IMPLICIT BIAS WEEK

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED, WHAT NEXT?

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APRIL 13, 2017
IMPLICIT BIASES DO NOT MAKE BAD PEOPLE
WHAT IS IMPLICIT BIAS?

Unconscious (System 1) processes affect Conscious (System 2) processes without awareness.

Unconscious processes are based on attitudes/associations that reflect influences of the world around us and are learned over time.

Associations reflect the stereotypes, and societal judgments of what is good and bad.

System 1 biases influence perceptions, judgments and behaviors without our awareness.

People have limited ability to control their influence on perceptions and behavior.
HOW CAN WE MITIGATE IMPLICIT BIAS EFFECTS?

1. **Interrupt the ability of unconscious biases to affect conscious processes.**
   - Identify points where the decision-maker has discretion.

   **Example:**
   - Music auditions from behind a screen
     - 20% of orchestra members were women w/o screen
     - 40% of orchestra members were women w/ screen

   **NB:**
   - Did not change stereotypes/biases, simply disconnected them from decision-making

   **Question:**
   - How can you interrupt the unconscious-conscious connection? —
   - What is the equivalent of the screen in any implicit bias situation?
HOW CAN WE MITIGATE THESE IMPLICIT BIAS EFFECTS?

2. **Use checklists /protocols**

- **What do they do:**
  - First, they disentangle the thinking that goes into a decision—we typically aggregate relevant information and use our judgment to arrive at the best course of action.
  - Second, checklists reduce reliance on human judgment.

- **NB:**
  - We believe we are smart, make good decisions, and are fair. We fail to see how system 1 processes introduce biases in our perceptions and judgments.

- **Question:**
  - Of what should checklist/protocols consist?
EXAMPLE OF CHECKLIST: POLICY (LAW FIRM)

- Does the firm set diversity and inclusion goals for all underrepresented groups?
- Are managing partners evaluated, held accountable, and rewarded economically for reaching diversity and inclusion goals?
- Has the firm considered allowing time spent on diversity efforts to be counted as billable time?
- Does the firm have a clear non-discrimination policy?
- Do employees have meaningful access to a fair and anonymous complaint process for micro-aggression and bias incidents?
- Does the firm conduct and evaluate trainings about racism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, etc. for staff at all levels of the firm?
- Are billable assignments and client contact opportunities distributed equally to all new and mid-level lawyers?
- Does the firm have a Chief Diversity Officer?
- Does the Chief Diversity Officer have sufficient clout?
- Are recommendations from diversity committees consistently implemented?
HOW CAN WE MITIGATE THESE IMPLICIT BIAS EFFECTS?

3. Distinguish education from training

- **Education** creates a permanent behavioral change in an individual through **imparting knowledge**

- **Training** helps an individual gain a **particular** skill

Questions:
- What **knowledge** is necessary to mitigate Implicit Bias?
- What **skills** should a person possess to act on that knowledge?
- How do or can one **train** a person in those skills?
4. **Use evidence-based interventions as much as possible**

- There is little scientific evidence that specific implicit bias interventions produce desired changes in behavior.

- There is little scientific evidence that specific implicit bias interventions do not produce desired changes in behavior.

**Desiderata:**

- Spending large sums for outside companies to provide this work may not be money well spent.

- In-house efforts at education and training may be better to do:
  - Because they are cost-efficient
  - They organize attention, motivation and synergies
  - And they may well make a desired difference
WHAT NEXT?

- Stereotypes exert influence even when we are aware of them (checkerboard, ba-fa etc.)
- Educate about stereotypes, implicit bias processes and effects
- But, develop evidence-based mitigation strategies

Education is not enough!

- Focus on and develop disruption strategies. Such as the audition screens

Disrupt the influence of unconscious biases on conscious judgements

- Provide systematic ways to derail implicit bias processes.
- Determine sources of bias and ways to remove them from decision-making
- Identify discretionary aspects of decisions and introduce protocols/checklists to mitigate their biasing effects

Identify and develop checklists/protocols

- What skills are needed to mitigate implicit bias?
- How can we train them?

Convert implicit bias knowledge to skills-training protocols.
WHAT NEXT?

Measure Everything

Analyze everything you measure

Use the analyses to guide goals, policy and programs
Thank you for your time and interest!