

# Making Racial Equity Tools Effective

## Governing for Racial Equity

### City of Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative

December 14, 2012

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# Agenda Overview

1. **Counteracting Implicit Bias – Terry Keleher**
2. **Seattle Initiative/Tools – Glenn Harris**
3. **King County Initiative/Tools – Carrie Cihak**
4. **Q & A**
5. **Next Steps: Choice Points & Equity Primes**
6. **Evaluation & Closing**



# IMPLICIT BIAS

- Implicit biases are pervasive
- People are often unaware of their implicit bias
- Implicit biases predict behavior
- People differ in levels of implicit bias

-- *Project Implicit* ([www.projectimplicit.net](http://www.projectimplicit.net))



# EXAMPLES OF IMPLICIT BIAS

- Doctors are less likely to prescribe life-saving care to blacks.
- Managers are less likely to call back or hire members of a different ethnic group.
- NBA referees are more likely to subtly favor players with whom they share a racial identity.

*Source: <http://writers.unconsciousbias.org/unconsciousbias/>*



# IMPLICIT BIAS IS INDIVIDUAL AND INSTITUTIONAL

- A lot of contemporary racism occurs without intention or malice. It does not require “racists.” Implicit bias helps explain how racism can be subtle in appearance but significant in impact.
- In institutions, the bias of individuals is routinely replicated through collective decisions and actions. It becomes compounded unless it’s consciously counteracted.
- “Implicit Bias...offers the idea that discrimination and bias are *social*, rather than *individual* issues, and that we can thus all participate in promoting equality.” -*American Values Project*



# CHOICE POINTS: THE CROSSROADS TO CHANGE



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# CHOICE POINTS

- Choice points are decision-making opportunities that influence outcomes.
- The cumulative impacts of many small choices can be as significant as the impacts of big decisions.
- When we're conscious of choice points and the related impacts, we're less likely to replicate implicit bias and the status quo, and we open new possibilities for equitable change.



# CHOICE POINTS IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Decision points in the criminal justice system where discretion is exercised that may produce a disparate impact:

- Enforcing the Law (e.g. racial profiling, “stop and frisk”)
- Arraignment, Release, and Pre-Adjudicatory Decision
- Adjudication and Sentencing
- Probation and Community Supervision
- Jail and Prison Custody
- Parole Decisions

Source: “Reducing Racial Disparities in the Criminal Justice System,” The Sentencing Project





# USING CHOICE POINTS TO ADVANCE EQUITY & INCLUSION

1. Where are the decision-making points that affect outcomes?
2. What decisions/actions may be reinforcing the status quo, implicit bias and current inequities?
3. What alternative action options could produce different outcomes?
4. Which action will best advance equity and inclusion?
5. What reminders, supports and accountability systems can be structured into routine practices to keep equity as a high priority?



# CHOICE POINTS: EXAMPLES

| Personal   | Institutional  |
|--|--|
| <b>Consumer decisions:</b> where to shop, what to buy, or boycott? | <b>Planning:</b> what to change and prioritize in programs/workplans?  |
| <b>Volunteer work:</b> what causes to get involved in?             | <b>Budgeting:</b> what items to prioritize, add or cut?                |
| <b>Charitable contributions:</b> what organizations to support?    | <b>Personnel:</b> who to hire, retain, promote, or develop as leaders? |
| <b>Socializing:</b> who to spend time with?                        | <b>Policy Development:</b> what to propose or modify?                  |
| <b>Voting:</b> which candidates or causes to support?              | <b>Practices:</b> routines/habits to continue, change, or cut?         |



# INSTITUTIONALIZING RACIAL EQUITY

| Implicit Bias  | Explicit Equity   |
|--|---|
| Unaware of choice points                                   | Builds in decision-making guides that evoke consideration of equity             |
| Exclusive of stakeholders                                  | Fosters active engagement and empowerment of stakeholders                       |
| Not attentive to race, gender, income and other inequities | Gives distinct, specific and sufficient attention to key disparities/inequities |
| Ignores barriers to access                                 | Supports and implements strategies to remove barriers                           |
| Does not consider racial impacts                           | Systematically analyzes potential impacts on disadvantaged groups               |



# PAIR & SHARE: USING CHOICE POINTS

1. For the Institution/organization you identified, what is a choice point where a current decision/course of action may affect racial outcomes.
2. For that choice point, identify some alternative actions that could lead to different and more favorable racial outcomes.
3. Decide which option could leverage the most equitable change.



# Equity Tools: Priming Consciousness to Counteract Bias

- Judicial Bench Cards
- Equity Impact Assessments
- Equity-Driven Planning
- Pocket Guide to Budgeting

# RACIAL EQUITY-DRIVEN PLANNING

- **Proactively seeks to eliminate inequities and advance equity** in policy and program development, budgeting and other kinds of planning and decision-making.
- **Identifies clear goals and objectives**, measurable outcomes and benchmarks, and tasks and timelines.
- **Develops mechanisms for successful implementation**, documentation and evaluation, with ample assigned staffing and funding—and built-in reminders and accountability mechanism—for ensuring success and sustainability.



# RACIAL EQUITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- A careful examination of the likely impacts of a policy proposal in order to minimize disparities and foster racial equity and inclusion.
- It can be a vital tool for facilitating race-conscious analysis of proposed policies, practices or programs.



# Stakeholder Engagement is Key





# Racial Justice: Strategy for Change

- Focuses on changing systems institutional policies, practices and outcome—we cannot simply focus on changing individuals.
- Engages and empowers stakeholders
- Proposes equitable solutions and proactive strategies – we cannot simply be reactive.
- Requires ongoing consciousness and strategic action – we cannot be “colorblind.”

**When we're not consciously part of the solution,  
we're often unconsciously part of the problem.**

# Pair & Share: Using Choice Points and Equity Tools/Primes in Your Work

1. What is a **choice point** in your area of work where decisions/actions (or inaction) affect racial outcomes?
2. What is an **equity tool** or prime you could use to evoke more consciousness of racial equity at that choice point?
3. What is a **next step** you could take to introduce/enhance/expand the use of an equity tool in your area of work?