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**Peer to Peer 9**

**I Think That? Unconscious Bias –  
How to Spot it and Become an Inclusive Leader: Part 2**

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# Do I Think That? Unconscious Bias

How to Spot it and Become  
an Inclusive Leader



## What's in it for Me and My Company or Firm?

- Branding is everything
- Clients and customers associate with companies that have shared values
- Loss of job applicant referrals
- Retention higher if management recognizes abilities
- Ethnically diverse executive teams are 33% more profitable according to McKinsey Report
- Catalyst study found companies with more women in executive positions have 34% higher return to shareholders

## What's your reaction to these words?

- Tattoo
- Ivy League
- Gay/lesbian
- Wrinkled shirt
- Heavily overweight
- Good looking
- Limp handshake

- Strong foreign accent
- Tall
- Same university as you
- Sushi
- McDonald's
- FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association)



## What is Unconscious Bias and How Can You Tell?

- Biases that are automatically triggered by our brain making quick judgments about people and situations based on our background, cultural environment and our experiences.
- In the first seven seconds we meet someone, we make 11 judgments about them, including about their dress, the way they speak, the way they shake your hand, their stare or lack of eye contact.



## Having a bias does not make us bad people, it only makes us human.

- We naturally assign people to social categories and these can be based on stories, books, movies, media and culture.
- We are exposed to and have to filter about 11 million pieces of information at any one time because our brains can only functionally deal with about 40.
- We “cherry pick” information that supports our opinions. When we do this, we validate and reinforce our biases, making it that much harder to be neutral.



- Unconscious bias is far more prevalent than conscious prejudice and often is incompatible with one's conscious values.
- Unconscious biases in the workplace can hinder recruiting, hiring and retention efforts, and unknowingly shape our organizations.
- Unconscious bias can affect how we evaluate and promote people despite their talent and performance.



# What does the Research Say?







## Rosenthal Bloomers

- How you treat others affects what they think of themselves and their ultimate success.
- Three children were picked at random and the teachers were told children were very smart (bloomers) but not to tell the children. The bloomers actually performed much better than other students in their class but in fact the bloomer children were picked at random and not based on higher test scores.
- When the identified bloomer child said something good, the teacher would nod three times. When the bloomer child said something bad, the teacher would encourage the student to try again. The teacher would blame the mistake on a situation such as the bloomer child had not slept well.



## Resumes

- You can be ruled out just on the basis of your name despite being highly skilled.
- Resumes with “typically white” names received 50% more callback than “typically black” names.
- Average “typically white” named candidates received more callbacks than highly skilled “typically black” named candidates.
- Those with Chinese, Indian or Pakistani-sounding names were 28% less likely to be invited to interview than those with English-sounding names, even when the qualifications were the same.



## Law Firm Partners Scoring Memos

Partners were given a mistake-heavy memo to review.

- When the partner thought the author was white the memo scored a 4.1 with the comment: “potential”
- When the partner thought the author was black they scored it a 3.2 with the comment: “I can’t believe he went to NYU”



## Salary and Height

- Less than 15% of American men are over six feet tall, yet almost 60% of corporate CEOs are over six feet tall.
- Research shows that when corrected for age and gender, an inch of height is worth approximately \$789 per year in salary. A six foot person would earn \$5,525 more each year than someone who is 5'5".



## Foreign Accent and Credibility

- Having a foreign accent has also been shown to elicit unconscious bias. Research shows that we are less likely to believe or trust someone with a foreign sounding accent.
- If someone with an accent recited this statement: “a giraffe can go without water longer than a camel can,” the statement was judged less truthful.



# What Would You Say?

## ***Real Life Real Estate Scenarios***



## Tactics

### Assume Good Intent and Explain Impact

- “It sounds like you’re trying to give me a compliment, but it feels a little more like an insult.”



## Tactics

### Ask a Question

- “I’m surprised to hear you say that. What past experiences have you had working with other women?”





## Tactics

### Interrupt and redirect

- “Let’s get back to business and talk about the important issues.”



## Tactics

### Reveal the contradiction

- “Jose is one of our highest ranked associates and Forbes just named him to 30 Under 30: The Top Young Lawyers.”

# Tactics

- Assume Good Intent and Explain Impact
- Ask a Question
- Interrupt and redirect
- Reveal the contradiction
- Humor



# Tactics

## Humor

- “I know that statement didn’t come from this room.”

# Personal *Voluntary* Action Plan

Step up, Speak up



# Facts

- In 2015, the industry median annual compensation was \$115,000 for women and \$150,000 for men – an average income gap of **23.3%**. The income gap was widest in the C-Suite at **29.8%**.
- A 2016 study showed that women do ask for raises as often as their male counterparts, but they get what they want **25% less often**.
- **65%** of professionals surveyed in one real estate industry study said they had experienced or observed gender bias against women in their commercial real estate workplace in the last five years.
- Studies have found when senior managers evaluate the work product of a group they automatically assume that the men contributed to a greater degree and that they took on more of a leadership role than the women.

## Be Identity Conscious, Not Identity Blind

- Resumes: Having identity and name blind sorting of resumes can increase selection of diverse candidates.
- Pool of interview candidates: Having more than one minority or female candidate, increases chance of diverse hiring.
- Mentorship: Having a more senior mentor increases rate of promotion and greater compensation.
- Sponsorship: Having someone to vouch for your competency and leadership increases compensation (27% more likely to ask for raise and 22% more likely to ask for key assignments).

## Personal *Voluntary* Action Plan

- Do you go to the same trusted colleagues for assignments?
- Do you assume an employee can't take on difficult assignment because of personal circumstances?
- Watch words used on reviews: do you say the woman is detail oriented and the man is strategic?
- Do you use racial stereotypes: Asians passive; African Americans angry?
- Do you make compensation information open and available?



## Resources

- Take the Implicit Association Test - Harvard University. Project Implicit. <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/> (accessed June 14, 2018)
- Read *Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People* by Mahzarin R. Banaji and Anthony G. Greenwald
- Talk to people in your company. Companies do better at diversity when contact among different groups is increased and people are engaged.



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