

ABCPLD Professional Development Session

Strategies for a Diverse, Inclusive Workforce

Speaker: Sema Burney

- We all have our own stories that will influence whether we have certain preferences or unconscious biases
- We are the product of our upbringing, our culture, education, etc. It is important to take the time to reflect on all of our experiences
- Sema asked participants to think about a time they felt different and share the one word that would describe how they felt in that moment of feeling different
 - For the most part the common theme with the words is that they are negative feelings (unsure, lonely, alone, excluded, nervous, embarrassed, etc). This is normal
 - Diversity is about valuing differences but this is difficult to do when mentally we go to a place of seeing difference as something negative
 - We need to work toward a shift in our mind set and talk about how diversity and difference can be a good thing within our team and environment
- What is Diversity?
 - At the center of diversity is our own unique personality
 - We are all born with our own unique personality traits and when we have to go against those personality traits it feels uncomfortable and unnatural
 - We all have our inherent elements of diversity such as race/ethnicity, place of origin, gender identity, socio-economic status
 - We also have acquired elements of diversity such as religion, language, work experience, relationship status, appearance, education background, etc. Many of these elements can change over time and also have a strong influence on how we perceive the world and interact with others
 - Lastly we also have organizational elements of diversity such as work location, seniority, professional associations, union affiliations, pay scale, title
- Wheel of Privilege
 - We often look at privilege as something that is bad or negative
 - There are many kinds of privilege and we all have privilege in different areas
 - It's important to recognize our privilege because it gives us the power to help those that are in a marginalized group and recognize our own biases
- Unconscious Bias
 - The reality is that we all have biases
 - We tend to gravitate towards people who we have an affinity to, who we like or have something in common with

- We tend to step back or away from people who are really different from us
- Our fast brain is instinctive, fast thinking, impulsive and also prone to error. Our fast brain is often where we house our unconscious biases
- Our brain loves the familiar and is very good at recognizing patterns
- Our brain is constantly looking at information and categorizing and making patterns. It's important to be aware of what is going on in the background with our brains because this will assist us in making instinctive decisions that may be erroneous
- Our slow brain is the part of the brain that takes the time to reflect, to think and to analyze. The slow brain is more rational, analytic and conscious
- We cannot be in our fast and slow brains at the same time. 95% of the time we are in our fast brain making decisions instinctively. The slow brain takes more time and energy. The second we question our instincts we are in the slow brain
- Unconscious Bias in the Workplace
 - Affinity Bias – gravitate towards people that are the same as ourselves
 - Confirmation Bias – searching for evidence that backs up our first impressions
 - Out-group Homogeneity Bias – tendency to see out groups as all the same whereas in-groups are seen as diverse and different
 - Halo Effect – perceived as having more positive traits than others
 - We see these different types of biases in all stages of the recruitment process (application, screening, interview and decision)
 - Break out session – discuss the types of biases you have observed in the recruitment process at your library
- Where do Biases Show Up
 - Application Process – it's not always easy to get diverse candidates. It's a good idea to enlarge our idea of what a diverse candidate is by:
 - ❖ Reviewing your competencies/job descriptions - this can attract candidates or turn candidates away. How important are the skills sets, the number of years of experience or type of education, etc that you are posting
 - ❖ Rewrite your job descriptions
 - ❖ Expand your network
 - ❖ Pay attention to where you post a position
 - Screening Process – unconscious biases often show up during this process
 - ❖ Reality is that the first thing we look at in a resume is the name and this is very important because the name triggers our unconscious bias
 - ❖ Some strategies for the screening process are: removing names and identifying information from resumes; do as much testing as possible before meeting candidate in person; diversify your screening committee

- Interview Process
 - ❖ First impression bias – first questions we have when we meet someone are: do I like you, do I trust you, are you safe and who do you remind me of
 - ❖ Managing first impression bias: use reverse logic and be aware of what your first impressions are; script the interview; use a talent scorecard; measure first impressions at the end
- The group took part in a practical case application
- Culture Fit versus Culture Add
 - Culture Fit – must think and behave like we do
 - Culture Add – encouraged to think differently and bring in new perspectives