Creating Inclusive Workplaces

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Inclusive workplaces

Harness all of the talent in our diverse society and create environments where all individuals can fully thrive.
Underrepresentation of women in the US

• Approximately 4.5% of the Fortune 500 CEOs are women.
• Women hold 14% of executive officer positions.
• Women hold 18% of elected congressional offices.
• Women hold 17.2% of research university presidencies.
• Women of color are more underrepresented.
Goldin & Rouse 2000
Two main points

1. Stereotypes bias the evaluations and experiences of individuals.

2. These biases can be reduced or eliminated.
Bias is an error in decision-making.
Stereotypes function as “cognitive shortcuts” in information processing.
Categorization by sex (and race)

Expectations about the individual

Bias in how we process information

Evaluations, opportunities, influence
Stereotypes affect the *standard* we use to judge the performance of individuals.
Brian Miller

79%

Karen Miller

49%

Steinpreis, Anders & Ritzke 1999
Extra scrutiny

“I would need to see evidence that she had gotten these grants and publications on her own.”

“It would be impossible to make such a judgment without teaching evaluations.”

Steinpreis, Anders & Ritzke 1999
Last summer Temple University bookstore decided to capitalize on the electronic craze among college students. For the first time ever, the bookstore started selling laptops, laptop accessories, and other electronic devices.

Sarah Provost, a 10-year-old Temple freshman, entered the dorms in late August 2013. Excited about becoming a Temple Owl, Sarah came to the main Temple bookstore to buy her own personal college supplies. She saw the textbooks, notebooks, and school supplies. Still, she was amazed by the display of laptops, all sorts of colors, shapes, and sizes were on display. Sarah selected and purchased a laptop for $900 on September 1.

On the first day of class, Sarah found herself struggling with her new laptop. She tried everything she knew, but nothing seemed to work. She considered returning the laptop to the bookstore, but she was worried about the hassle.

Sarah decided to call the store’s customer service. She explained her problem, and a representative named Tom agreed to meet her in the store to help.

Tom explained that the laptop was still under warranty, and they could replace it for free. However, it would take a few days, and Sarah would need a temporary replacement.

Sarah thanked Tom and left the store with a new laptop and a temporary replacement. She was relieved and grateful for the store’s customer service.

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Thomas Meyer
Seniority: 3rd Year Law Associate
Alma Mater: NYU
Race/Ethnicity: Caucasian

3x more edits /comments
2x more likely to find mistakes
Reeves 2014
Thomas Meyer
Seniority: 3rd Year Law Associate
Alma Mater: NYU
Race/Ethnicity: Caucasian

Score: 4.1 out of 5
“generally good writer but needs to work on…”
“has potential”
“good analytical skills”

Score: 3.2 out of 5
“needs lots of work”
“can’t believe he went to NYU”
“average at best”

Reeves 2014
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allison</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>137k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>148k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brad</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>150k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>144k</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correll, Benard & Paik 2007
Correll, Benard & Paik 2007

Allison ↔ Sarah
Less competent
Less committed

Brad ↔ Matthew
More competent
More committed
“I had a baby, not a lobotomy.”
Can individuals overcome doubts about their competence by self-promoting their accomplishments?
more competent
less likable

Rudman 1998; 2012
Stereotypes affect the *criteria* we use to judge individuals.
More education

✔

More experience

Uhlmann & Cohen 2005
More education

More experience

Uhlmann & Cohen 2005
More experience

More education

Uhlmann & Cohen 2005
What about once on the job?

• Women and underrepresented minorities have less social influence and are less likely to get credit for their ideas.

• Groups are less likely to act on women experts’ suggestions, leading to lower group performance.

Propp 1995; Thomas-Hunt & Phillips 2004
The effects of stereotypes create a “cumulating disadvantage.”
250 Women      250 Men

50% women

No bias

Martell, Lane & Emrich 1996
35% women

1% bias

250 Women

250 Men

Martell, Lane & Emrich 1996
29% women
5% bias

Martell, Lane & Emrich 1996
How can we overcome these effects?
Effective solutions require breaking the tendency to use stereotypes as cognitive shortcuts.
Bias education

Educating about the effects of stereotypes gives well-intentioned men and women the tools to avoid bias.
Increase accountability & transparency

• Have decision-makers justify their decisions.
• Track numerical progress. Organizations manage what they measure.
• Helps avoid the “paradox of meritocracy.”

Castilla & Benard 2010
Block the automatic use of language.
The most common way that we transmit and maintain culture is through language.
Language of Leadership

Activity

1. Describe your top performer.
2. Use words to describe behaviors and attributes.
Language of Leadership

COMMUNAL

Description A

- Team player
- Friendly
- Good relationship manager
- Committed

AGENTIC

Description B

- Big thinker
- Influences others
- Takes risks
- Independent
Communal
- Supportive
- Team Player
- Helpful
- Friendly
- Thoughtful
- Collaborative
- Committed
- Caring
- Tactical
- Hardworking
- Relationship builder

Agentic
- Confident
- Strategic
- Ambitious
- Outspoken
- Independent
- Risk-taker
- Entrepreneurial
- Driver
- Influential
- Go-getter
- Innovator
Performance Evaluations
Performance Evaluations

Language to assess the competence and potential of ourselves and our team members
Block the **automatic** use of language
Performance Evaluations
Performance Evaluations

Agentic and Communal Language

One of our members recently applied for the Director of Marketing position. She is one of the co-leaders and an extremely impressive professional and scholar. She and I actually worked together on Capitol Hill for Congresswoman ___ years back and I can honestly say she is the most determined, passionate, and hardworking person I know. I wanted to pass on my high praise for her.
Performance Evaluations

Use Agentic and Communal Language

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Performance Evaluations

Strategically use **agentic** and **communal** language when describing the performance of men and women on your teams
“Super Positive/Can Do attitude. People enjoy working with (person).”

“(Person) has created a forum which enables greater visibility and collaboration across the many complex initiatives in flight.”
“Super Positive/Can Do attitude. People enjoy working with (her).”

“(He) has created a forum which enables greater visibility and collaboration across the many complex initiatives in flight.”
Performance Evaluations

Personality vs. Accomplishment

I can honestly say she is the most **determined**, **passionate**, and **hardworking** person I know. I wanted to pass on my high praise for her.

Her passion for creating change on behalf of all women inspires others to join the cause. As a result of her drive, the Congresswoman reframed policy to include the needs of women.
Separate personality from feedback and focus on accomplishments.
Performance Evaluations

“The presentation ultimately went well. But along the way, we discovered many areas for improvement. You would have had an easier time if you had been less judgmental about R—‘s contributions from the beginning.”

(Fortune, 2014)
Performance Evaluations

Critical Feedback (Personality/Style)

(Fortune, 2014)
Performance Evaluations

Toolkit

1. Strategically use Agentic & Communal Language

2. Focus on Accomplishments, and Link to Business Outcomes

3. Block Undue Criticism of Women’s Styles
Performance Evaluations

Example Activity
Performance Evaluations

Criteria to assess the competence and potential of ourselves and our team members
Performance Evaluations

More experience

More education
Establish clear criteria in advance of decision making.
Performance Evaluations

“Yeah, she can code, but she can’t convince me about her decisions.”

“She asked a lot of questions. I can’t spend all my time babysitting her.”
Notice when higher or different standards are used to evaluate the performance of certain individuals.
Performance Evaluations

Toolkit

1. Strategically use Agentic & Communal Language
2. Focus on Accomplishments, and link to Business Outcomes
3. Block Undue Criticism of Women’s Personalities
4. Establish Clear Criteria in Advance
5. Notice Higher or Different Standards
Join us

gender.stanford.edu/newsletter
Why language?

• Language not only reflects culture; it also (re)produces it
• Allows for a focus on the inputs to the evaluation process rather than attempting to change the performance evaluation process itself
• Immediately actionable by everyone
Analysis of performance evaluations

- 125 male and female performance evaluations stratified by level (below director/director) and by region (SV/non SV)
- With gender redacted, we coded the language used to describe employees
- After coding, gender was reattached to reviews for analysis
29 codes with additional sub-codes

- Agentic, communal and doubt raising language
- References to personality
- References to communication style
- Specific references to technical projects/skills
- Praise/criticism not linked to a business outcome
- Buzzwords
- Descriptions of heroic/gamechanger/superstar traits
- Descriptions of hardworking/nose to the grindstone traits
- Leadership and experience
# Agentic versus communal language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communal</th>
<th>Agentic</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td>Confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Player</td>
<td>Ambitious</td>
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<tr>
<td>Warm</td>
<td>Outspoken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compassionate</td>
<td>Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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Agentic versus communal

Reviews of men contain 45% more agentic language:

He has been the driving force for our strategy.

Use of communal language is evenly distributed:

He has excellent soft skills and genuinely cares about people.

She is clearly someone everyone appreciates for her collaborative approach and dedication to the cause.
Game changer versus hardworking

Reviews of men have 33% more “visionary/genius” language:

- He is a visionary in his domain.
- He is a game changer.

Reviews of women have 13% more “hardworking” language:

- She should continue her dedication and hard work.
- She has good attention to details and dedication.
- She is dedicated and committed.
Men have more leadership language

Men’s reviews are 4 times more likely to discuss leadership attributes:

In addition to this major project, he invested in developing his leadership skills and successfully established meaningful relationships with peers and stakeholders across the business.

Women, when described as leaders, are framed as an “emerging leader:”

She has really come into her own. I have seen her improve and step-up, she is taking more of a leadership role.
Men receive more feedback

Men’s reviews have 4 times more developmental feedback than women’s:

*He needs to start working on his design skills. There have been lapses in the interface.*

Men’s reviews have 2 times more positive feedback than women’s:

*The execution attitude you have is amazing as you drive change.*
Women have more feedback on communication style

Women’s reviews are 3 times more likely to discuss their communication style:

- She has adjusted her style based on feedback and has made a lot of progress.
- She gives the impression that she is not sure of her own accomplishments.

Women’s reviews are 66% more likely to say that they need to change their communication style:

- Her speaking style and approach can be off-putting to some people at times. She should become more conscious of when she does it.