadership is crucial for fostering inclusiveness in diverse teams.**”

Ashikali et al. (2021) The Role of Inclusive Leadership in Supporting an Inclusive Climate in Diverse Public Sector Teams

Inclusive Leadership and Public Participation

Public participation is any process that involves members of the public in government decision-making.

Office of Management and Budget, Broadening Public Participation and Community Engagement in the Regulatory Process



Why does inclusion matter for the public?



PARTICIPATION IN DECISION
MAKING LEADS TO BETTER
UNDERSTANDING AND
SATISFACTION OF PUBLIC NEEDS



BUILDS CONSENSUS ON
SERVICE GOALS, PRIORITIES,
AND PERFORMANCE
EXPECTATIONS



IMPROVES PUBLIC TRUST OF
GOVERNMENTS AND THEIR
DECISION MAKING

Spectrum of Public Participation

International Association for
Public Participation (IAP2)

Inform



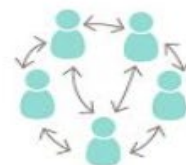
Consult



Involve



Collaborate



Empower



Public Participation Goal

To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions

To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.

To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.

To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.

Promise To The Public

We will keep you informed.

We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.

We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.

We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.

We will implement what you decide.

Example Techniques

- Fact sheets
- Web sites
- Open houses

- Public comment
- Focus groups
- Surveys
- Public meetings

- Workshops
- Deliberative polling

- Citizen advisory committees
- Consensus-building
- Participatory budgeting

- Citizen juries
- Ballots
- Delegated decision

Table Talk

1. How, if at all, do you typically engage staff in decision-making?
 - What are the impacts of this approach?
2. How, if at all, do you typically engage the public in decision-making?
 - What are the impacts of this approach?
3. What tensions have you experienced or might arise by giving staff or the public more influence over some decision making?



Keep them informed (fact sheet, email/meeting to inform)



Ask their feedback (survey, focus group, public comment)



Work together and incorporate their recommendations (workshops, consensus building)



Let them decide (citizen jury, delegate decision)



3. How do I become an inclusive leader?

Individual and Organizational Actions

- Create small, ongoing intentional opportunities for connection
- Include others in discussions and decisions; seek and incorporate feedback
- Increase awareness of bias and reduce subtle acts of exclusion (microaggressions)



What is bias?

Preference; the tendency to favor one thing over another





Affinity Bias

A preference for people who are similar to or have the same qualities as ourselves.

Birds of a feather
flock together.



I might be
different, but I
have the skills you
need.





Where does bias come from?

Family, friends, & life experiences



Media: Movies, books, news





AP Associated Press AP - Tue Aug 30, 11:31 AM ET

A young man walks through chest deep flood water after looting a grocery store in New Orleans on Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2005. Flood waters continue to rise in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina did extensive damage when it

[Email Photo](#) [Print Photo](#)

RECOMMEND THIS PHOTO » Recommended Photos
Recommend It: Average (138 votes)



3:47 AM ET

Two residents wade through chest-deep water after finding bread and soda from a local grocery store after Hurricane Katrina came through the area in New Orleans, Louisiana. (AFP/Getty Images/Chris Graythen)

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RELATED

• Katrina's Effects, at a Glance AP - Tue Aug 30, 1:26 PM ET

[Hurricanes & Tropical Storms](#)

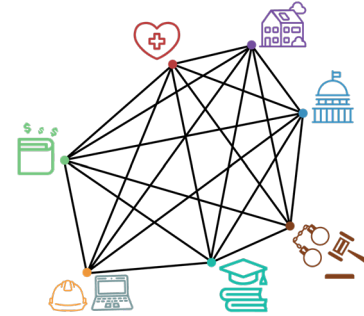
What does bias look like? Levels of Bias

MACRO

Institutional



Systemic/Structural



MICRO

Individual



Interpersonal



Individual



Within individuals.

Private beliefs & attitudes that reside inside our minds.

- Conscious & unconscious
- Internalized (self directed) & externalized (towards others)

Examples:

- Belief that people with mental disabilities are less intelligent

Interpersonal



Interactions ***between individuals.***

Once we bring our private beliefs into our interactions with others, we are now in the interpersonal realm.

- Within and across difference
- Intentional or unintentional

Example:

- Slurs or jokes targeting a marginalized person or group

Institutional



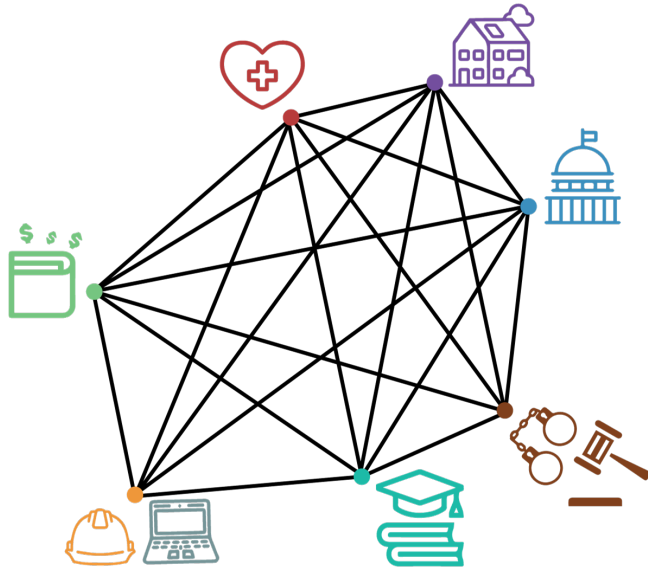
Within institutions.

Policies and practices at the organization level that perpetuate bias.

Example:

- Discriminatory hiring practices that disadvantage certain groups

Systemic/Structural



Across institutions and society.

Bias that accumulates across institutions and history

Example:

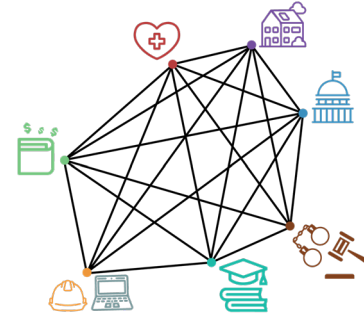
- Social determinants of health (income, housing quality, access to food)

Levels of Bias/Oppression

Institutional

Systemic/Structural

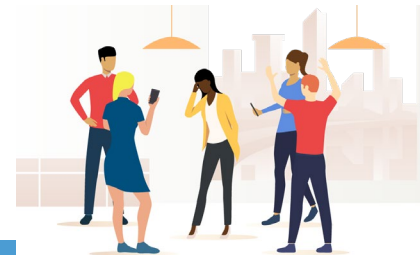
MACRO



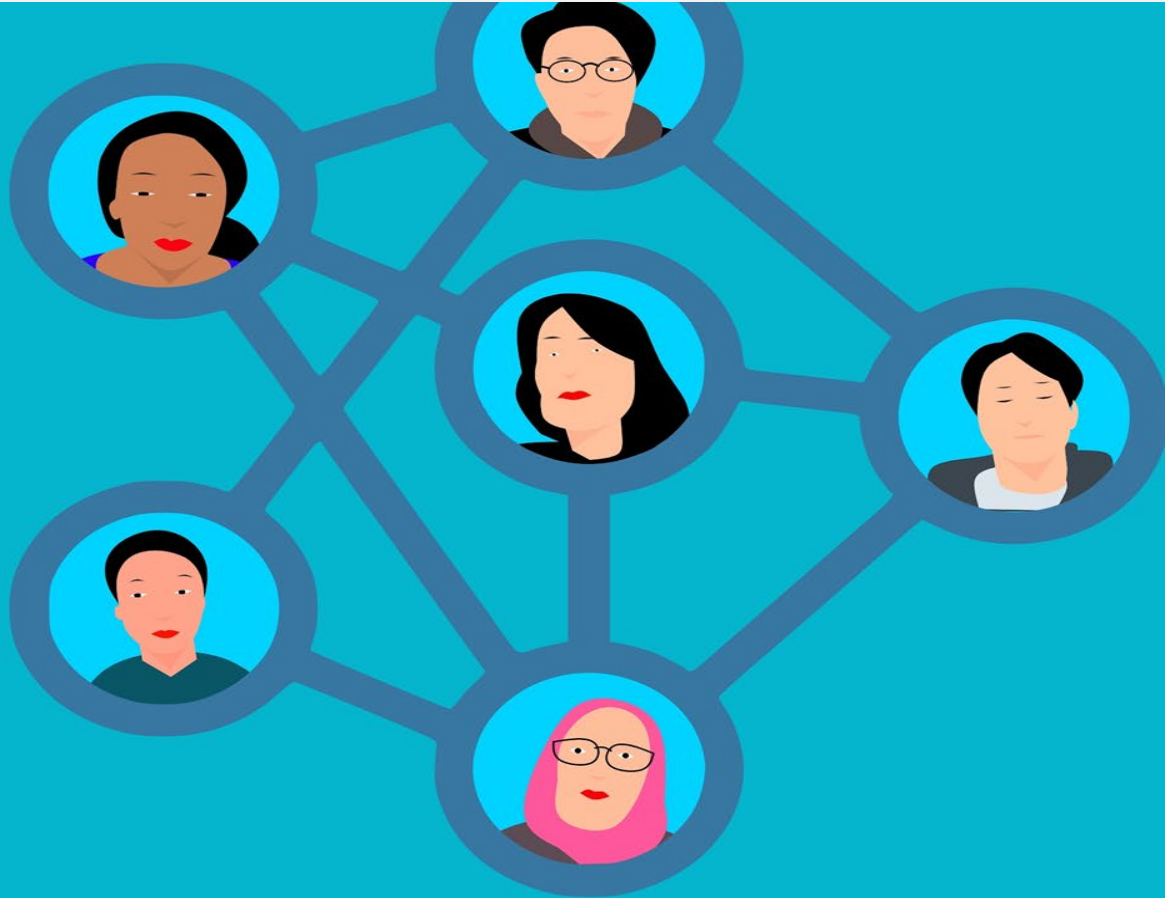
Individual

Interpersonal

MICRO



Implicit Bias and Microaggressions



Warming Up Your Brain

Bed

Wake

Nap

Rest

Snooze

Peace

Awake

Blanket

Yawn

Tired

Slumber

Drowsy

Dream

Snore

Doze

Take a moment to
write down the words
you can remember
(1 min)



Poll

Did you remember?



Snore

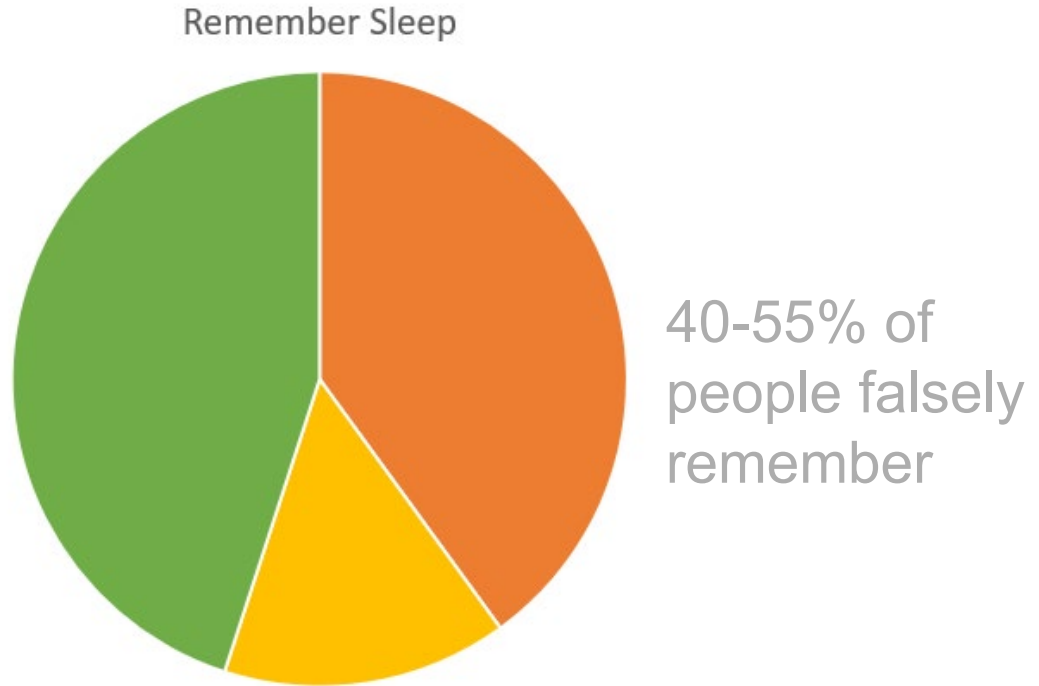
Wake

Nap

Blanket

Sleep

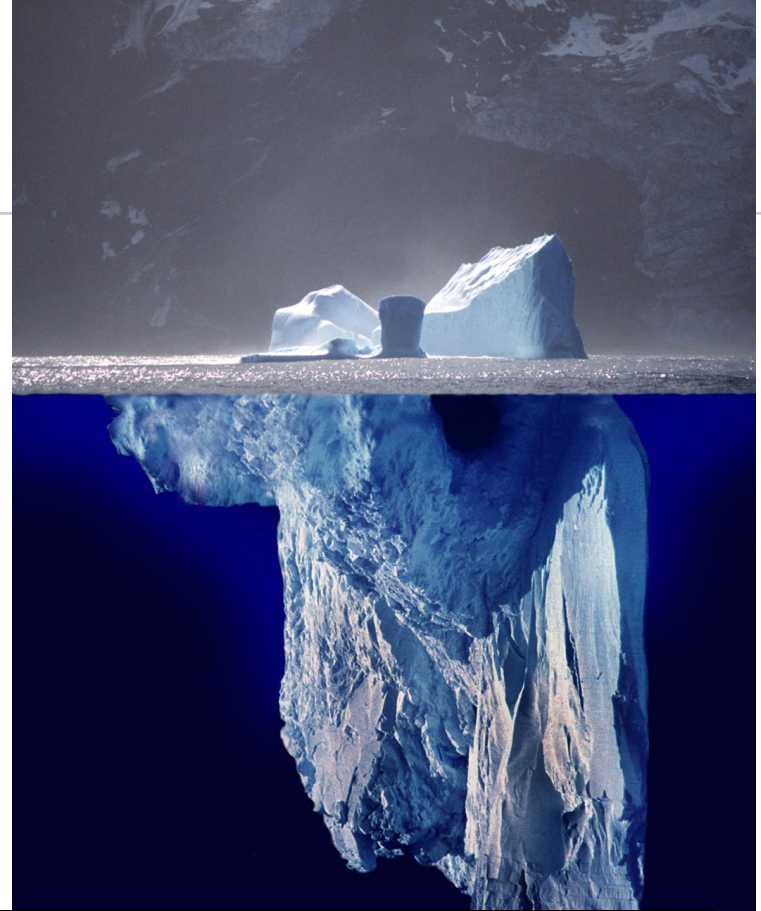
You're in good company!



The Brain

Consciously process about 50
bits per second

11 million bits of information
every second



We have **limited** conscious processing capacity

Two Brain Systems

System 1



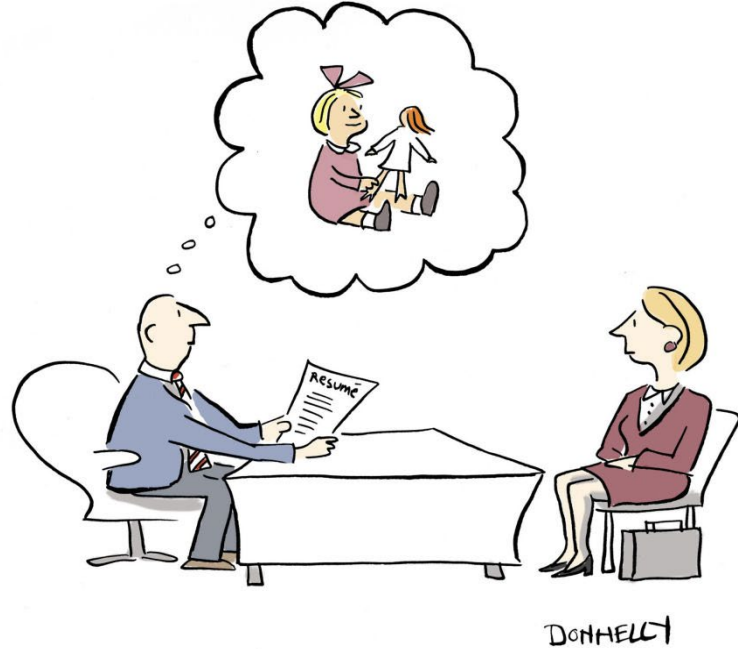
System 2



CHECKLIST



Implicit / Unconscious Bias



Implicit Bias: A belief or attitude that affects our decisions and actions without our conscious awareness



Disability IAT

Disability ('Physically Disabled – Physically Abled' IAT). This IAT requires the ability to recognize figures representing physically disabled and physically abled people.

Asian IAT

Asian American ('Asian - European American' IAT). This IAT requires the ability to recognize White and Asian-American faces, and images of places that are either American or Foreign in origin.

Gender-Career IAT

Gender - Career. This IAT often reveals a relative link between family and females and between career and males.

Weight IAT

Weight ('Fat - Thin' IAT). This IAT requires the ability to distinguish faces of people who are obese and people who are thin. It often reveals an automatic preference for thin people relative to fat people.

Sexuality IAT

Sexuality ('Gay - Straight' IAT). This IAT requires the ability to distinguish words and symbols representing gay and straight people. It often reveals an automatic preference for straight relative to gay people.

Race IAT

Race ('Black - White' IAT). This IAT requires the ability to distinguish faces of European and African origin. It indicates that most Americans have an automatic preference for white over black.

Transgender IAT

Transgender ('Transgender People - Cisgender People' IAT). This IAT requires the ability to distinguish photos of transgender celebrity faces from photos of cisgender celebrity faces.

Religion IAT

Religion ('Religions' IAT). This IAT requires some familiarity with religious terms from various world religions.

What are Microaggressions?

“**Everyday** verbal, nonverbal, and environmental **slights, snubs, or insults**, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or **negative messages** to target persons based solely upon their **group membership**.

Dr. Derald Wing Sue





Micro-Aggressions



How do subtle acts of exclusion/microaggressions affect people?

“Death by a thousand cuts”

- Linked to psychological distress, depression, anxiety
- Withdrawal and substance abuse

At work

- People feel less welcome and begin to question if they are wanted or even safe
- Impacts ability to speak up, collaborate with others, ask for and receive feedback, and more likely to seek other employment



R.A.V.E.N. Approach

for addressing microaggressions

Redirect (intervene) (correct) (pull aside)

Ask probing questions for clarity

- *I think I heard you say... what did you mean by that?*
- *I want to make sure I understand what you were saying, were you saying that...?*

Values clarification

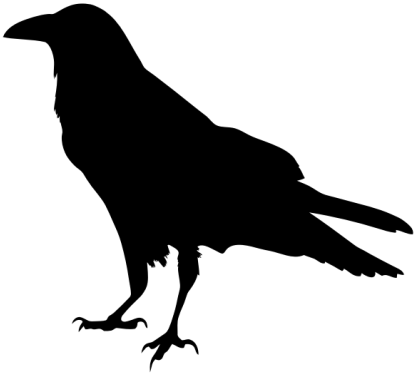
- *You know, in this department we work hard to create a space that is safe and welcoming for all students*
- *What you just said is not in alignment or consistent with our institutional values that prioritize equity and inclusion*

Emphasize your own thoughts and feelings

- *When I hear your comment, I think/feel...*
- *Many people might take that to mean...*
- *In my experience...*

Next steps

Reflect and decide the next time you encounter this situation, what you might consider doing



Microaggressions Worksheet

With your group, fill in the Microaggressions Worksheet.

Microaggression Example	Underlying Belief or Biases	Message to Recipient	Potential Responses
"Where are you from? No, where are you <i>really</i> from?"	All people from a particular racial/ethnic group (often Asia, Latinx) are immigrants	You are not American. You are a foreigner. You do not belong here.	
Use of the pronoun "he" to refer to all people			
A person in a wheelchair is carrying a box and an able bodied person takes it (without asking or getting permission)			
Raising your voice or speaking slowly when addressing a person who has an accent			

- Column 2: What underlying beliefs or biases could lead to the microaggression?
- Column 3: What impact/message might it have on the recipient?
- Column 4: How could the recipient or an observer respond using RAVEN?

What You Can Do to be an Inclusive Leader

- ❑ **Build self-awareness.** Understand and reflect on your experiences and biases and how they affect you. Slow down and ask questions to activate your conscious brain: What assumptions am I making?
- ❑ **Educate yourself.** Read books about bias and inclusion, learn from stories of people who have different backgrounds and experiences, actively work to diversify your networks.
- ❑ **Practice active listening.** Believe others' stories (even if they don't align with your experiences)
- ❑ **Notice and speak up** when you notice bias or exclusion. Respond to microaggressions using RAVEN. Ask who else needs to be heard or in the room.
- ❑ **Ask for feedback.** Listen to feedback (without being defensive) from various sources.
- ❑ **Get to know people** and pay close attention to their words and ideas, show genuine curiosity and compassion about their lives.
- ❑ **Encourage participation** from everyone on your team. Solicit ideas and feedback. When someone isn't participating, notice and check with them about how you can support them.



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