MED Leadership Series

Building a diverse research team
Objectives

Understand the elements of successful teams

Understand how bias affects our decisions

Understand the role of psychological safety

Overcoming bias in recruitment
Cognitive Diversity

“Cognitive diversity is the inclusion of people who have different styles of problem-solving and can offer unique perspectives because they think differently. Unlike demographic diversity, which focuses on achieving a mixture of statistical characteristics such as gender or age, cognitive diversity focuses on achieving a mixture of how people carry out intellectual activities, such as making associations or drawing conclusions.”
What is the problem?

When people don’t get along, the problem isn’t incompatibility, it is usually inflexibility AND the lack of self-awareness...the lack of cultural intelligence.
What is the problem?

- Increase Uncertainty
- Increase Stress
- Revert back to survival mode
- Homophilic diversity
Cognitive Diversity

▪ Teams with a high deviation from the “standard” perspective (in other words, cognitive diversity) are more likely to solve a problem than non-diverse teams, according to an experiment run by the Harvard Business Review.

▪ Gartner predicts that through 2022, 75% of organizations that boast of a diverse and inclusive culture among frontline decision-makers will exceed their financial targets.

▪ In 2019, IBM announced its effort to embrace neurodiversity by hiring high-functioning individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The company stated that “Neurodiverse people approach problems differently and have to think harder to get around what the rest of us accept.”

Cultural Intelligence

“An outsider’s seemingly natural ability to interpret someone’s unfamiliar and ambiguous gestures the way that person’s compatriots would.”

Source: Cultural Intelligence by P. Christopher Earley and Elaine Mosakowski
Cultural Intelligence

Culture is a **group habit** driven by values and needs.

*Cultural Intelligence (ICQ) =*

The ability to turn differences into synergy instead of painful liabilities.
### Cultural Intelligence

**Faculty of Medicine Culture:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What they need</th>
<th>Standards, structure</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What they want</td>
<td>Being correct, logic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What they are scared of</td>
<td>Being wrong</td>
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<tr>
<td>How they behave under stress</td>
<td>Withdrawn, stubborn</td>
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<tr>
<td>What do they do in a conflict</td>
<td>Avoid</td>
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<tr>
<td>They judge you based on</td>
<td>Precision, accuracy, quality</td>
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Psychological Safety

“Psychological safety is the belief that one will not be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns, or mistakes. It is a dynamic, emergent property of interaction and can be destroyed in an instant with an ill-timed sigh.”

Source: The Two Traits of the Best Problem-Solving Teams by Alison Reynolds and David Lewis
Psychological Safety

It is essential to unleashing talent and creating value 85% felt unable to raise a concern with their boss lead to widespread frustration, anxiety, depression and even physical harm.

The Most Successful Teams are Cognitively Diverse and Psychologically Safe

They also share positive behaviors and emotions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPPOSITIONAL</th>
<th>GENERATIVE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cautious</td>
<td>Curious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling</td>
<td>Encouraging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible</td>
<td>Experimental</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hierarchical</td>
<td>Forceful</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reasoned</td>
<td>Inquiring</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resistant</td>
<td>Nurturing</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>DEFENSIVE</th>
<th>UNIFORM</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cautious</td>
<td>Appreciative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conforming</td>
<td>Considered</td>
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<tr>
<td>Controlling</td>
<td>Controlling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directive</td>
<td>Competitive</td>
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<td>Flexible</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resistant</td>
<td>Hierarchical</td>
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SOURCE: ALISON REYNOLDS AND DAVID LEWIS, USING THE QI INDEX © HBR.ORG
Psychological Safety

- Admit you are wrong
- Ask for the team’s input
- Respond positively to questions and doubts
- See mistake as a learning opportunity
What is bias?

Prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another

We make allowances for people within our group but not those outside it
What is unconscious bias?

Bias that happens automatically, without conscious thought, and out of our control

Influenced by background, personal experiences and cultural environment
Why we need to talk about it?

- Decrease Equity
- Lack of Diversity
- Reduce Inclusion
- Less innovation
- Decrease the overall productivity and efficiency of a lab
## Benefits of EDI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support recruitment challenges and skills shortages</th>
<th>Improve employee satisfaction and retention</th>
<th>Leads to more rigorous work</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Better dissemination of results</td>
<td>Foster innovation and problem-solving skills</td>
<td>Promote organizational values more fully</td>
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Importance of EDI

EDI are a major priority for GOC, OHRI and our Faculty

EDI initiatives play a critical role in allocation of grants / funds

CRC Programs (mandated targets)
New Frontiers, NSERC, CIHR
Different types of bias

- Conformity bias
- Beauty bias
- Affinity bias
- Horns effect
- Halo effect
- Gender bias
Stats, facts & figures

Papers written by diverse groups received more citations and were published in journals with higher impact factors.

“Who is a scientist?”
K-2 grade = 58% male / 3-5 grade = 73% / 6-8 grade = 75%

Subtle variations in feminine appearance erroneously convey a woman’s likelihood of being a scientist.

Resumes with African, Asian, and Hispanic names are less likely to get call backs for interviews.
Evaluations in Academic Science

A nationwide sample of biology, chemistry, and physics professors (n=127) evaluated application materials of an undergraduate science student (female or male) for a lab manager position.

1. **Both** male and female faculty participants rated the female student as:
   - Less competent
   - Less hireable
   - Offered lower salary ($3.7K)
   - Less mentoring

2. Even though the female was rated more likeable

Letters of recommendation

Analysis of 312 recommendation letters for 103 positions at a medical school revealed different tendencies...

Letters for men: Longer; More references to CV, Publications, Patients, Colleagues

Letters for women: Shorter; More “doubt raisers” (hedges, faint praise, and irrelevancies); More references to personal life

“It’s amazing how much she’s accomplished.”

Summary statements for 51 research grant renewals

“Leader” and “pioneer”

“Highly innovative”

“Highly significant research”

“Expertise”

“Working in excellent environments”

Overcoming Bias in Hiring

- Check the job posting
- Identify important characteristics for job
- Analyze and reassess
- Recruit widely – Outside of network
- Stick to a script during an interview
- Evaluate your decision metric
- Standardized the evaluation process
- Other tips
Check the job posting

Look at the language in the job posting

Avoid biased language to encourage more diverse applicant pool

“Dominant” “Competitive” “Leader”

“Up and Coming” “Fresh”

Spokesperson vs. Spokesman
<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Recruit widely</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Get out of the comfort zone - Two key factors in implicit bias (familiarity &amp; closeness)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diversity in applicant pool: Recruitment search protocol (Future Research Leaders Conference)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reducing implicit bias – Implicit bias education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avoid message: “Only Ivy Leaguers need apply (plus maybe Cal Tech, MIT, and Stanford...)”</td>
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Standardize the evaluation process

Bias can lead us to view same resumes differently

Avoid global judgement

Develop a standard evaluation form with scoring metrics, and use it for every candidate
Identify important characteristics for job

Biases can lead us to rationalize why we prefer a candidate over another - Favor publication over potential scientific impact

Identify behaviors that are relevant to the position before candidate interviews

How much does likeability matter in the job? “Fit”->Tend to hire people we like the most. If important, give a rating
Stick to a script

Interaction: We automatically search for a common ground
– Could make people feel like an outsider and increases stress
– Women feel more stress when being evaluated by all male panels

Stick to the script and ask everyone the same questions
Evaluate your decision metric

Check of subtle biases within the metric
Make sure you are not giving points for: Elite institutions; Experience at specific institutions; Fame of mentor

Have diverse group of non-search committee member evaluate the metrics
Analyze and reassess

Evaluate your outcome and efforts, disparities will emerge over time

Identify the bottleneck: diversity of applicant pool; shortlist pool; post-interview; hiring process
Other tips

- Allow for anonymous voting (more applicable for bigger committees)
- Have a committee member be an advocate for each candidate (or play devil’s advocate)
- Be able to articulate reasons for every decision (move forward vs. drop)
Self Reflection

- What have you done over the last 30 days to promote EDI within your team?
- What have you done to encourage cognitive diversity and create a psychological safe environment?
- What unconscious bias are you more prone to?
- Do your team members represent our community?
- What concrete actions will you take following this presentation?
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<tr>
<td>Cognitive Diversity training and assessment</td>
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<td>Psychological Safety training and assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural Intelligence training</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implicit Association Test (Unconscious Bias)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Books</td>
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<td>Human Resources and Faculty Affairs teams</td>
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Books

- The Fearless Organization
  Amy C. Edmondson
  Harvard Business School
  Wiley

- The Five Dysfunctions of a Team
  Patrick Lencioni
  Harper Business

- Drive
  Daniel H. Pink
  Harper Business

- Uncommon Sense in Unusual Times
  Csaba Toth
  Harper Business

- Think Again
  Adam Grant
  Harper Business