



W I S E L I

*Women in Science & Engineering Leadership Institute
University of Wisconsin-Madison*

Searching for Excellence & Diversity:
A workshop for the University of Minnesota – Duluth
Medical School – Dean Search

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Overview

- Introduction
- Running an Effective and Efficient Search
- Recruiting an Excellent & Diverse Applicant Pool
- Evaluating Applicants – the potential role of unconscious bias
- Ensuring a fair and thorough review – minimizing the role of unconscious bias
- Conducting an effective interview process
- Closing the deal – hiring selected candidate



Recruiting Resources

<http://wiseli.engr.wisc.edu/recruitingresources.php>

- Diverse Issues in Higher Education
- AISES – American Indian Science and Engineering Society: *Winds of Change*
- SACNAS
- AAIP – Assn. Of American Indian Physicians
- ELAM – Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine
- Office of Minority Health



Recruiting Resources

<http://wiseli.engr.wisc.edu/recruitingresources.php>

- Other institutions with a focus on rural health, Native American health
- Other individuals active in fostering diversity in academic medicine and/or rural health, Native American health
- Local leaders/advocates.



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**Reviewing Applicants:
Understanding and Minimizing
the Influence of Unconscious Bias**



What is unconscious bias?

- A substantial body of evidence demonstrates that most people hold unconscious biases about groups of people.
- Depending on the discipline, unconscious biases can also be referred to as:
 - Schemas
 - Stereotypes
 - Mental models
 - Cognitive shortcuts
 - Statistical discrimination
 - Implicit associations
 - Spontaneous trait inference

The tendency of our minds to apply characteristics of groups (real or imagined) to our judgments about individual group members.



What is unconscious bias?

- Most of us routinely rely on unconscious assumptions even though we intend to be fair and believe that we are fair.
- Human brain works by categorizing people, objects and events around us -- this allows us to quickly and efficiently organize and retrieve information.
- But – when evaluating people we can be led astray by our tendency to categorize people – and we tend to do so on the following dimensions:
 - Race/Ethnicity, Sex, and Age.



Unconscious bias in the search process

- Applications/CVs/Résumés
- Reference Letters
- Job interviews



Evaluation of Curriculum Vitae and Résumés

Curriculum vitae for positions in academic psychology

Steinpreis et al. (1999) "The Impact of Gender on the Review of the Curricula Vitae of Job Applicants and Tenure Candidates: A National Empirical Study." *Sex Roles* 41: 509-528.

- 238 academic psychologists (118 male, 120 female) evaluated an actual cv randomly assigned a male or female name (Karen or Brian Miller).
 - One cv – at time of job application (jr-level)
 - One cv – at time of early tenure (sr-level)
- Entry level – academic psychologists more likely to hire male applicants and gave men higher ratings for:
 - Research
 - Teaching
 - Service
- Senior-level - Academic psychologists were equally likely to tenure men and women candidates, **but** were four-times more likely to include cautionary comments on cv's with a female name



Evaluation of Curriculum Vitae and Résumés

- Evaluating résumés with African American- or white-sounding names

Bertrand and Mullainathan. (2004). "Are Emily and Greg More Employable than Lakisha and Jamal? A Field Experiment on Labor Market." *Am Econ Rev* 94: 221-1013

- Resumes sent to a variety of employers advertising openings in local newspapers in Chicago and Boston.
- Randomly assigned “white-sounding” or “African American-sounding” names to résumés.
- Applicants with “white-sounding” names were 50% more likely to be called back to interview for positions.
- For “white-sounding” names, applicants with better qualifications were 27% more likely to be called back. For “African American-sounding names,” applicants with better qualifications were only 8%* more likely to be called back.

* Not statistically significant



Evaluation of Curriculum Vitae and Résumés

Applications for lab manager

Moss-Racusin et al. (2012). "Science faculty's subtle gender biases favor male students." *PNAS* 109: 16474-16479.

- 127 science faculty (men and women) rated application materials for an entry level position as a lab manager; applications randomly assigned a male or female name.
- Rated male applicant as more competent and hireable than the female applicant.
- Selected a higher starting salary for the male applicant.
- Reported more willingness to offer career mentoring to the male applicant.



Evaluation of Curriculum Vitae and Résumés

Additional examples

■ Motherhood Bias

Correll, S. J., Benard, S., & Paik, I. (2007). "Getting a job: Is there a motherhood penalty?" *The American Journal of Sociology*, 112: 1297-1338

■ Sexual Orientation

Tilcsik, A. (2011). Pride and prejudice: Employment discrimination against openly gay men in the United States. *American Journal of Sociology*, 117: 586-626.

■ Arabic sounding-names

Derous, Hanh Nguyen, and Ryan. (2009).. "Hiring Discrimination Against Arab Minorities: Interactions between Prejudice and Job Characteristics." *Human Performance* 22: 297-320.

Compared call back for job interviews for applicants with Arabic- or Dutch-sounding names

Rooth. (2010). "Automatic Associations and Discrimination in Hiring: Real World Evidence." *Labour Economics* 17: 523-534.

Compared call backs for job interviews for applicants with Arabic- or Swedish-sounding names



Letters of Recommendation

Trix and Psenka. (2003). "Exploring the Color of Glass: Letters of Recommendation for Female and Male Medical Faculty." *Discourse & Soc* 14: 191-220.

- 312 letters of recommendation for medical faculty **successfully hired** at large U.S. medical school
- Letters for women vs men:
 - Shorter
 - More letters for women with “*minimal assurance*”
 - More gendered terms in letters for women
 - More letters for women included “*doubt raisers*”
 - Men more frequently referred to as “researchers” and “colleagues”. Women more frequently referred to as “teachers” and “students”
 - Women – 4X more references to personal lives
 - Women - Fewer *standout adjectives* (“outstanding” “excellent”) and more *grindstone adjectives*.



Letters of Recommendation

Schmader, Whitehead, Wysocki. (2007). "A Linguistic Comparison of Letters of Recommendation for Male and Female Chemistry and Biochemistry Job Applicants." *Sex Roles* 5: 509-514.

Found fewer differences between letters for men and women in comparison to the Trix and Psenka study, but reaffirmed the comparative absence of outstanding adjectives in letters for women.



Job Interviews

■ Interviews for a leadership position

Phelan, Moss-Racusin, and Rudman. (2008) “Competent Yet Out in the Cold: Shifting Criteria for Hiring Reflect Backlash Toward Agentic Women.” *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 32: 406-413..

- Taped interviews of actors (male and female) performing an agentic or communal script.
- Evaluated interviewee for competence, likeability, hireability.



Assumptions about Gender and Behavior

Multiple authors over 30 years: e.g., Bem, Broverman, Eagly, Heilman Rudman

DESCRIPTIVE: How men and women actually behave

Men (agentic)

- Strong
- Decisive
- Assertive
- Tough
- Authoritative
- Independent



Women(communal)

- Nurturing
- Communal
- Nice
- Supportive
- Helpful
- Sympathetic

PRESCRIPTIVE: How men and women “ought” to behave

Note: Social Penalties for Violating Gender Norms



Job Interviews

Phelan, Moss-Racusin, and Rudman (Continued)

- Competence: Agentic interviewees rated as more competent than communal interviewees
- Likeability: Agentic men rated more likeable than women; Communal men rated less likeable than women.
- Hireability
 - Agentic interviewees more hireable than communal;
 - No difference in hireability of communal men and women;
 - **Agentic men more hireable than agentic women**

WHY? – SHIFTING CRITERIA

- For agentic men, communal men, communal women – competence weighted most heavily in hiring decisions.
- Agentic women likeability/social skills – a perceived weakness – weighted most heavily in hiring decisions.



Job Interviews - Other Examples

■ Sexual Orientation

Hebl, M. R., et al. (2002). "Formal and interpersonal discrimination: A field study of bias toward homosexual applicants." *Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28: 815-825.

■ Accented English

Segrest Purkiss et al. (2006) "Implicit sources of bias in employment interview judgments and decisions." *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 101: 152-167.

■ Weight

Kutcher and Bragger. (2004) "Selection Interviews of Overweight Job Applicants: Can Structure Reduce the Bias?" *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 34: 1993-2022.

■ Pregnancy

Bragger et al. (2002). "The Effects of the Structured Interview on Reducing Biases Against Pregnant Job Applicants." *Sex Roles* 46: 215-226.

■ Disability?



Minimizing Bias and Assumptions

What Not to Do:

- Suppress bias and assumptions from one's mind (or try to)
 - Studies demonstrating Stereotype Rebound effect
 - Nira Liberman and Jens Förster, "Expression After Suppression: A Motivational Explanation of Postsuppression Rebound," *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology* 79 (2000): 190-203
 - C. N. Macrae, Galen V. Bodenhausen, Alan B. Milne, and Jolanda Jetten, "Out of Mind but Back in Sight: Stereotypes on the Rebound." *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology* 67 (1994): 808-817
- Relying solely on a presumably "objective" ranking or rating system to reduce bias
 - Christine Wennerås and Agnes Wold. "Nepotism and Sexism in Peer Review," *Nature* 387 (1997): 341-343.



Minimizing Bias and Assumptions

What to do before conducting evaluations:

- Replace your self-image as an objective person with recognition and acceptance that you are subject to the influence of bias and assumptions

Uhlmann and Cohen, *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 2007

- Diversify your search committee

- Social tuning/increased motivation to respond w/o bias

Lowery, Hardin, and Sinclair, *J. Personality and Social Psychology*, 2001

- Counterstereotype imaging

Blair, Ma, and Lenton, *J. Personality and Social Psychology*, 2001

- Dasgupta and Greenwald, "*Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*", 2001

- Critical Mass – increase proportion of women and minorities in the applicant pool

Heilman, *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 1980; van Ommeren et al., *Psychological Reports*, 2005



Minimizing Bias and Assumptions

What to do before conducting evaluations:

- Develop and prioritize criteria prior to evaluating applicants.

Uhlmann and Cohen, Psychological Science, 2005

- What credentials and skills are you seeking?
- What types of experience will be valued?
- What leadership skills and styles are you seeking?
- What application materials and interview questions will enable you to access candidates strengths and weakness in areas such as:
 - Clinical/research/teaching skills and abilities
 - Interpersonal skills and abilities
 - Leadership style
 - Negotiating skills
- Which of these criteria (or others) will matter most? How will you evaluate candidates with strengths in some areas/weaknesses in others?



Minimizing Bias and Assumptions

What to do while conducting evaluations:

- Spend sufficient time and attention on evaluating each candidate
Martell, J. Applied Social Psychology, 1991
- Focus on each applicant as an individual and evaluate their entire application package (cover letter, résumé, interview, recommendation letters) – more information minimizes bias
Heilman, Organizational Behavior & Human Performance, 1984; Tosi and Einbender, Academy of Management Journal, 1985; Brauer and Er-rafiy, Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 2013.
- Use inclusion rather than exclusion decision-making processes
Hugenberg et al., J. Personality and Social Psychology, 2006
- Stop periodically to evaluate your criteria and their application
- Accountability: Be able to defend every decision and hold each member of the search committee responsible for equitably evaluating applicants.
Foschi, Social Psychology Quarterly, 1996
Dobbs and Crano, Social Psychology Quarterly, 2001.



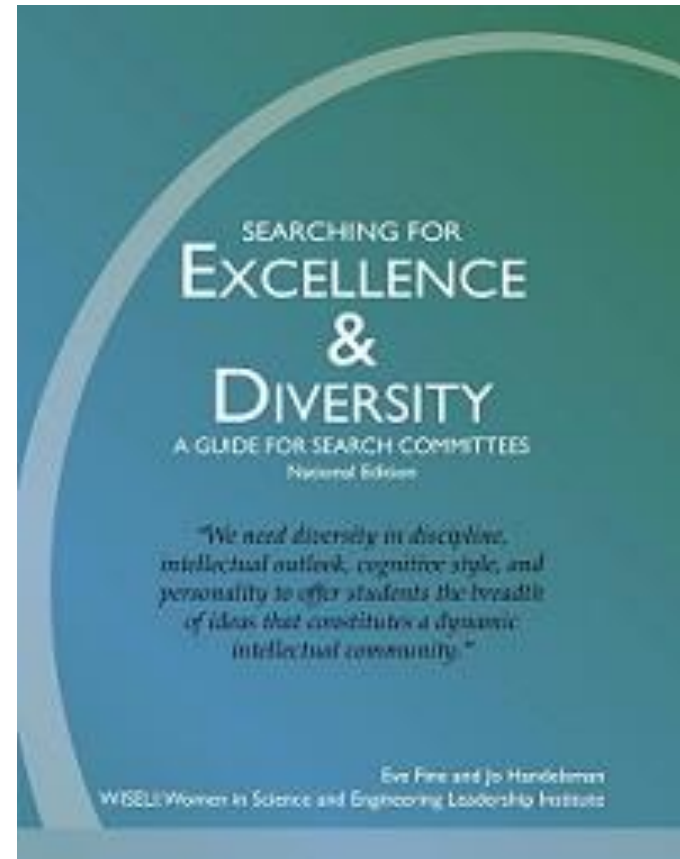
Minimizing Bias and Assumptions

What to do while conducting evaluations (cont.):

- Accountability: hold each member of the search committee responsible for equitably evaluating applicants.

Some examples that should cause you to **pause, consider**, and **raise questions**:

- I couldn't care less if the person we hire is black, purple, green, polka-dot, male female or whatever. All I care about is excellence.
- I know that I am gender-blind and color-blind.
- I'm not sure how well this candidate will fit here (or in this position).
- I think he/she is just too soft-spoken for a leadership position.
- She struck me as too aggressive.
- I'm not sure why, but I don't really like this candidate ... something just rubs me the wrong way.
- Is this candidate sufficiently mature? or ... past his prime?
- Will we have a partner hire issue to contend with?



http://wiseli.engr.wisc.edu/docs/BiasBrochure_3rdEd.pdf

http://wiseli.engr.wisc.edu/docs/SearchBook_US.pdf