



W I S E L I

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

Searching for Excellence & Diversity

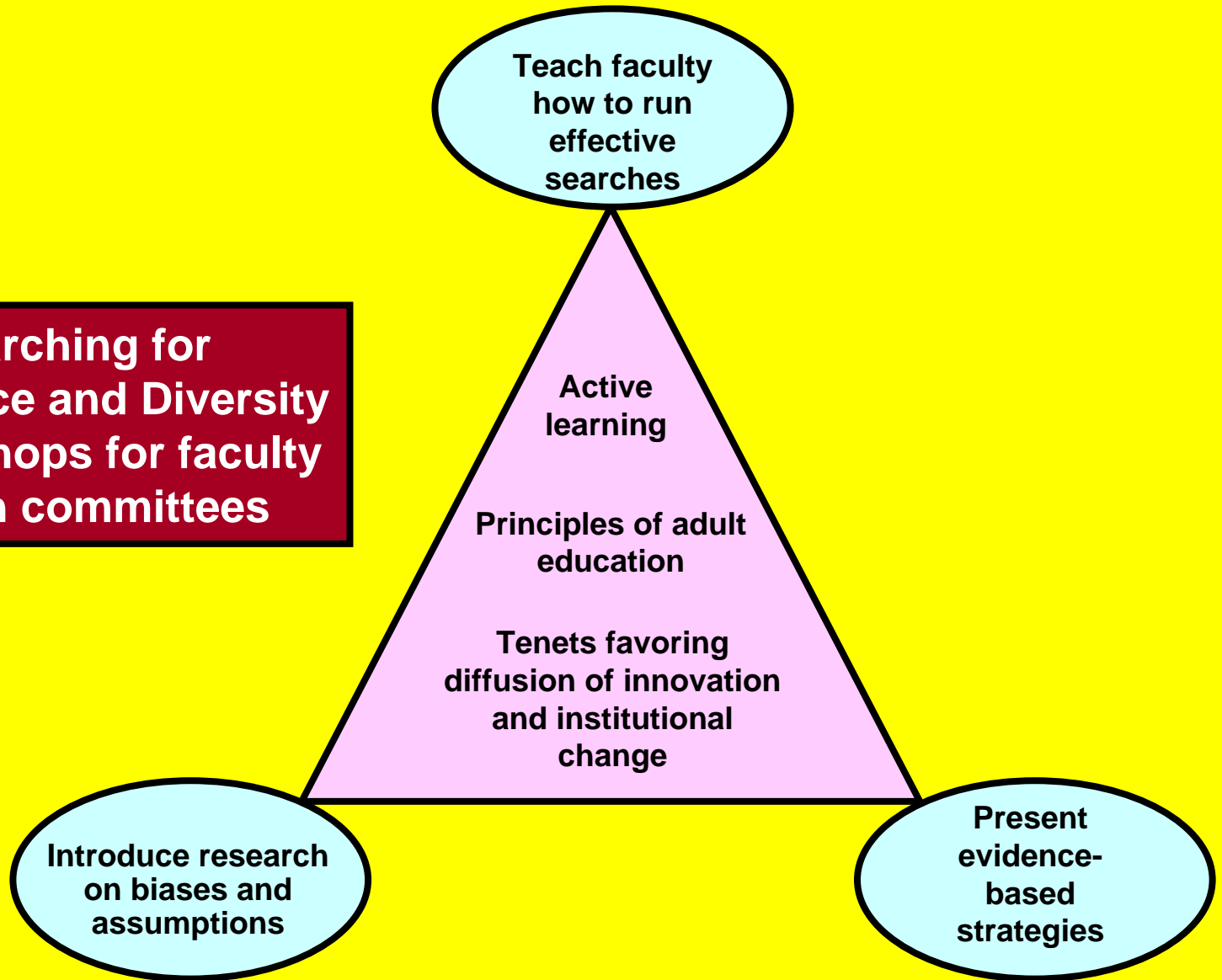
An evidence-based approach to
training search committees



Why focus on hiring?

- Gatekeeping role of search committees
- Shapes the “complexion” of the faculty for years to come
- Obvious disparities for women in science and engineering
- Hiring is NOT the only important thing to think about as we diversify our workplaces (e.g., climate, leadership, equity)—but it is an important place to start!

**Searching for
Excellence and Diversity
– Workshops for faculty
search committees**





Five Essential Elements of a Successful Search

- Run an effective and efficient search committee
- Actively recruit an excellent and diverse pool of candidates
- Raise awareness of unconscious assumptions and their influence on evaluation of candidates
- Ensure a fair and thorough review of candidates
- Develop and implement an effective interview process



Raise awareness of unconscious assumptions and their influence on evaluation of candidates

- What is “unconscious bias”?
- How might unconscious biases affect the search process?
- How can a search committee overcome these tendencies?

Show them the data



What is “unconscious bias”

- Unconscious bias and assumptions
- Schemas
- Stereotyping
- Cognitive shortcuts
- Statistical discrimination
- Implicit associations

The tendency of our minds to judge *individuals* based on characteristics (real or imagined) of *groups*



Unconscious bias in the search process

- Applications/CVs/Résumés
- Reference Letters
- Evaluation of Leadership/Competence



Unconscious bias in the search process: Applications/CVs/Résumés

- 238 academic psychologists sent a curricula vitae with either male or female name
 - Entry level: more likely to vote to hire man, more likely to indicate man had adequate teaching, research, and service experience
 - High level: no gender differences
 - No differences between male and female evaluators
 - More write-in comments for women

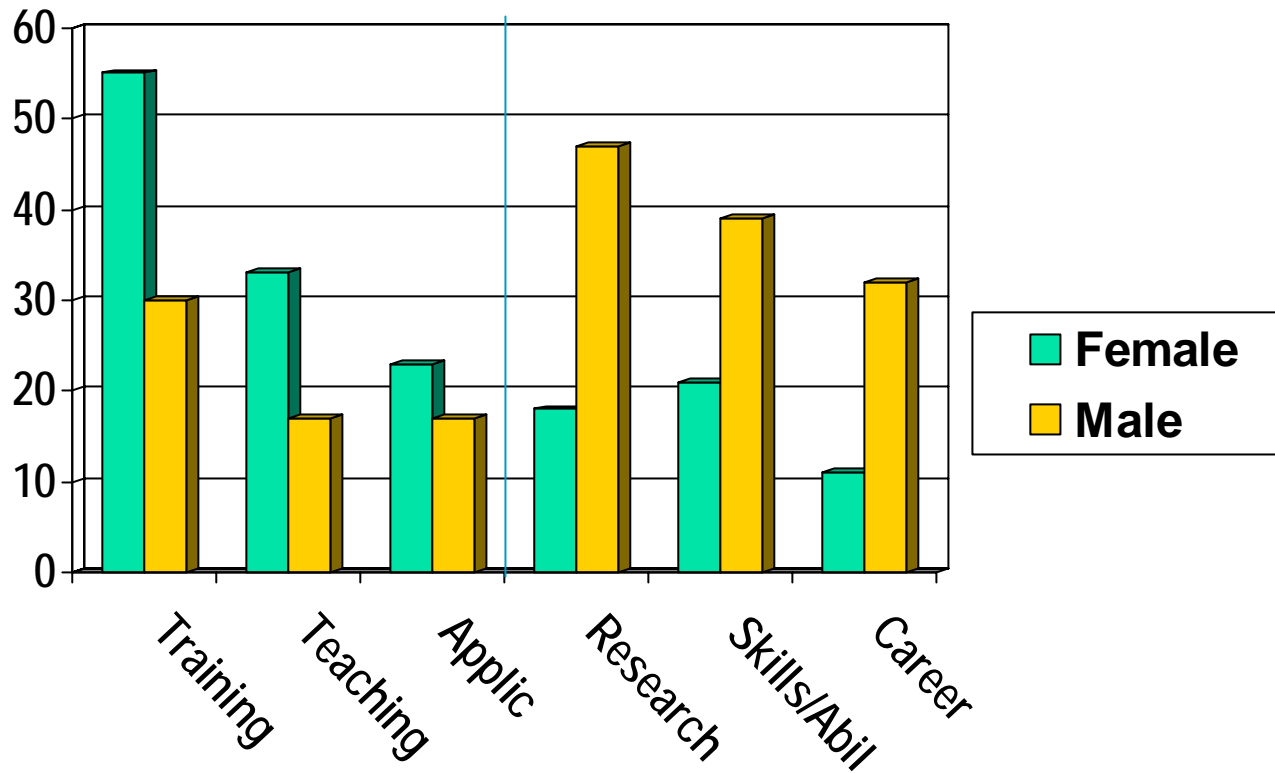


Unconscious bias in the search process: Reference Letters

- 312 letters of recommendation for medical faculty hired at a large U.S. medical school
- Women's letters compared to men's more often:
 - Were *shorter*
 - Offered *minimal assurance*
 - Used *gender terms*
 - Contained *doubt raisers*
 - Used *stereotypic adjectives*
 - Used *grindstone adjectives*
 - Used fewer *standout adjectives*
 - Contained less *scientific terminology*



Top 3 semantic realms following the possessive for men and for women





Interventions in at least one randomized, controlled study that mitigate bias in evaluation

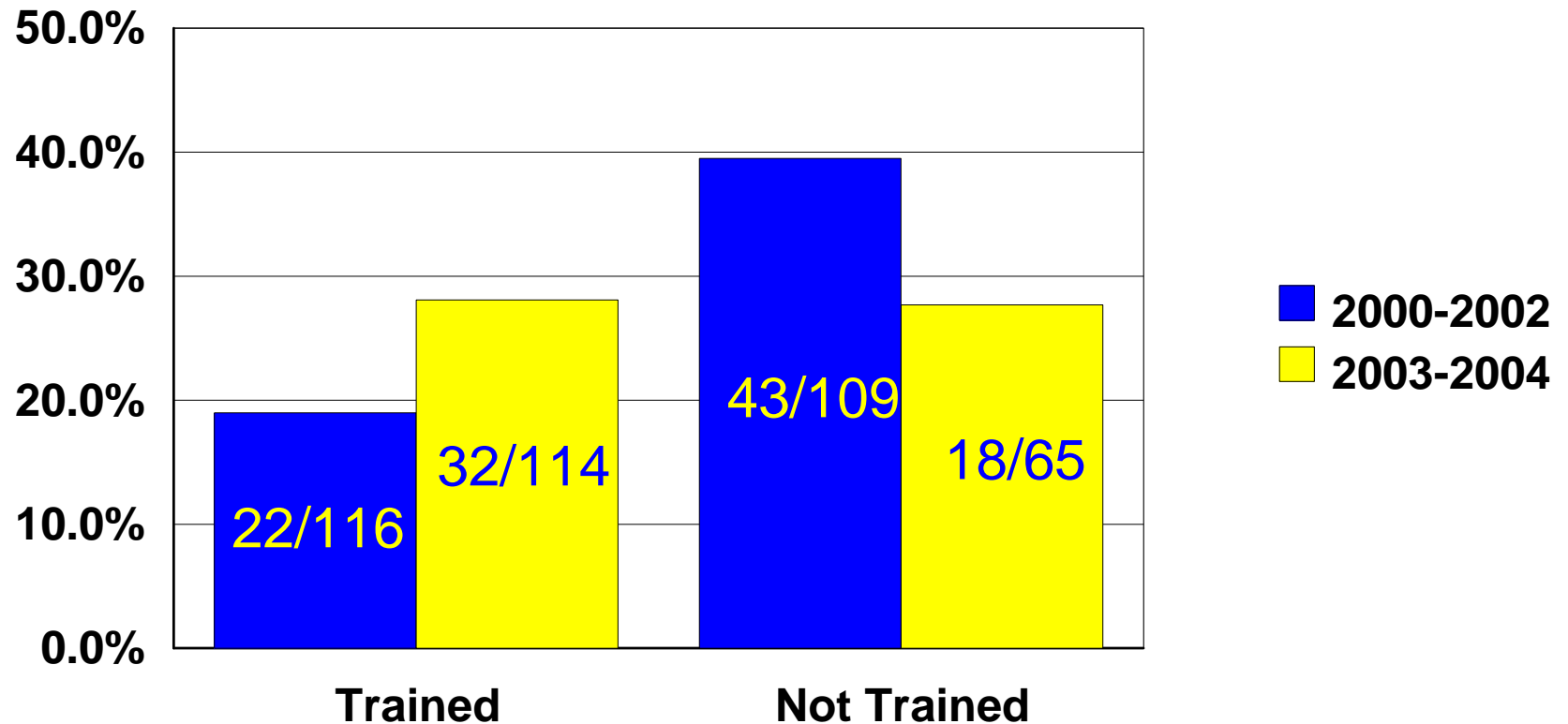
Intervention	Example of study
Reduced time pressure and cognitive distraction during evaluation	Martell RF. J Applied Soc Psychol, 21:1939-60, 1991
Presence of a member of the social category being evaluated	Lowery et al. J Pers Soc Psych 81:842, 2001
At least 25% women in the pool being evaluated	Heilman ME. Organ Behav Hum Perf 1980; 26: 386-395, 1980
Instruction to try to avoid prejudice in evaluation	Blair IV, Banaji MR. J Pers Soc Psychol 70:1142-1163, 1996
Counterstereotype imaging	Blair IV, Ma JE, Lenton AP. J Pers Soc Psychol 81: 828-841, 2001
Establishing the value of credentials before any applicant is seen to avoid “redefining” merit	Uhlmann and Cohen, Amer Psychol Assoc 16:474-480, 2005



Success?

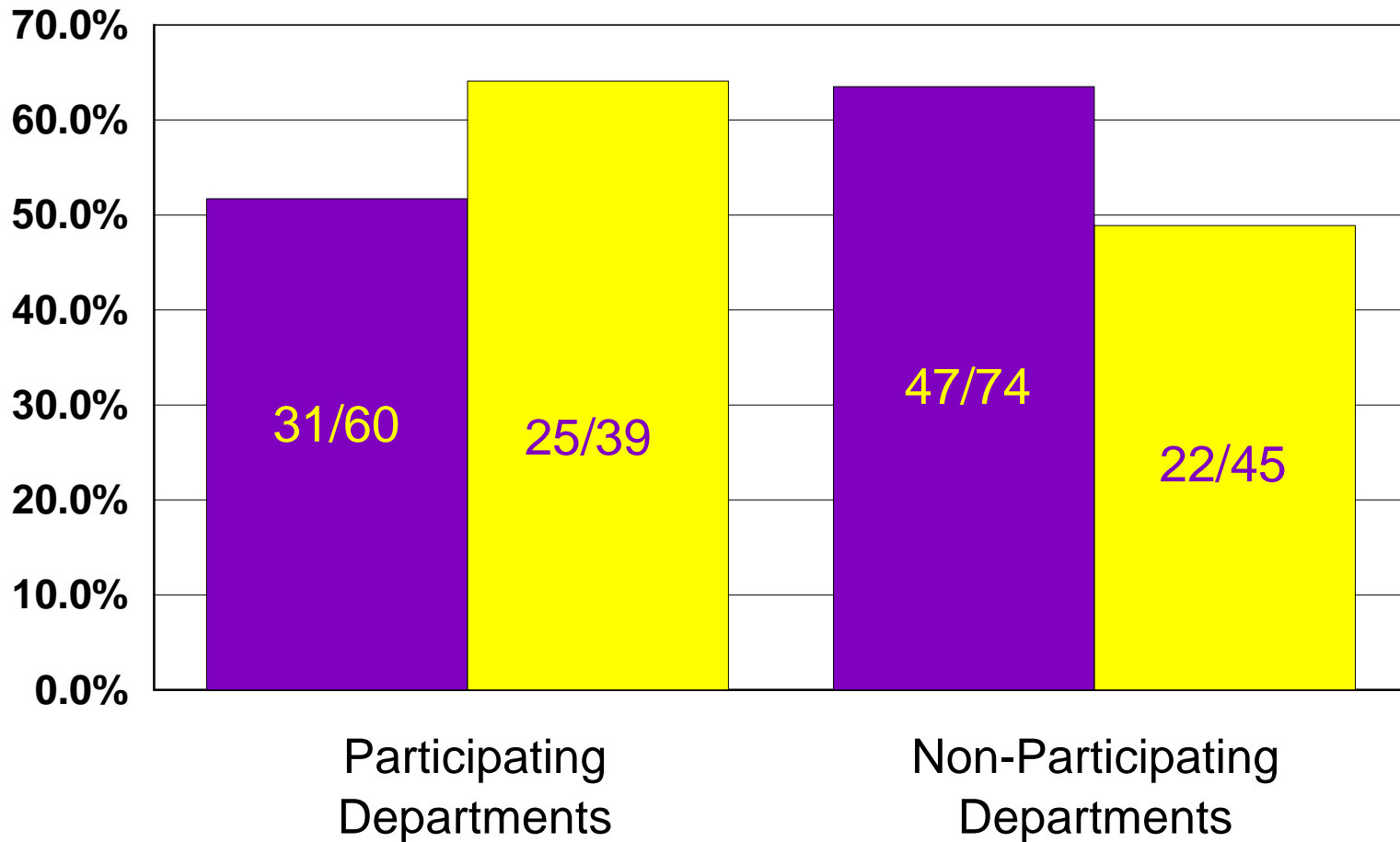
- Run approximately 17 sessions for over 90 individuals per year
- Evaluation results:
 - ~60% of attendees report being "attentive to possible biases implicit in the criteria used to review candidates"
 - ~60% of attendees report "sharing information about research on biases and assumptions with their search committees"
 - 90% of attendees reported feeling "prepared to address diversity hiring assumptions" after participating in the workshop

Percent Female, Offers Made to Assistant Professors Biological & Physical Sciences



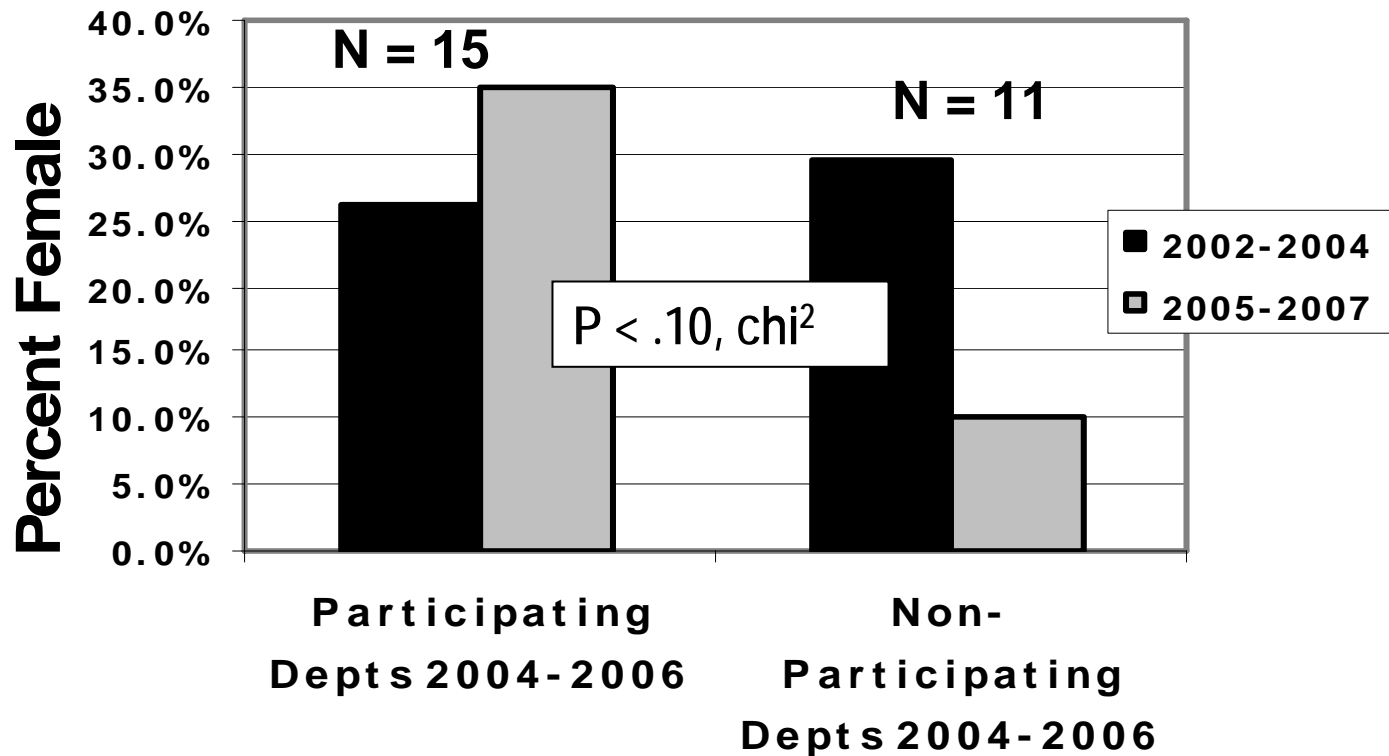
NOTE: "Trained" departments sent at least one faculty member to a WISELI hiring workshop or meeting.

New Hires' Satisfaction* With the Hiring Process Biological & Physical Sciences

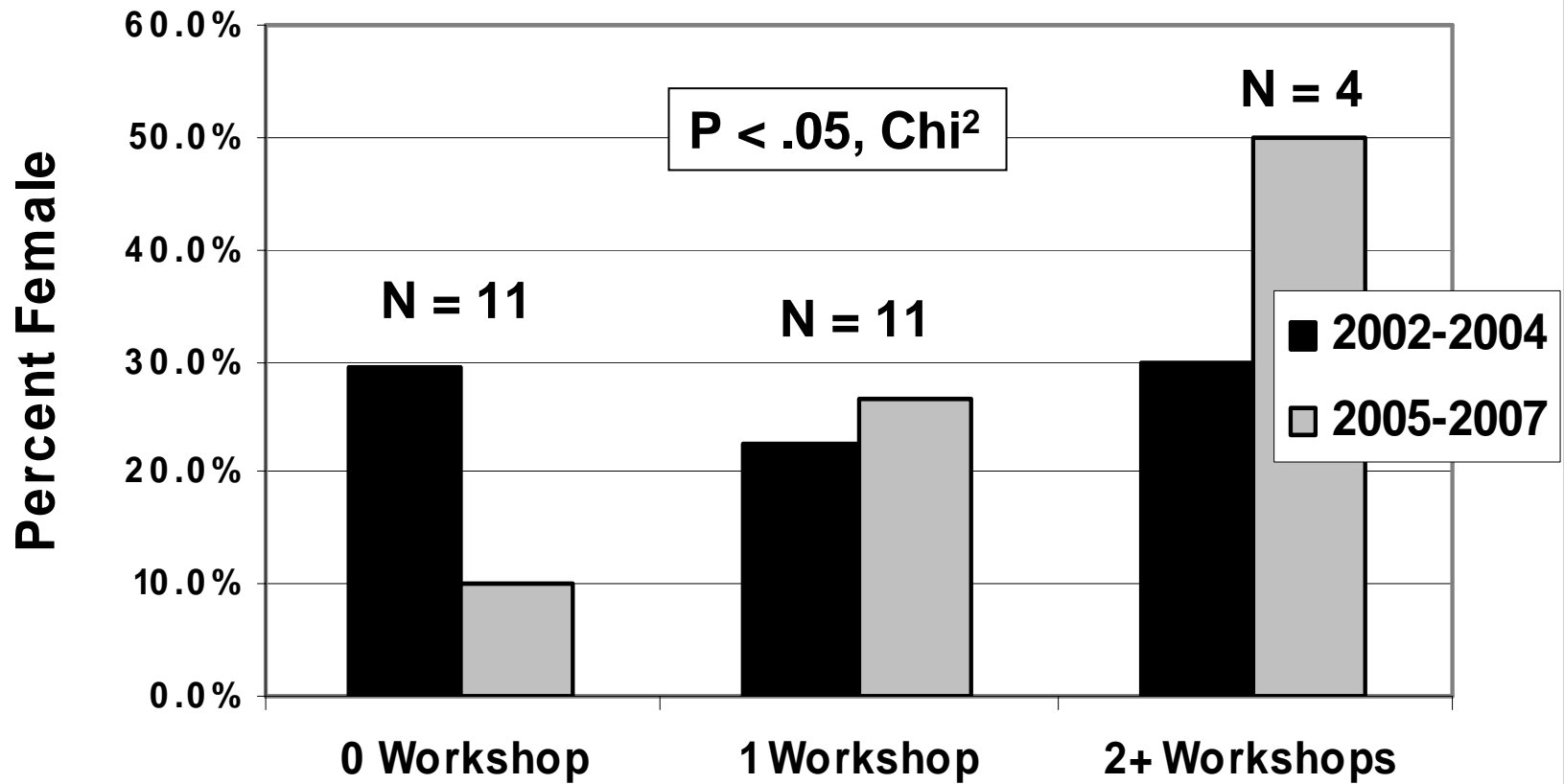


* Agree Strongly to the item "I was satisfied with the hiring process overall."

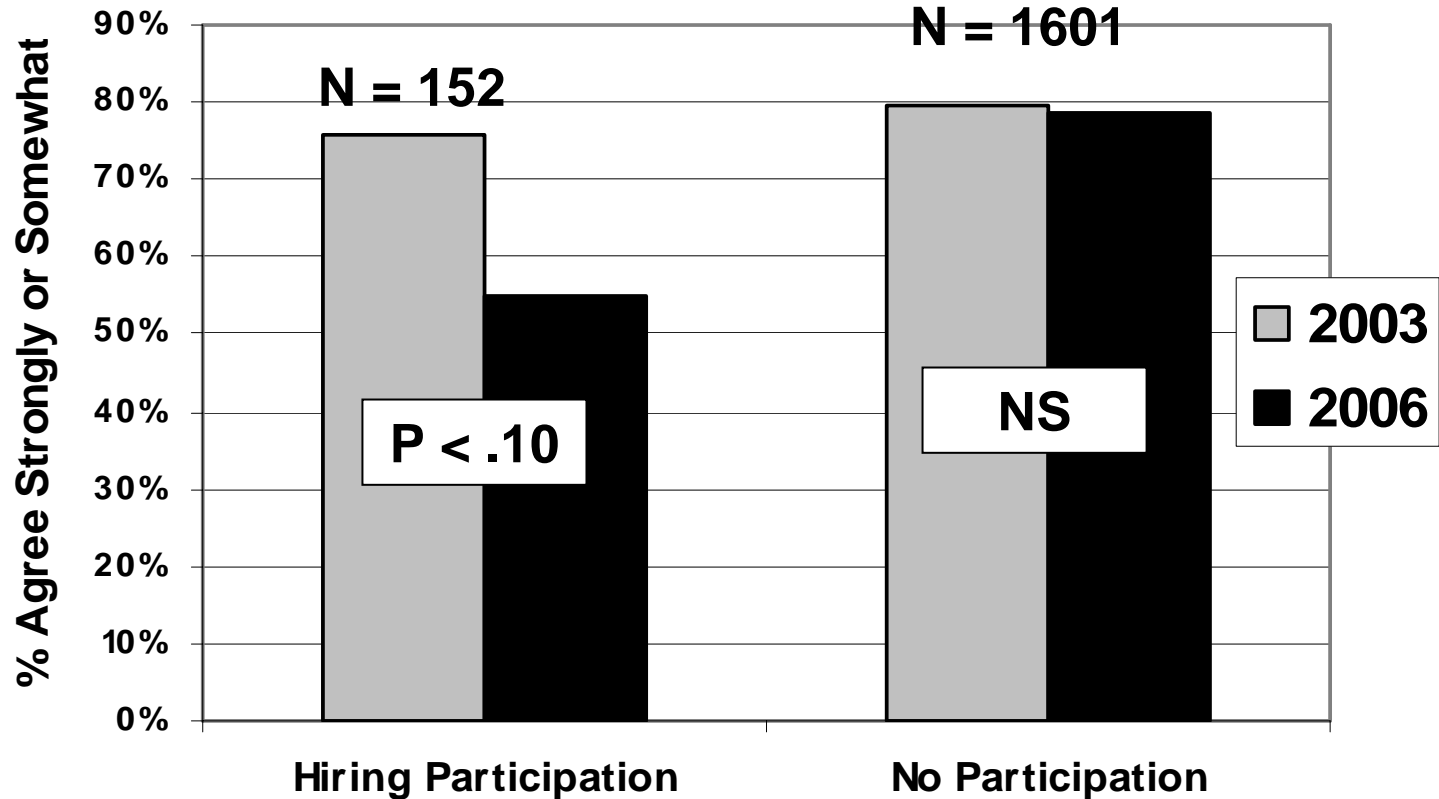
New Ladder Faculty in SMPH by Any Workshop Attendance, 2002 - 2007



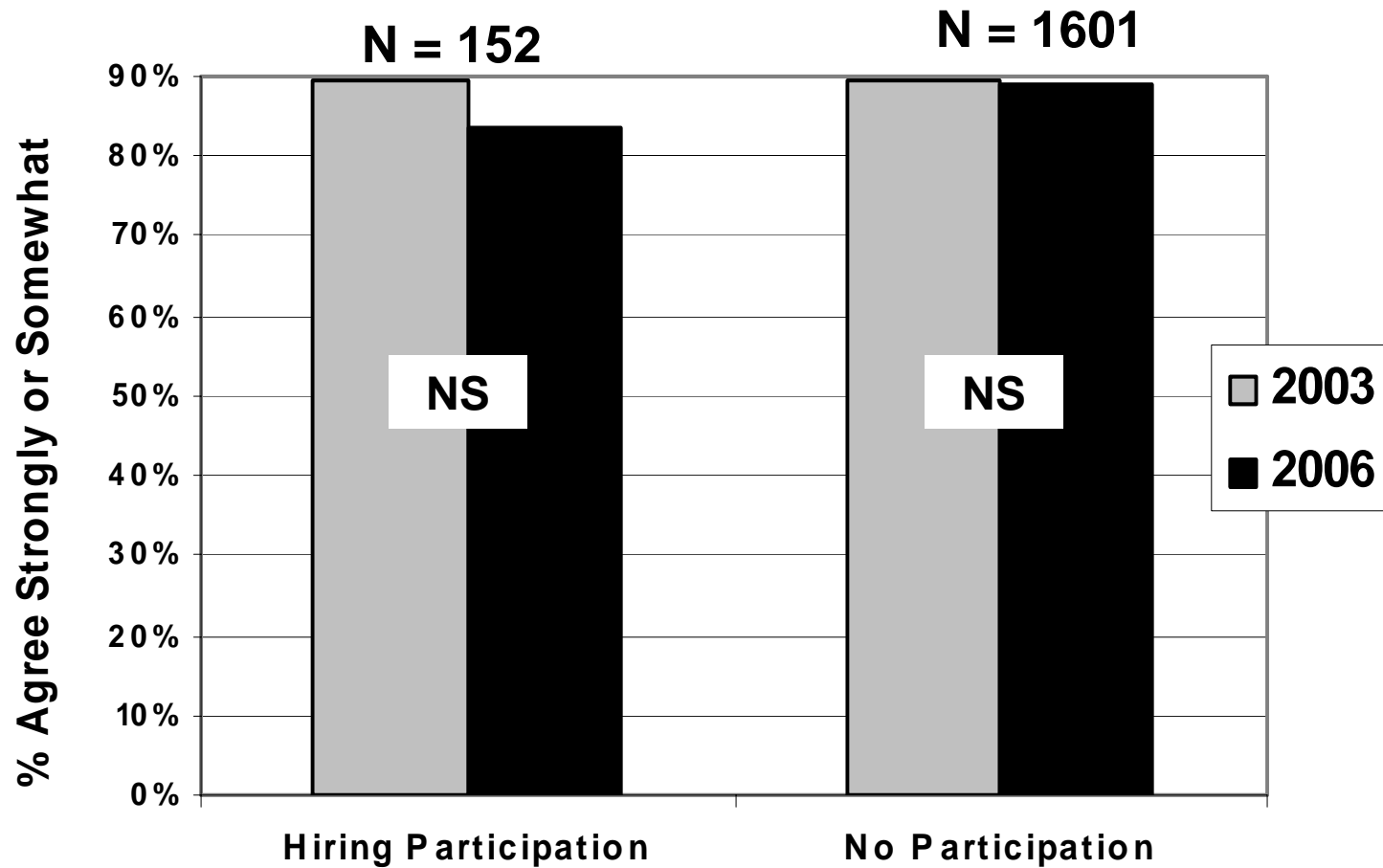
New Ladder Faculty in SMPH by Workshops Attended, 2002 - 2007



Effects of Hiring Workshop Participation
"The Climate for Faculty of Color in My Department is Good"



**Effects of Hiring Workshop Participation Dept Climate
"The Climate for Women in My Department is Good"**





Summary and Conclusions

- *Searching for Excellence and Diversity* is filling a previously unmet need to train search committees
- We have some evidence of its effectiveness
- The element most well received and perhaps most transformative is the section that provides some “bias literacy” to participants



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