



We are all biased ...now what?

facilitated by: Luther Wright, Jr.



What is our first and biggest challenge related to bias?

The ability to see beyond ourselves



IN OTHER WORDS...

We All See the World through
our own **unique lenses**

Overcoming bias requires us first
to understand **our individual
lenses** (including blind spots)
and then

Develop the ability to appreciate
the lenses of others

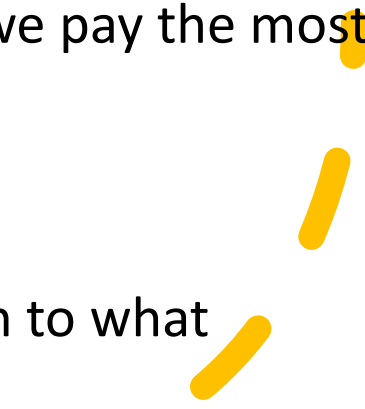




HOW DOES BIAS IMPACT RELATIONSHIPS?

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Impact on Relationships

- **PERCEPTION**
 - How we see people and perceive reality
 - **ATTITUDE**
 - How we react towards certain people
 - **BEHAVIORS**
 - How receptive/friendly we are towards certain people
 - **ATTENTION**
 - Which aspects of a person we pay the most attention to
 - **LISTENING SKILLS**
 - How much we actively listen to what certain people say
- 
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Examples of Common Implicit Biases

COLOR/CULTURE
BIAS

GENDER BIAS

AGEISM BIAS

NAME
BIAS

CONFIRMATION
BIAS

HALO
EFFECT

CONFORMITY
BIAS

GENERATION
BIAS

ATTRIBUTION BIAS

CONTRAST
EFFECT

AFFINITY
BIAS

COMMUNICATION
BIAS

Microaggressions Reminder

Microaggressions are “brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages” to a target group like people of color, religious minorities, women, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ individuals.

These microaggressions are often subtle in nature and can be manifested in the verbal, nonverbal, visual, or behavioral realm; they are often enacted automatically and unconsciously (Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000).

What?—A
Microaggression
Adjacent Love
Story

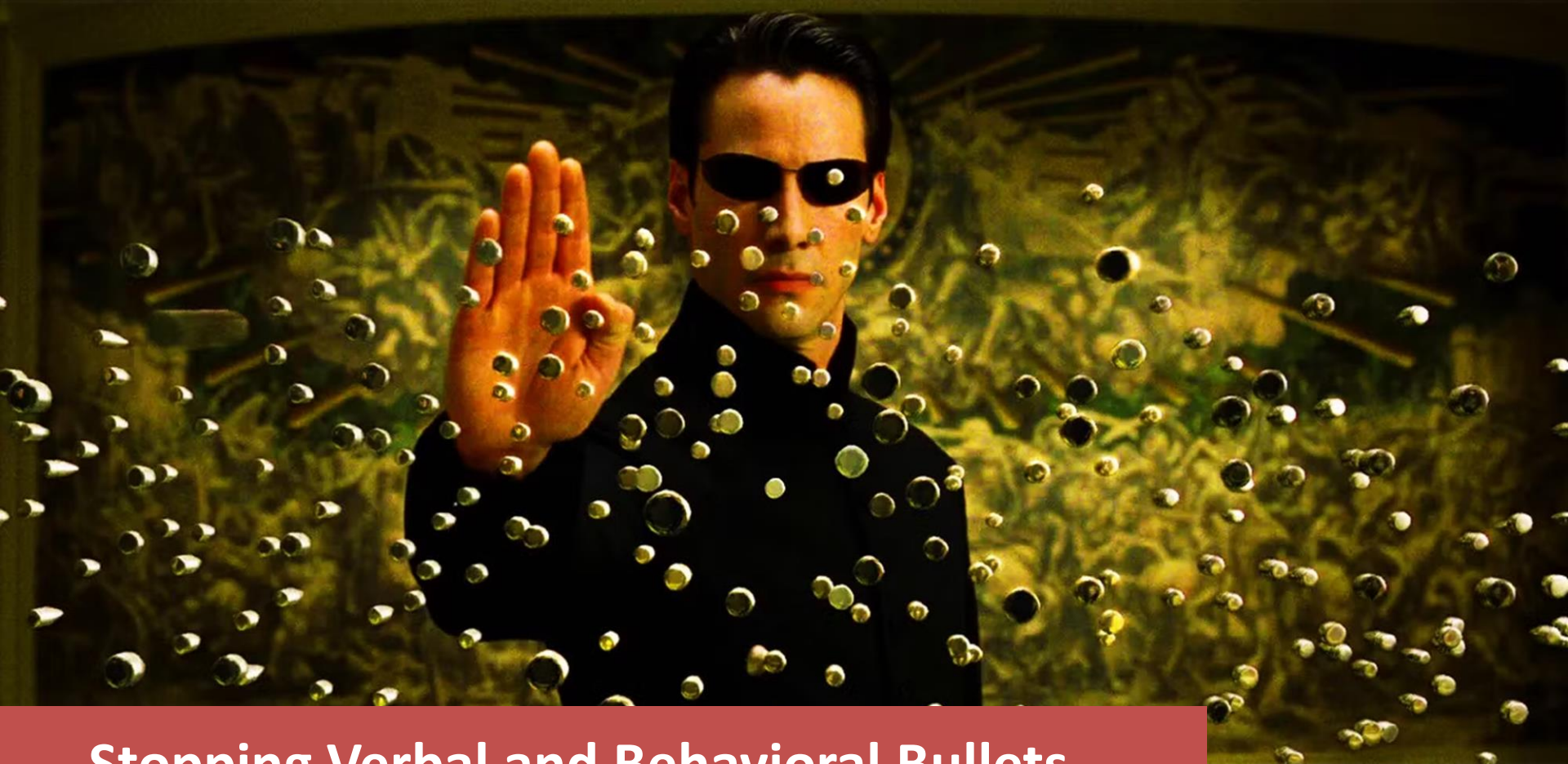




BIAS
BIAS

BIAS REALITIES

- We are all biased in some way because we are all human
- We must be honest about our biases
- Our goal is to make sure our biases don't impact our decisions and interactions



Stopping Verbal and Behavioral Bullets

An **Active Bystander** (sometimes referred to as an **Upstander**) is someone who witnesses or hears about a situation and takes action to keep a situation from escalating or to **disrupt** a problematic situation in the moment.



Five Keys to Disrupting Others

- Notice the situation
- Interpret the situation as a problem
- Assume personal responsibility
- Know how to help
- Step Up/Speak Up!



Notice the Situation

- Correctly read the room or event
 - Be aware of your surroundings
 - Notice if anyone appears uncomfortable
- Does not have to be something you specifically witness




Interpret the Situation as a Potential Issue

- Question any ambiguity
- Examine the situation more deeply even if others appear unconcerned
- Imagine how the recipient feels (*this is where bias enters*)
- Determine if the situation requires an immediate response and take action



Assume Personal Responsibility

- Acknowledge that you may be the only person available to speak up/address
- Enlist others to intervene with you if necessary (in the moment) or after the fact
- Understand what your organizational policy and the law require from you to fully address the behavior

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a wooden pencil, writing the words 'Educate Yourself' on a white spiral-bound notebook. The word 'Educate' is written in a cursive script, while 'Yourself' is written in a large, bold, black sans-serif font. The notebook is resting on a dark, textured wooden surface.

Educate Yourself

Know How to Help

- Increase your skills and knowledge about how to intervene and resolve issues
- Be fully aware of “Direct” and “Indirect” ways of intervening
- Make sure that your “disruption” does not make the situation worse



Step Up/ Speak Up!

- Notice Power Dynamics
- Constantly check/address your own biases
- Know when to and how to properly handle the situation
- Intervene directly when you can do so safely
- **Never make excuses for the offender**
- **Never minimize or dramatize the situation**



Power Dynamics |

Power Dynamics Defined

- The term “**Power dynamics**” refers to the ways in which power works in a setting. It refers to the power balance — or lack of balance — between two or more people.
- It is usually about the ways that formal authority is distributed and how that affects people’s behavior.
- However, **Power Dynamics** can also refer to the informal ways that power is exerted in an organization

Power Dynamics

Four Kinds

Experiential power

- power from experience, training and study
- may give additional weight to one's opinion or perspective
- **deferring to those with seniority or expertise is a common manifestation of this power**

Relational power

- gained from connections with others and with keeping track of information tied to these relationships
- this information gives individuals the ability push forward agendas
- **It is all about "who you know"**

Power Dynamics

Four Kinds

Cultural/ Systemic power

- one group's ability to establish and directly benefit from institutions, laws, customs, and policies
- **"it's just the way that things are done" or that it's the "right" or "best" way.**

Circumstantial/Majority power

- being surrounded by those from a similar identity like culture, race or gender, or based on shared history/experience
- it only exists in certain contexts (*move to a place where you are not the majority and it vanishes*).
- **Usually seen when you are in the extreme majority**

Power Dynamics in Action

- Retreat in 2007 at my prior firm
- Firm was run by a Five Person Board
- First (and at the time only) Partner of Color in history of 100 person firm
- Also only person of color on the bus, leading the bus in “fun”
- One of the Firm’s Board members made the following comment to me in front of the entire bus:





“Hey Luther, What do you think you are doing--Get to the back of the bus where you belong”

- What Power Dynamics do you see in play?
- Any concerns about legal liability or otherwise?
- How should this be handled by the observers?
- What are your duties if this happens in your organization and you witness or hear about this type of behavior? Why?
- How does this incident impact the organization informally?



**Remember
this about
intent**

A fire does not care how it was
started and does not burn
differently if started
unintentionally . . .



What's the Big Deal with Biased-Based Words and Actions?

- Can add stress to the lives of people, especially those already feeling marginalized
- Fosters/ triggers depression and poor mental health
- Impacts the emotional and physical well-being of employees and those who witness
- Impacts careers and performance
- Erodes organizational culture
- Can lead to legal liability and reputational harm



Some Helpful Responses

- Restate/Paraphrase/Clarify
- Acknowledge the Feelings Behind the Statement/Action and then address the **Impact**
- Challenge the stereotype/issue and even share your journey (*if applicable*)
- Appeal to the person's values, sense of empathy and sense of pride
- Get the person to explain the thought process
- Point out commonalities and value of Respect

Encourage Use of the Platinum Rule

The Golden Rule:

- Not quite enough.
- Does not account for people's different and unique needs.
- We cannot assume that others want to be treated exactly the way we do.

The Platinum Rule:

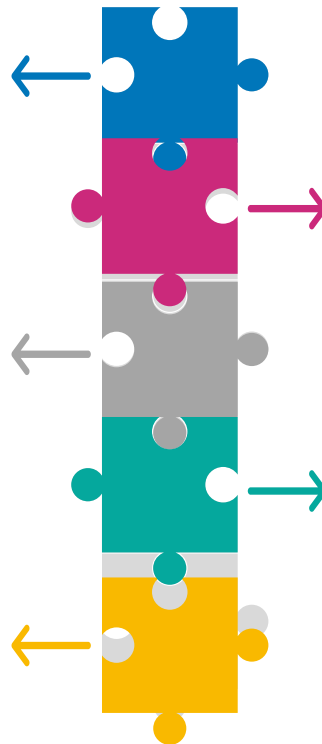
- "Treat others as they want or need to be treated."
- Gives others permission to be different from us and reminds ourselves to honor that difference.

SPECIFIC INDIVIDUAL ACTION STEPS

- 1.** Make good choices about “Appropriate Humor”
 - a. Avoid humor based on a person’s identity
 - b. Laugh “with” and not “at”
 - c. Use the “OUCH” technique

- 3.** Be intentional with language – use only with permission

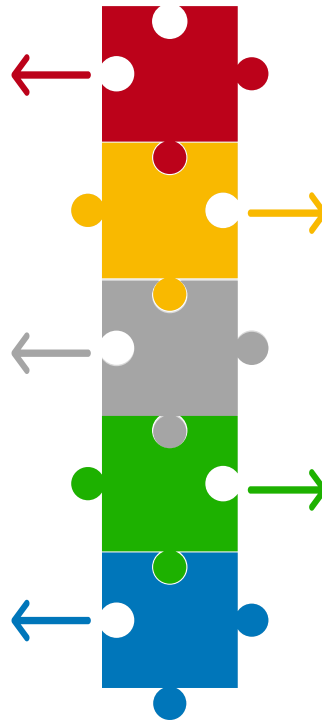
- 5.** Ask for help if you know a difficult communication is about to happen
 - a. Bounce thoughts off someone with cultural competency
 - b. Address issues quickly



- 2.** Pronounce People’s names and pronouns correctly (and practice it if you need to)
- 4.** Honestly confront your own biases (conscious or unconscious)
 - a. Gender, racial or cultural roles and/or limitations
 - b. Ageism
 - c. Religion
 - d. Stereotypes
 - e. Fear

SPECIFIC INDIVIDUAL ACTION STEPS

- 6.** Don't make assumptions. Don't represent or think that you know everything or know more than you actually do about a culture or group you are not a part of
- 8.** Expand your knowledge of other cultures
- 10.** If you see or hear about something, say something/do immediately



- 7.** Apologize if you make a mistake. Learn from it
- 9.** Do something that challenges your cultural comfort zone

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Question and Answer

Ogletree
Deakins

Thank you!

Luther Wright, Jr.

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