

An Interactive and Practical  
Approach to Implicit Bias for  
Facilitators and Commissioners

Friday, September 15, 2017

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Exercise

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Read these words Copyright © Glenn 2002

- Couch
- Stool
- Seat
- Pew
- Bench

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Read these words

Apple  
Orange  
Seed  
Pit  
Juice

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Read these words

Glass  
Curtains  
Blinds  
Pane  
Sill

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Read these words

Pillow  
Slumber  
Bed  
Doze  
Snore

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Memory Test...

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Schematic Memories

• Test Words from our memory task:

1.	5.	9.
2.	6.	10.
3.	7.	11.
4.	8.	12.

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Word Memory Task

Sky  
Sleep  
Seed  
Water  
Bench  
Fruit

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Word Memory Task

Fire  
Chair  
Glass  
Street  
Window  
Pillow

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How Did You Do?

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Schematic Memories

• Test Words from our memory task:

1. Sky	5. Bench✓	9. Glass✓
2. Sleep	6. Fruit	10. Street
3. Seed✓	7. Fire	11. Window
4. Water	8. Chair	12. Pillow✓

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PART I: AN OVERVIEW OF IMPLICIT BIAS



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Social Cognition Research

Categorization of and preference for people based on group identity is a normal, fundamental process of the human brain.

Our ability to categorize our experience is an "indispensable cognitive device for understanding, negotiating, and constructing our social world."

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The Brain Identifies

- Race
- Age
- Gender

within a *fraction* of a second

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## Schemas

During the process of categorization, our brains encode information about groups of people into our memories, along with favorable or unfavorable impressions or values.

These mental constructs are sometimes called "schemas."

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## Akin to Computers

These mental processes can be likened to computer hardware. What goes into that hardware will differ from person to person, but we all process, code, store, and retrieve the data we receive similarly.

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## In v. Out Groups

This research shows that we are, by nature, prone to prefer most strongly persons in the social categories to which we ourselves belong ("in-groups" as opposed to "out-groups").

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### Particularity/Sameness

We also tend to perceive persons in our own groups with PARTICULARITY (as unique individuals).  
BUT, we view "out-group" members as homogeneous, or ALL THE SAME.

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### For Example

When we are faced with information inconsistent with our beliefs, we revise our beliefs under certain circumstances, but we are more likely to create a subgroup category (an "exception"), leaving our belief intact.  
This is especially true when the "out-group" is large and the stereotype negative.

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### Implicit Biases

Cognitive scientists also believe that these early stereotypes or beliefs ("implicit biases") about groups of people continue to exist at an unconscious level, despite our brain's increasing ability to reason, understand, and exercise judgment as we mature.

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Factors that can increase the likelihood of reliance on Unconscious Bias

Distraction

Stress

Boredom

Time pressure

Absence of accountability

Lack of motivation to be accurate and fair

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Bicycle Thief Video

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Keypoint Polling

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Would you impute income?  
Yes  
No

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Do you spend more time on certain parts of the Income and Expense Declaration?  
Yes  
No

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Do you spend more time on certain parts of the Income and Expense Declaration?  
Yes  
No

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Do you give more instructions?  
Yes  
No

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Only give the sample handout?  
Yes  
No

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Sit and help directly?  
Yes  
No

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Do you take into account lifestyle?  
Yes  
No

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Do you give listed child hardships?  
Yes  
No

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PART II:DEBIASING

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How to Minimize the Effects of Implicit Bias

Be and stay motivated to be fair;

Maximize accountability;

- Ask a peer to observe
- Look for patterns in your behavior or decision-making.

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How to Minimize the Effects of Implicit Bias

Take ample time;

- Are some people given less time to answer questions than others

Minimize distraction--pay attention;

- Minimize stress
- Deal with anxiety and/or depression

Make the category of the person explicit/salient;

- Acknowledge (to yourself) the social categories of people

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How to Minimize the Effects of Implicit Bias

Make the category of the person explicit/salient

- Be conscious of difference
- Don't try to ignore difference

Make a conscious effort/engage in an intentional thought process (think about your thinking);

Consciously confront cultural stereotypes.

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How to Minimize the Effects of Implicit Bias

- Attention
- Intention
- Effort

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How to Minimize the Effects of Implicit Bias

Make a conscious effort to wait until all facts are present before reaching a conclusion. Engage in constant vigilance.

Even people with few implicit biases are assisted by reminding themselves or being reminded by others that it is an ongoing challenge to minimize their effects.

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