



## Making Diversity Work

### 7 Steps for Defeating Bias in the Workplace

#### THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

Workplaces are more diverse than ever, and studies show that this diversity contributes to innovative ideas and novel approaches to decision-making. A diverse workplace also makes for stronger business relationships with customers and vendors and offers opportunities for lucrative interactions with businesses around the globe.

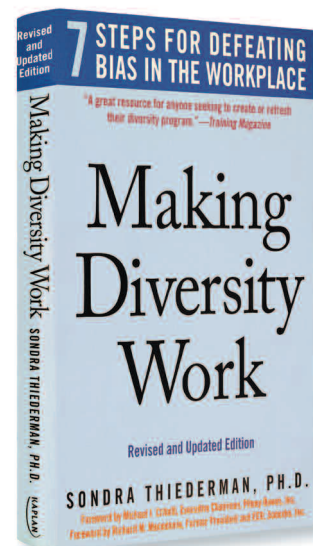
However, when bias exists, the benefits of a diverse workforce lie dormant.

Drawing from research and nearly 30 years of experience in the field, diversity expert Sondra Thiederman, Ph.D., provides executives and managers with step-by-step strategies for minimizing conscious and unconscious bias and maximizing the ability to manage diversity effectively.

Although some individuals may find the subject matter a source of discomfort, recognizing and addressing bias are the first steps to a more transparent, productive workplace. *Making Diversity Work* includes real workplace examples, practical applications and exercises designed to guide you and your team on a journey of self-discovery, behavior change and, ultimately, healing.

#### IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- How the seven-step Vision Renewal Process can help you identify and defeat conscious and unconscious bias.
- Four strategies to help you become mindful of your biases.
- Three questions to ask to dissect your biases.
- Five strategies to identify common kinship groups.
- What are Gateway Events™ and how they can bring about productive dialogue.
- Cognitive and verbal skills to encourage better diversity dialogue.



by Sondra Thiederman, Ph.D.

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# THE COMPLETE SUMMARY: MAKING DIVERSITY WORK

by Sondra Thiederman, Ph.D.

**The author:** Sondra Thiederman, Ph.D., is one of the nation's leading experts on workplace diversity, cross-cultural business and bias reduction.

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## PART ONE: THE BASICS OF BIAS

William Cunningham is a psychologist at Ohio State University. Cunningham's work, and the solutions it inspires, is rooted in previous research on how the brain generates biased responses to different groups.

Addressing primarily race bias, but later broadened to other types of difference, these earlier studies found that when white people view pictures of black faces, the region of the brain that is responsible for wariness (the amygdala) responds with a sharp spike in activity. This spike amounts to a primitive "jumping to conclusions" about the nature of people different from ourselves. It is what has been termed an "instinctive bias." It is this physical reaction — the spike in response to groups different from ourselves — that gave rise to the belief that biases are part of our hardwiring and, in turn, the erroneous conclusion that they are unchangeable.

Cunningham's "tiny change" had to do with time. In the earlier studies, the faces were shown for only 30 milliseconds — removed so quickly that they could only be "seen" subconsciously. Cunningham decided to find out what would happen if the pictures were viewed for a longer period of time — 525 milliseconds, still too brief for the conscious mind to grasp. And yet, the extended time was long enough to change the brain's response. Although there was still a spike when the different faces appeared, the spike was not in the alarm center, but in the part of the brain that controls rational thought.

The upshot of this — and the very good news — is that, if given long enough, the conscious and rational brain does have the power to override even our most primitive biased instincts. ●

## Bias Defined and Misdefined

A bias is an inflexible positive or negative belief about a particular category of people.

Based on this definition and going solely by the information provided below, is the following person absolutely, positively guilty?

*Juan, a 50-year-old manager, had occasion to interview a woman named Nancy, who, at the time of their meeting, was in her mid-20s. After the interview, Juan said to his boss, "I'd like to hire her, but Nancy has quit four career-track jobs since college. We need someone willing to commit for the long run. It looks like some Generation Xers really do move around a lot."*

### Flexible Versus Inflexible

There are a couple elements in this scenario that might have misled you into believing Juan was guilty of bias, including his statement, "It looks like some Generation Xers really do move around a lot." If you look at this sentence closely, you can see that it is not a bias but, instead, a "working generality."

Another reason you might have thought Juan was guilty is that the characteristic he ascribed to Nancy (changing jobs often) could, if applied inflexibly to all Generation Xers, indeed be a reflection of a bias. This confusion highlights a key point that will help you in your efforts to accurately diagnose bias in others and yourself.

*Bias is an attitude, not a behavior, and just because a word or action is consistent with a biased attitude does not automatically mean it actually reflects a biased attitude.*

### Guerilla Bias™

Consider this case study:

*Gerry was the manager at a business journal based in New*



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Rebecca S. Clement, Publisher; Sarah T. Dayton, Editor In Chief; Andrew Clancy, Senior Editor; Amanda Langen, Graphic Designer; Jeannette Scott, Contributing Editor

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York City. One of his writers was a young woman named Liz. Liz was a satisfactory journalist but not quite up to the standards of the organization. Because of this, Gerry had gotten into the habit of editing pieces, rather than doing what he did with the men on his staff: sending their pieces back for rewrites. When one of those men asked Gerry why he hadn't edited their writing too, Gerry said, "Your situation is different. After all, Liz is a single mother, and you know they all have a rough time and deserve an extra break."

The bad news for Gerry, and for those around him, is that he is a carrier of a particularly dangerous species of bias: Guerilla Bias.

One reason that Guerilla Bias is so dangerous is that it is difficult to spot and, therefore, very tough to diagnose. Guerilla Bias lies concealed behind good intentions, kind words, and even thoughtful acts. In Gerry's case, his so-called thoughtful act was to edit Liz's manuscripts for her rather than give her the opportunity to learn from her mistakes.

Defining bias is difficult; it involves a demoralizing glut of yeses and noes, ifs, buts, and maybes, each of which seems designed to drive us mad. Yes, being drawn to someone like you is normal; no, this impulse should not be completely indulged. Yes, it is OK to make a reasonable assumption about a person, but you are biased if you don't change your mind in the face of conflicting evidence. Yes, it is all right to be kind to an individual, but it is bias if you do it solely because of the group to which he belongs. Yes, some behaviors do not reflect a biased attitude, but, maybe, those behaviors should be changed anyway. ●

### PART TWO: THE VISION RENEWAL PROCESS

## Step One: Become Mindful of Your Biases

The fear that prevents us from admitting bias is that of having to acknowledge, even to ourselves, that we may not be quite as nice as we, and others, like to think we are. Until we overcome our dread of looking like bad people, or at least like less-good people, we will be unable and unwilling to acknowledge our biases, admit them and target them for extinction.

**Strategy I: Observe Your Thoughts.** Biases, as we know, are attitudes. As such they live inside our brains waiting to be noticed, first as thoughts and then as actions. Some, the most subconscious ones, are so rude that they whiz from attitude straight to action so fast that

we barely feel the breeze, much less notice what is going on. Lucky for us, most biases are more courteous and make the journey to thought and then to action at a civilized pace — a pace that allows us to be aware of their presence.

We've all watched our thoughts before. Have you ever, for example, been asked to say the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the word cat, house or airplane? When you notice, and then say, the word that pops up, you are watching your thoughts. That's all there is to it. We do it all the time. It's just that when it comes to something more substantial, we lose sight of how simple and familiar the process is.

**Strategy II: Examine Your Thoughts.** Watching our thoughts is important, but it is merely the evidence-gathering stage of our investigation. The next step is to examine that evidence, to determine if each thought is indeed a whiff of smoke floating up from a buried bias or, instead, an innocent recollection of what our culture at large says about the group.

One way to do this is for you to look at each initial reaction and ask yourself this question: "Would I feel the same way about the meaning of this incident if the actor were of a different kinship group?"

The next step in determining if your first thought is evidence of a bias is to see how much emotion is attached to it. The less emotion, the less likely the thought is to be biased.

**Strategy III: Explore Your Attitudes Toward Human Difference.** Observing and analyzing your thoughts as you think of and encounter other kinship groups is a good start toward bias identification. There is still, however, one more piece of evidence that needs to be collected. Before we bring charges of bias against ourselves, we need to shore up our case by examining how we feel about the notion of difference itself. Generally, those who have few biases tend to be fairly indifferent to whether or not a person is different from themselves. People who possess the virtue of seeing others clearly neither ignore the difference when it is pertinent to the situation nor put excessive emphasis on it.

**Strategy IV: Observe Your Behavior.** I have gone to great lengths to emphasize that a bias is an attitude not a behavior and that not every inappropriate action reflects a bias. Having said that, there are some actions that, if observed, alert us to the possibility that a bias just might be lurking beneath the surface.

- When deciding whom to send to training, do you find yourself sending people from some kinship groups but not others?

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- When picking plum assignments, is there any group you favor?
- Do you catch yourself being “nicer” to members of any one group than to members of another?

Evidence produced by observing behaviors such as these is not unto itself conclusive. If paired, however, with other pieces of evidence, it might close the case. ●

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### Step Two: Put Your Biases Through Triage

Just as injured soldiers on the battlefield are put through a triage process to discover who requires treatment first, your biases need to be triaged to identify which ones most urgently need your attention. This is accomplished by examining the damage and pain each one is apt to cause.

#### Does Your Bias Compromise Your Ability to Hire the Best People?

Linda would have had to answer this question with a regretful yes. The human resource director at a prestigious hotel in Beverly Hills, Linda allowed her bias to interfere with a key hiring decision.

Sitting across the desk from Linda was an applicant who, by anyone’s standards, was perfect for the job: outgoing, articulate and very knowledgeable of the hospitality industry. She was also born and raised in Japan. Therein lay Linda’s problem. Because of Mariko’s heritage, Linda’s evaluation of her was grossly distorted by another set of qualifications, or I should say misqualifications, that popped into her head and blocked her view of what Mariko had to offer. All Linda could see as she looked at Mariko was a hodgepodge of stereotypes right out of a Hollywood movie: shy, retiring and soft-spoken. Certainly, to Linda’s biased eye, Mariko was not a good candidate for a high-stakes sales position.

Linda had a choice to make. The best option would have been for her to shove her bias, and these fictional characteristics, aside long enough to see Mariko for who she was and hire her. Instead, she rationalized away Mariko’s assertiveness in an effort to prove her bias correct. Mariko did not get the job.

Linda paid an expensive price for this exercise in stubbornness. Shortly after the ill-fated interview, Mariko was snapped up by a neighboring hotel that then proceeded, with Mariko’s help, to abscond with much of Linda’s lucrative convention business.

#### Does Your Bias Interfere With Your Ability to Retain Quality Employees?

When a person does not conform to the positive qualities that we anticipate, there is a tendency for us to dislike him for not measuring up to our expectations.

Are you ever the target of this kind of bias? Perhaps as a woman you are expected to love children; as a straight man, to like sports; or as a gay man, to be artistic. A common positive bias toward women, for example, reads, “All women value relationships and have, therefore, a nurturing leadership style.” Because of this bias, women whose leadership style is authoritarian tend, as reflected in a 2007 gender-bias study conducted by Catalyst, to be disliked and “their behavior frowned upon.”

#### Does Your Bias Put Your Organization at Risk for Litigation?

Litigation is the worst nightmare of every organization, every manager and every CEO. Sometimes the waking dream is filled with contemptible characters who tell racist jokes, denigrate gay people or make sleazy comments to female subordinates. Other times, and this is the real worry, the act that results in litigation is of the Guerilla Bias variety; no sleazy and easily identifiable characters are in sight.

I doubt, for example, that the manager who inspired Meg’s race discrimination suit was particularly sleazy; he was probably even “nice.” Because he was so nice, he couldn’t bring himself to tell her that she was doing a bad job. He was, you see, afraid that Meg would be offended by his comments. Eventually, Meg’s performance became so bad that, despite his fear of her reaction, he fired her. This wouldn’t, of course, have been a problem had he given Meg some warning — along with the information she needed in order to improve. Unfortunately, he didn’t give her these things. What he did give her was clear grounds for a discrimination suit, which, by the way, Meg ultimately won. ●

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### Step Three: Identify the Secondary Gains of Your Biases

What am I gaining by holding on to my biases?

The answer lies in the truism of the human mind that most otherwise unproductive attitudes and behaviors carry within them what is called a “secondary gain.” Sometimes that gain feels, at least temporarily, good.

Every bias has a secondary gain attached to it. Some of those gains are real; others are merely illusions. In every case, however, the gain is not worth all the trouble the

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bias causes. Once we realize that, we move one step closer to being willing to let the bias go.

**Secondary Gain: Protection From Diminished Status.** Marie, a Mexican-born nurse practitioner, had a similar concern. She complained of constantly being assigned to care for, as she put it, “those dirty, uneducated Mexican immigrants.” As it turns out, her bias came directly from the fear that her contact with these patients would somehow pull her back down into a status and lifestyle she had come to find repulsive. To relieve this fear, Marie manufactured the bias that these patients were in possession of remarkably few redeeming virtues and were irrevocably beneath her in terms of their position in the social stratum.

**Secondary Gain: Protection From Loss.** Fear of losing something we believe to be rightfully ours is one of the most common reasons for the development of bias. This explains why biases increase in times of economic slowdown and why it is then that we begin to hear a medley of mantras about how “those people” are “taking all the jobs,” “getting preferential treatment” and “taking advantage of the situation.”

**Secondary Gain: An Excuse to Avoid Discomfort.** This bias is frequently disguised behind kind thoughts such as “I don’t want to hurt his feelings,” “I don’t want to make anyone upset” or, my personal favorite, “I wouldn’t want to risk offending anybody.” ●

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### Step Four: Dissect Your Biases

Step Four uses inquiry, as anthropologist Jennifer James puts it, to “move our responses to others out of our guts and into our minds.” This inquiry will take the form of three questions, each of which, if answered honestly, will reveal the faulty logic behind your biases:

**Question 1: Where did you learn your bias and under what circumstances?** Many of us grew up in homes that were veritable petri dishes of the bias virus. Television, radio, the Web and newspapers are, of course, abundant sources of bias.

Of all the ways we learn bias, you would think that experience would be the most reliable. Well, maybe and maybe not. For one thing, any experience with one individual, or even 10 individuals, says nothing about other members of that kinship group. In addition, unless an experience is well-rounded and repeated, it tells us little even about the person actually encountered.

**Question 2: How many people have you actually met who conform to your bias?** Caution! The phrase “actually met” does not include media images,

rumor, what other people say they know; all that counts here are personal encounters between members of the group in question and you.

**Question 3: Have you ever met a member of your target group who does not conform to your bias?** I am reminded of a young woman named Rose, who told me with complete confidence that “all Mexicans are destructive.” That misguided belief grew out of one horrifying night when two Mexican immigrant teenagers tried to break into her house. When the boys found they couldn’t get in, they became furious and destroyed her front fence. Rose was alone, her phone was disconnected and she was, understandably, terrified.

After she told me this story, I asked if she knew any Mexicans who weren’t destructive. She looked at me as if that were the stupidest question she had ever heard and said, “Oh, yes, I live in a mostly Mexican community and all my neighbors are wonderful people.” Under the bright light of logic, you could almost see her bias melt away. ●

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### Step Five: Identify Common Kinship Groups

A kinship group is “any population that shares a self- or externally ascribed characteristic that sets it apart from others.” This characteristic might be a disability, race, a hobby, gender, age or any other of dozens of human dimensions. The virtue in the concept of a kinship group is that it allows each of us to belong to many groups at once, depending on the characteristic on which we focus. It also — and this is the best part — enables us to broaden our group to include many populations that we previously thought of as different from ourselves.

Here is one of the many advantages of sharing a kinship group: Once you identify yourself with a particular population, members of that group are transformed in your mind from “them” to “us.”

**Strategy I: Keep What We Share Top of Mind.** We notice what we care about. Keeping what we share top of mind is a matter of caring. Once we recognize how important identifying commonalities is to bias reduction, we will care.

**Strategy II: Practice Skills for Achieving Empathy.** In connection with our current task of identifying what we share, the empathy we are seeking is summarized in this question: What emotions or experiences — positive or negative — have you had that are,

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to some degree, like those experienced by someone who otherwise seems different from you? Those shared experiences and emotions, that empathy, becomes, in essence a shared kinship group.

Full understanding is not a prerequisite to empathy.

**Strategy III: Seek Contact With Those Who Are Different From You.** Of all the strategies for identifying shared kinship groups, this one seems to be the most straightforward: Spend time with and get to know people who are different from you.

**Strategy IV: Create Workplace Opportunities for Cross-Group Contact.** Organizations can play a major role in facilitating bias reduction by creating ways for people of diverse backgrounds to be together and, in turn, have the opportunity to discover and focus on what they share. This contact, in order to be most effective at reducing bias, needs to have the following characteristics:

1. Be appropriately intimate.
2. Be as varied as possible.
3. Be sanctioned by a relevant authority figure.
4. Be among people who are reasonably equal in status and resources.
5. Should be, if possible, unhurried.
6. Be goal-oriented.

Affinity/network/employee resource groups certainly conform to these requirements and have for years been the backbone of diversity efforts in many companies.

**Strategy V: Create and Emphasize Shared Goals.** Shared goals, you see, have the power to fill the fissure that separates us. When we are striving to achieve the same thing, it is just plain harder to hate each other. The goal creates a kinship group. ●

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### Step Six: Shove Your Biases Aside

As we have seen, bias is an attitude, and every attitude at some point is manifested as a thought. So far, we're OK — what we think, although not always good for us, is usually harmless. That is, unless we allow that thought to dictate a behavior. It is between the biased thought and the action that we want to throw the switch.

Because Jill was such a hard case, I'm going to use her as an example. Jill had what seemed to be an unshakeable bias against people over 50. This caused her to think, "There is no point in giving Lance that assignment, he'll never come up with the innovation we need." Jill refused to give Lance any challenging projects. As a result, Lance quit the organization

because of lack of opportunity and took his 25 years of experience elsewhere.

The point where Jill needs to switch tracks is just after the thought "There is no point in giving Lance that assignment" comes into her head. The trick to doing this, for Jill and for us, is to stay in the moment so we can catch the thought as it whizzes by. This takes practice and vigilance, but it can be done.

We are not our thoughts. Our thoughts are tools that we produce to help us survive. Because we produce them, we can manipulate them. In short, we have the power to follow these instructions:

*Think the thought, shove it aside; think the thought, shove it aside; think the thought, shove it aside.*

Even if we only keep the biased thought out of the way for a few seconds, we can peer through that break in the fog and see the person more accurately. Perhaps the fog will close again, but it is a start and, like any mechanical act, shoving the thought aside becomes easier with practice. ●

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### Step Seven: Fake It Till You Make It

Ever since she can remember, Bess has had, as she put it, a "thing" about people who don't express themselves well in English.

For whatever reason, Bess just couldn't exterminate this bias. She was aware it existed and aware it distorted her view of many employees who had much to offer the organization. However, she still found herself avoiding people who did not articulate up to her standard.

Determined to change her behavior, she made a list of the things her bias was causing her to do and the consequences of those behaviors. Having made her behaviors and their consequences concrete and measurable, Bess set out to do things differently.

The ultimate consequence of these changes in behavior was that Bess' bias began to fade. First, it faded because the dissonance (the difference) between her behavior and her biased attitude subconsciously bothered Bess. The second reason her bias faded was that it just couldn't survive the onslaught of positive and varied information that Bess' new behaviors caused to come her way.

#### Fake Your Language

I am asking you to do something you do most of the time anyway: Use respectful language. The "faking"

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comes in on those occasions when you are not feeling particularly respectful.

Speaking respectfully to and about people produces, of course, the same positive responses that Bess experienced when she changed her behaviors. Those responses will, as they did in Bess' case, provide the kind of positive feedback that can't help but erode bias. ●

### PART THREE: GATEWAY EVENTS™: ENTERING INTO DIVERSITY DIALOGUE

## Getting Diversity Fit

He couldn't call it anything other than an ambush or, if your taste runs to the medical, a "sudden onset" Gateway Event. It was early on a Monday morning and Wally was rushing to the weekly management meeting. Just as he rounded a corner, he practically collided with two of his supervisors, who were embroiled in a heated disagreement. As best he could figure it out, one of the combatants had offended the other with a comment about the new female sales associate. Knowing it was his job to do something, Wally stopped around the next turn, thought for a moment, and then, as if he had come to some kind of decision, moved on down the hall. After all, he couldn't be late for his meeting. "I just couldn't handle it," he told me. "I was caught off guard and decided to let the incident pass."

Most Gateway Events are like this: They swing open before us without warning. We rarely have time to prepare a response or, for that matter, to sort out how we feel about what is going on. When this happens, we are in danger of walking away, or worse, going into autoreponder mode, spouting glib denials and politically correct nonsense. To prevent this kind of meltdown, we need to do what Wally did not do, which was to prepare ahead of time for every contingency.

What amounts to that preparation? Becoming mindful of your biases, identifying their weak foundation and learning to shove them aside are all part of your diversity fitness program.

This exercise entails naming, and thus taming, the emotions that accompany Gateway Events. In this context, we are concerned with those small worries and larger fears that compromise in several ways our ability to carry on effective conversations about diversity and bias.

- Fear interferes with our willingness to enter into the conversation in the first place.
- Anxiety prevents us from being able to think on

## Defining Gateway Events

We rarely have to seek out opportunities to engage in conversations about bias; life has a way of presenting them to us. These opportunities come in the form of misunderstandings, accusations and any other happenings that involve discord between or about people who are different from each other. Because these incidents are capable of bringing about productive dialogue and thereby serve as gateways to greater understanding and reduced bias, I call them Gateway Events.

our feet.

- Agitation blocks our ability to interpret accurately what is going on.
- Fear pulls us out of the moment by tempting us to focus on painful experiences of the past or imagined disasters of the future rather than on the realities of the present.

If we are to be prepared to enter into gateway conversations and make them successful, we need to identify what we fear or, at least, what has us worried. ●

## Cognitive Skills for Diversity Dialogue

Of course the impact of an act matters, and that impact, if negative, must be remedied. The actor's intent, however, also needs to be taken into consideration, because knowledge of intent just might influence the success of that remedy.

The problem is, as Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton and Sheila Heen say in their book, *Difficult Conversations*, it is almost impossible to guess a person's intentions accurately.

Intentions are invisible. We assume them from other people's behavior. In other words, we make them up.

We "make them up" largely according to our past experiences and the impact of the act on our welfare.

Here are some questions we can all ask ourselves the next time we feel the sense of hurt and anger that accompanies so many Gateway Events:

1. Is the offending word or action unusual for the person you are indicting?
2. Has this person done other things that support your reaction or, on the contrary, has she demonstrated that she respects and cares about people who are different from her?
3. If you have heard that she has done other things

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that might reflect a bias, are they merely rumors or are they events that you have witnessed and evaluated for yourself?

When we feel offended, the benefit of asking questions like these is enormous. That benefit is the acquisition of power. If we calmly examine what has happened, we gain the power that comes with objectivity.

### Set Productive Goals

Diversity consultant Roosevelt Thomas says it succinctly but powerfully: Dialogue is conversation with a purpose.

Aimless conversation, particularly if the catalyst for that conversation is emotionally charged, will lead nowhere or, worse, will lead somewhere we would rather not go. We need functional dialogue about bias, not just noise, and certainly not just conflict for conflict's sake.

### Practice the Pyramid Principle

This strategy is informed by what any architect knows about building: Whether constructing the Pyramid of Cheops, Blenheim Palace, the Vatican or the Great Wall of China, the only way to proceed is one stone at a time.

When it comes to conversations about bias, this means we need to adopt a helpful motto.

“Think small.”

Often, in the heat of a Gateway Event, we become overloaded by the scope of the issue and the intensity of emotion. That overload can, in turn, leave us paralyzed and unable to act. The trick to popping the clutch and getting moving again is to sidestep the main issue of the conflict for a moment — don't worry, we'll get back to it later — and, instead, build a foundation of small successes on which the solution to the big problem can ultimately rest. By thinking smaller, we create bite-size strategies that can be swallowed without gagging and that are manageable even when we are lost in a maze of self-consciousness, anger or fear.

And wider and wider the base becomes, and firmer the foundation, until we have constructed, if not the Great Pyramid of Cheops, at least a modest structure of good communication with the potential of better understanding. ●

## Verbal Skills for Diversity Dialogue

My father, who was an actor, taught me something

important about the presentation of dialogue, ideas or accusations: Lower your voice. By softening our voice, we allow, and even tempt, the listener to crane forward to hear, and more readily understand, what this mysterious and barely audible message is all about.

Many of us believe that for words to be effective, they must be forceful, dramatic and exaggerated. The opposite is true. Understatement is almost always more powerful, and often more accurate, than exaggeration.

### Avoid Dogmatic and Dismissive Language

It is when someone has accused us of a biased attitude that we are most tempted to make dogmatic statements. Particularly if we haven't gotten ourselves diversity fit, we are apt to buckle at the knees and at the heart and lash back with an inflexible, “You're too sensitive” or that pair of old standbys, “You know what I meant” and “I was only kidding.” Each of these dismissive phrases does little more than make the object of the allegedly offending statement feel still more diminished and the person who has been accused of bias look foolish and unkind. ●

## Conclusion

Biases are distorted views of other human beings that are created by messages from the past and sustained by fear of what will happen in the future. If only we could remain in the moment — free of past messages and future fears — our vision would clear, we could see the people around us more accurately, and cases of mistaken identity would no longer weaken our ability to treat others with the respect and dignity they deserve.

Like shoving biases aside, being in the moment is a habit. I know it's a habit because most of us have been habituated to the opposite behavior since childhood. For years, we have allowed, and even encouraged, our minds to jump from subject to subject, and from past to present to future. It is time we work to break that habit and focus on the now and on the individual before us. It is time we see people for who they are. ●

### RECOMMENDED READING LIST

If you liked *Making Diversity Work*, you'll also like:

1. ***The 2020 Workplace* by Jeanne C. Meister and Karie Willyerd.** This summary provides a useful guide to help you and your organization create tomorrow's workplace of choice.
2. ***Free Agent Nation* by Daniel H. Pink.** The “Organization Man” is dead. Long live the Free Agent. Pink explains the reasons for the development of widespread free agency and how it impacts your company and your industry.
3. ***Bridging the Culture Gap* by Penny Carte and Chris Fox.** Based on the real-life business situations of the authors' many international clients, this summary helps those of any nationality to become better communicators.