ANDIE&AL
Breaking Through Bias

ADOPT DISCRIMINATION- RESISTANT METHODS OF PERSONNEL DECISION-MAKING
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN SUMMARY

What follows are PATH's recommended methods for managers to adopt to ensure that their personnel decisions are resistant to the influences of negative stereotypes, discriminatory status beliefs, and personal biases:

1. "Screen" Social Identity of candidates (Pg. 141). This means conceal from decision-makers the social identity—gender, race, ethnicity, etc.—of persons they are considering for personnel decisions such as hiring and compensation. In other words, to the extent consistent with effective and well-founded decision-makers should not have access to information that *should not be considered* in reaching personnel decisions. This can be accomplished by removing all indications of and references to the candidates' social identities from the materials on the basis at which the decisions are to be made.

2. Ensure decision-makers adhere to specific, objective evaluation criteria (Pg. 145). When personnel decisions are made on the basis of clear, specific, and objective criteria, those decisions are largely protected from discriminatory influences. Personnel decisions made on the basis of ambiguous, or subjective criteria, by contrast, allow individuals' subjective discretion—and hence their unconscious biases—to influence the decisions.

3. Nudge decision-makers to use "slow thinking" in making personnel decisions (Pg. 152). When decision-makers make personnel decisions using what Nobel Prize winning psychologist Daniel Kahneman calls "slow thinking," they are unlikely to be influenced by discriminatory biases. As Kahneman points out, there are two quite different ways in which people think:
   - Fast thinking: is automatic and effortless, and it occurs without conscious awareness.
   - Slow thinking*:* is careful, deliberative, and grounded in facts.
   Fast thinking is prone to be influenced by bias; slow thinking is not.

4. Remove opportunities for subjective discretion where consistent with operational effectiveness (Pg. 155). This can be tricky as organizations need to strike a balance between opportunities for biased decision-making and ability to make the most effective and profit-enhancing decisions. For example, requiring that promotion decisions be made by considering candidate pools that include, say, 30 percent women, eliminate some discretion in the selection of the composition of the candidate pools without restricting decision-makers ultimate autonomy in selecting the person to be promoted.

5. Separate personnel evaluations from personnel decisions (Pg. 159). This might be implemented, for example, by having the interviews of hiring candidates conducted by diverse teams of employees drawn from around the company These teams would then submit detailed written reports of their evaluations of the candidates to a hiring committee that would make the final hiring decisions. In this way, the subjective preferences and unconscious biases that were triggered in those doing the interviewing cannot influence ultimate personnel decisions.

6. Appoint diverse teams of decision-makers (Pg. 160). Diverse and inclusive teams are more likely to reach decisions that are free of the influence of negative stereotypes and individual biases. They are also less likely to fall victim to groupthink.

7. Require written justification of personnel decisions that are subject to third-party review (Pg. 161). When decision-makers know that their personnel decisions will be reviewed for indications of possible bias, they are far more likely to make those decisions in a fair and objective way.

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