Just Because You Always Hear It, Doesn't Mean It's True

Gail Farnsley
Senior Executive Partner
Gartner
Key Issues

1. What is Unconscious Bias?
2. Why is understanding Unconscious Bias important?
3. How can you recognize and intercept Unconscious Bias?
What is Unconscious Bias?

- Unconscious bias results from “schemas”
- Schemas are necessary; everyone has them
- They let us pay attention to only select information
- We need them to live … but …
- They also lead to implicit or unconscious bias

What do you see?
How Unconscious Bias Affects the Workplace: Some Examples

- “Blind” orchestra auditions significantly increase odds that women will be hired

- Résumés with white-sounding names get 50% more callbacks

- Female job applicants -- needed 99 “impact factors” vs. Male job applicants – needed 20 “impact factors”

Key Issues

1. What is Unconscious Bias?
2. Why is understanding Unconscious Bias important?
3. How can you recognize and intercept Unconscious Bias?
Diversity In Tech: The Facts

**Women Comprise 57% of U.S. Professional Occupations**

**Women Hold 25% of U.S. Technology Jobs**

**Women Make Up 19% of U.S. Software Developers**

Only **5%** of **Technology Leadership** Jobs Are Held by Women

Diversity In Tech: The Facts

Black & Hispanic Professionals Comprise 16% of U.S. Professional Occupations, but 30% of U.S. Population

Black & Hispanic Men Hold 9% of U.S. Computing Jobs

Black & Hispanic Women Hold 4% of U.S. Computing Jobs

We’re Losing The Diversity Already There: An Unnecessary Corporate Brain Drain

Women in Tech…

74% love work

56% leave their jobs

80% stay in workforce

Sources: Athena Factor, 2008
Why Diversity Matters
Key Issues

1. What is Unconscious Bias?

2. Why is understanding Unconscious Bias important?

3. How can you recognize and intercept Unconscious Bias?
Why The Critical Listening Guide?

The female 'confidence gap' is a sham
Jessica Valenti

Famous quotes, the way a woman would have to say them during a meeting.

By Alexandra Petri  October 13, 2015  Follow @petridishes
# The Critical Listening Guide: An interactive Look

## Hear this?

### Types of Problem Statements:

- Fix the woman **(in yellow)**
- Essentialism **(in blue)**
- Framing as "women's issues" **(in purple)**

- Click on a statement to find out what to ask or add to continue the conversation, as well as the common misperceptions behind the statement.

- **"Women need to learn to be more confident."**
- **"Women bring communication or people skills."**
- **"Women want a family-friendly workplace."**
- **"Women are such great collaborators."**
- **"Learn to take up space, and toot your own horn."**

- **"Hey ladies, we need to..."**
- **"Women are..."**
- **"Women should..."**
- **"Men..."**
- **"None of the above..."**
Jot down any observations or questions you have.

Jot down any phrases or “red flags” you’d like to see added.

Pick 2-3 to share with the group.

For Yourself:

• Skim before or after conferences, workshops, or other talks to heighten your ability to recognize and address these concerns.

• Refer to it when preparing your own talks, panels or workshops.

• Refer to it when reading information on diversity or whenever you hear something that doesn’t sound quite right.

With others:

- When using this tool, don’t make it about blame. Talk about how we’ve probably all made these statements from time to time. These are complex topics so it’s helpful to think about how to talk about these issues in more accurate and effective ways.

- Show this to your team or to other colleagues to start a conversation.

- Debrief with others after conferences or workshops, using this tool for reference.

- Disseminate as a helpful resource for speakers who are preparing talks.
Action Plan for Reducing Unconscious Bias

Monday Morning:

- Review Creative Listening Guide and start listening for biased statements at work.

Next 90 Days:

- Review your job descriptions and revise to contain unbiased language.
- Share unconscious bias research and the Creative Listening Guide with your staff and peers.

Next 12 Months:

- Review your company’s recruiting practices, recruitment firms it employs, and recruiting algorithms
Available NCWIT Resources

- Critical Listening Guide: Just Because You Always Hear It, Doesn't Mean It's True
- NCWIT Checklist for Reducing Unconscious Bias in Job Descriptions/Advertisements
- NCWIT Tips for Writing Better Job Ads
- How Can Reducing Unconscious Bias Increase Women's Success in IT? Avoiding Unintended Bias in Letters of Recommendation
- Harvard Implicit Bias Test