

HOW RACIALLY EQUITABLE IS YOUR FOUNDATION?

ASSESSING YOUR PRACTICE

*Dr. Meredith Reitman, Reitman Research and Strategy, LLC
Workshop for Philanthropy New York, May 18, 2018*

Hello and welcome to this workshop on how to assess racial equity in your foundation. My name is Meredith and I want to give a warm thank you to Philanthropy New York for inviting me here today, and to you all for joining me.

I want to begin with a quick note on how I developed our discussion today. When exploring barriers to racial equity, I feel it is important to make sure the voices of those who are most impacted are central to the discussion. As a white woman, I do not fall into that category. So as much as possible I will be centering the words and experiences of people of color, and especially black women, to explain how race works for or against us in our country.

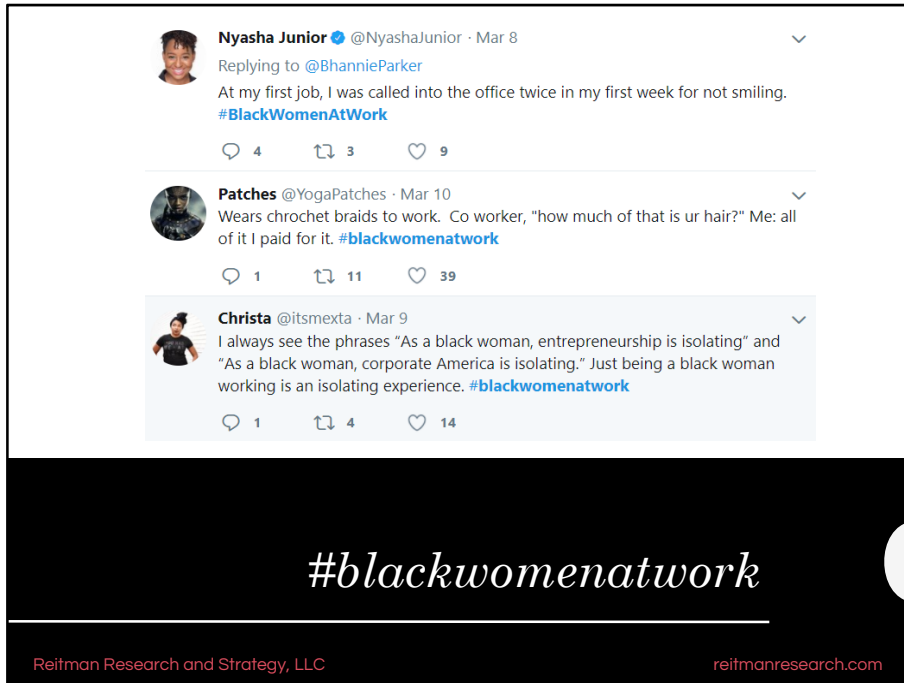
too black

They take my kindness for weakness. They take my silence for speechless.	Any praise is preferential treatment. To voice concern is discontentment.
They consider my uniqueness strange. They call my language slang.	If I stand up for myself, I'm too defensive If I don't trust them, I'm too apprehensive
They see my confidence as conceit. They see my mistakes as defeat.	I'm deviant if I separate I'm fake if I assimilate
They consider my success accidental. They minimize my intelligence to "potential".	My advancement is somehow unfair. When I reach the top, it's considered rare.
My questions mean I'm unaware. Not to ask means I don't care.	My character is constantly under attack. Pride for my race somehow makes me "too black".


(Moore, 2002)

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Along those lines, I will start us off with a poem by Cynthia Moore from 2002 that I came across while doing my academic research. While it was unfamiliar to me back then, it was well known to many of the black folks I spoke to. You can find the poem on page 1 of your packet - we're going to read it out loud together, each taking a stanza.



More recently black women have also been sharing their experiences at work by using the hashtag #blackwomenatwork, which was created by activist Brittany Packnett a year ago – right after Maxine Waters and April Ryan were publicly disrespected. She created it in order to “challenge non-Black people to stand with Black women not just when this happens on television, but in the cube right next to them.”



Christa @itsmexta · Mar 9
This is why it is crucial that we have (and continue to create) spaces just for us. To be surrounded by other black woman and feel a belonging and acceptance... that feeling is healing. [#blackgirlsgather](#)

Christa @itsmexta · Mar 9
I am thankful for those black women create these space for us on a regular! I am grateful for those black women who become part of my community when I create these spaces for us. [#gratitude](#) [#BlackWomen](#)

Christa @itsmexta · Mar 9
[#blackwomen](#) deserve space to just breathe & simply be.

#blackwomenatwork

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today's workshop

- Introductions
- Glossary
- In the workplace
- Break it down
- What to do

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So here's what we'll be doing today. We'll start off with some introductions, move onto a glossary-for-the-day so we're all on the same page, talk about these concepts in the workplace, break them down into their component parts, and then spend a good chunk of time discussing what to do by actually walking through the use of several tools.

1
Who am I?

2
Who are you?

3
What brought
you here
today?

introductions

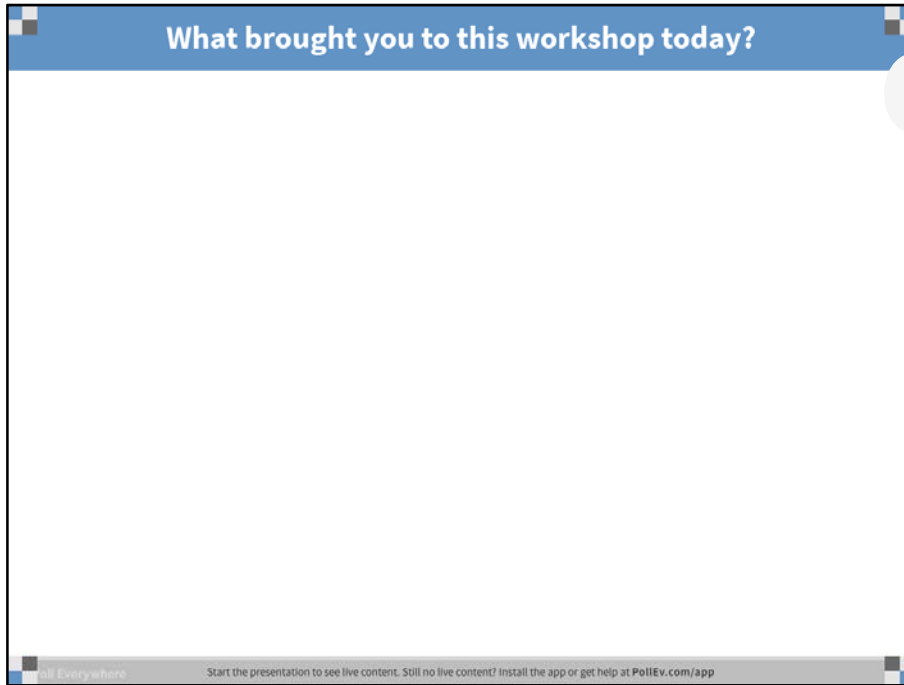
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So a little about me – when I was talking to Kathryn about this workshop, I called myself an “impassioned technician” and I think that remains a good description. I am a lover of data and research – which was very helpful when I was a professor – but am most fulfilled when I am using those skills to work on racial justice and equity. I’m a New Yorker by heritage but Michigan-born, currently living in Queens.

Let’s go around the room and hear from you – name, where you were born and where you now reside.

Great thank you – I’m now going to ask you to take out your phones and visit pollev.com/meredith to answer the question there.



Poll Title: What brought you to this workshop today?
https://www.polleverywhere.com/free_text_polls/CHtzf4XBV9cDw7v



Thanks so much for sharing that. That will help direct me as we move forward.

Before we get into the complexities of assessing racial equity, it's best to all be on the same page about the terms we're using. I call this "glossary-for-a-day" as you are welcome to use the terms in other ways as soon as you step outside the workshop, but while we're here, this is what we mean.

So let's start with the big one: Race. Race, according to the various experts at *Race: The Power of an Illusion* (an amazing PBS-produced miniseries) is an imposed social idea that gives people different access to opportunities and resources according to physical traits (skin, hair, eyes).

glossary

An imposed social idea that gives people different access to opportunities and resources according to physical traits (skin, hair, eyes).

(Race: The Power of an Illusion)



Ethnicity, by comparison, is a chosen identity associated with cultural traditions such as food, language, and religion. It is not generally associated with social hierarchies.

However, sometimes ethnicity can be racialized! Sometimes this happens in order to empower groups and sometimes to marginalize them. So “Mexican”, generally associated with culture or language, can be racialized on the body as “brown” either to support advocacy or to create a threat. The same goes for people who identify as Muslim. This process usually happens when resources (money, jobs) are at stake.

glossary

A chosen identity associated with cultural traditions such as food, language, and religion. Not generally associated with social hierarchies.

But sometimes ethnicity can be racialized!

(Race: The Power of an Illusion)



Now we come to racism. I looked at a lot of definitions to find one that I felt truly captured the genesis and impact of this concept and this was my favorite by far. Racism involves physical, psychological, spiritual, and social control, exploitation and subjection of one race by another race. It is the social institutionalization of the psychological concept of white supremacy. This means that racial discrimination and injustice are established, perpetuated and promoted throughout every institution of society - economics, education, entertainment, family, labor, law, politics, religion, science and war.

glossary

Racism involves physical, psychological, spiritual, and social control, exploitation and subjection of one race by another race. It is the social institutionalization of the psychological concept of white supremacy...

glossary

...This means that racial discrimination and injustice are established, perpetuated and promoted throughout every institution of society - economics, education, entertainment, family, labor, law, politics, religion, science and war.

(Phavia Kujichagulia)



Now let's move on to Diversity, Inclusion and Equity. Here I am drawing on the report from Bellwether Education Partners called "Unrealized Impact". You'll see some work from them in your packet a little later on. They did an amazing synthesis of how people use these terms.

So to start us off, diversity is about representation, or the presence of different types of people.



Inclusion is more about involvement, respect, connection



We see equity when we see equally high outcomes for all – outcomes is the key word here.

Diversity: presence of different types of people

Inclusion: involvement, respect, connection

Equity: equally high outcomes for all

glossary

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Looking at all three together, we can see how they are each important but distinct. Doing one without the other might not lead to the results you want.

Equity: correct past
and current harms

glossary

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One more thing about that distinguishes the three: diversity alone can tend to ignore systems of power. Inclusion can, too, especially if no one is question who is doing the including. Equity recognizes the role power plays in the development of outcomes and states that something must be done to counteract that power. It also recognizes current and past harms and attempts to correct them in service of achieving equal outcomes.

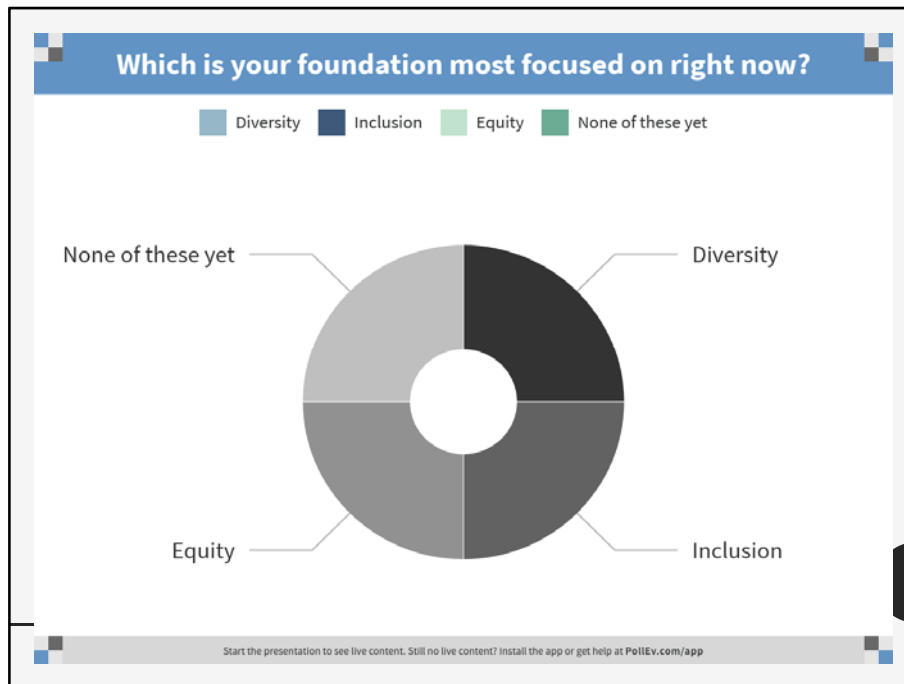
glossary



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Using the example of Queens, where I live, we can see that it is very racially diverse, but it is not inclusive, nor is it equitable. Most of the decisions are in the hands of a small group of white men, and the outcomes on all axes – health, employment, education, criminal justice – are widely divergent by race.



So let's take a minute now to see which concept your foundation is most focused on right now.

Poll Title: Which is your foundation most focused on right now?

https://www.polleverywhere.com/multiple_choice_polls/dhucWDKIEexHIZc



Ok, now that we have our glossary-for-a-day under our belts, let's switch to how it plays out in the workplace. I'm going to use some data from my own research to start us off.

My academic research was on how race operates in the workplace, particularly whether people felt a sense of belonging. I studied this from both a qualitative and quantitative perspective, using the case study of the IT industry in Seattle. As part of my qualitative analysis I interviewed men in professional-level jobs who self-identified as Asian, white and Black. Together, we're going to read out quotes from these men starting on page 2 in your packet. The names given are pseudonyms.

*in the
workplace*

Neil
Black Program Manager

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“I felt like I was under the microscope... Coming to work and just by walking in you stand out because obviously you look different.”

Daily struggle with intense scrutiny.

*in the
workplace*

John
Asian Software Engineer

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“I’ve always blended in. I’ve always blended in really well. There’s never been any negative issues at work for me.”

It is important to note that neither black nor white employees used the language of “blending” – black employees felt it was impossible (as you’ll see in the next quote) and white employees never questioned their belonging] John is experiencing conditional belonging – belonging as long as he conforms to the white dominant culture.

*in the
workplace*

Jeremy
Black Software Engineer

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“I’d say OK, I go in here I know there’s going to be product unit managers and group managers and vice presidents and here I am, the lone black person on the team, and I’m late. It’s like, argh! And everyone else, there are a lot of people late, but the fact that I would stand out coming in late [means] I couldn’t just blend in, even if I wanted to.”

His blackness puts his late attendance in the spotlight.

*in the
workplace*

Gary
Black Software Tester

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“One of the things that they’ll talk about is “they’re the black guy.” And it’s like, no, I busted my behind to get here. I did all the extras and it’s not because I’m a black guy, it’s because I’m literally really good, pretty much better than you.”

So Gary is facing constant challenges to his qualifications and achievements because he is not seen as belonging, so must be there for some other reason.

*in the
workplace*

Samir
Asian Software Engineer

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“I do know a couple of other friends of mine from my origin who people have a hard time understanding ... but thankfully I haven’t come across that. But I do ask [my friends] “do you understand what I’m saying or [am I] just rattling something and you’re trying very hard to understand? And they’ve been very honest with me ... and I appreciate that. That’s how you know whether you’re doing it right.”

So for Samir, avoiding the stereotype is a process of constant study, checking and rechecking.

*in the
workplace*

Rich
Black Game Designer

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“I didn't know if I was going to be accepted on interviews if I had my hair like this. Because my cousin was doing consulting work and one of his performance reviews said that his image or something along those lines gave off an attitude. And he felt like that had to do with his hair because his hair was dreaded at the time. So he cut his hair off. And I was like wait a minute, this isn't the same cousin I know that said he'd never do this and never do that? But you know, he said hey, he had to do what he had to do. And I don't know if it was worded in such a way where there could have been a lawsuit or anything like that, but I didn't know if it was going to be a problem when I interviewed up here.”

*in the
workplace*

U.S. Court Rules Dreadlock Ban During Hiring Process Is Legal


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Rich was right to be worried.

In 2016, the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled against a lawsuit filed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission against Catastrophe Management Solutions, effectively ruling that refusing to hire someone because of their dreadlocks is legal. The lawsuit was filed by the EEOC on behalf of Chastity Jones, whose job offer was rescinded by Catastrophe Management Solutions, located in Mobile, Alabama. [According to the case file](#), Jeannie Wilson, a human resources manager for CMS, commented on Jones' dreadlocks during a private hiring meeting to discuss scheduling conflicts, telling Jones, "they tend to get messy, although I'm not saying yours are, but you know what I'm talking about." Wilson told Jones that CMS would not bring Jones on board with dreadlocks, terminating the job offer.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/nbcblk/u-s-court-rules-dreadlock-ban-during-hiring-process-legal-n652211>



in the workplace

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Let's move into a slightly lighter space to wrap up this section. Here are "10 moments black people in the workplace know too well" from BuzzFeed.

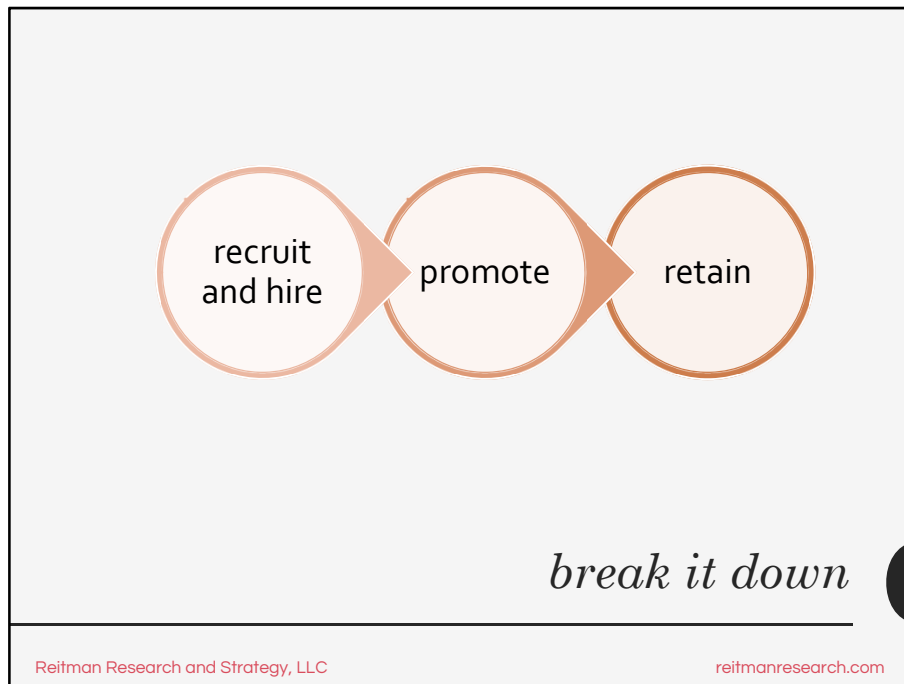
think
pair
share

What stories have you heard – in your life or in the news – that echo what we just shared?

think alone (1m)
pair together (2m)
share out (4m)

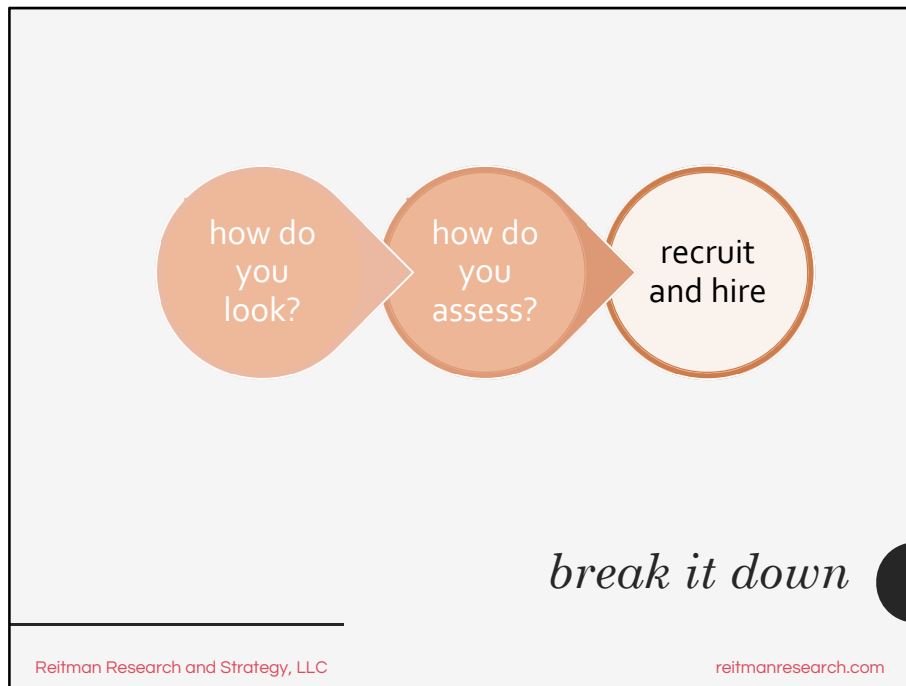
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After hearing those stories, we're going to do a think/pair/share. Read the question on the slide, take one minute to think on your own, 2 minutes to pair with someone next to you and share your response, and then we'll take four minutes to share out together.



Thank you for sharing your thoughts in response to those stories.

Now let's breakdown what's happening in the workplace into its component parts. In the workplace, where do we generally see issues when it comes to racial equity? In the recruitment and hiring process, in the promotion process, and in the way we retain (or do not retain) employees.



What kinds of things get in the way of racially equitable recruitment and hiring process?
Well, the way we look for people and the way we assess the people we find.



So, for example, when it comes to recruiting, relying on referrals means you are relying on established networks, which remain overwhelmingly segregated.

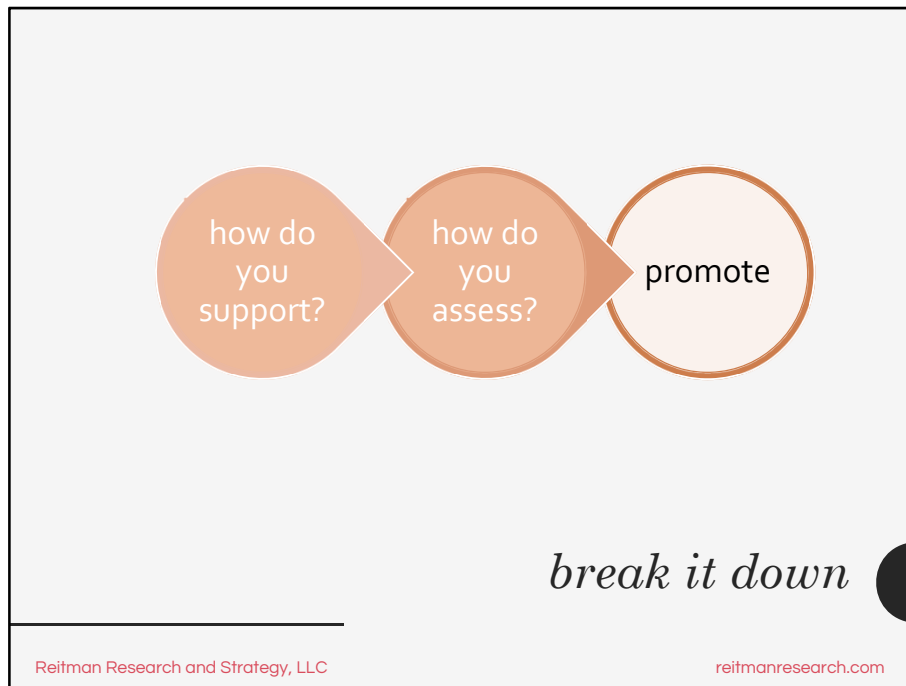


We also encounter problems in the hiring process, mostly due to implicit bias.

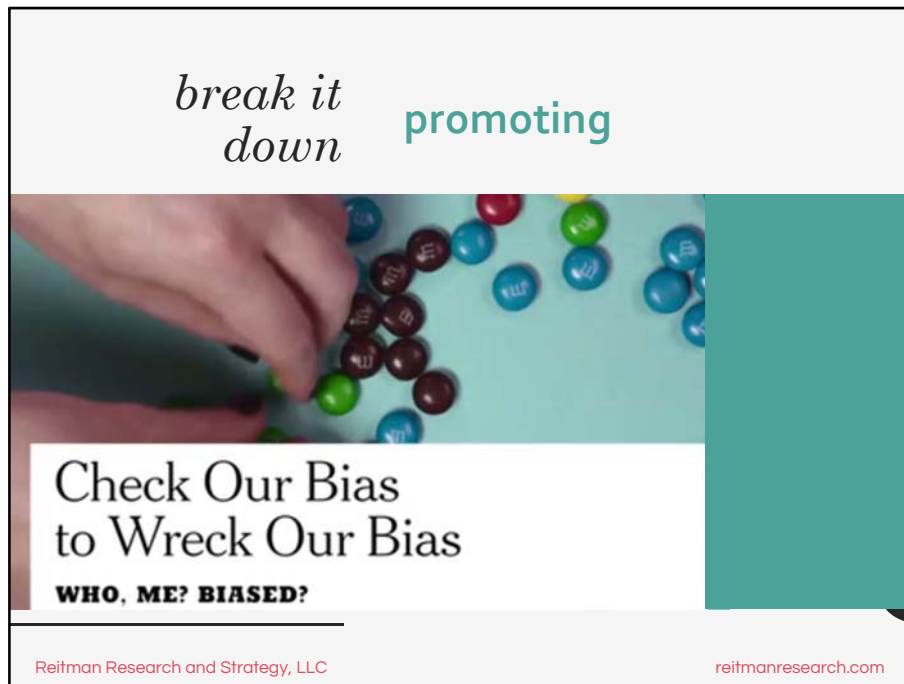
You've probably heard of implicit bias before – this is my favorite explanatory series – we'll return to it a couple times:

<https://www.nytimes.com/video/us/100000004818663/peanut-butter-jelly-and-racism.html>

The fog we're in impedes our judgement in important decisions, specifically in how we judge whether someone is right for a job.

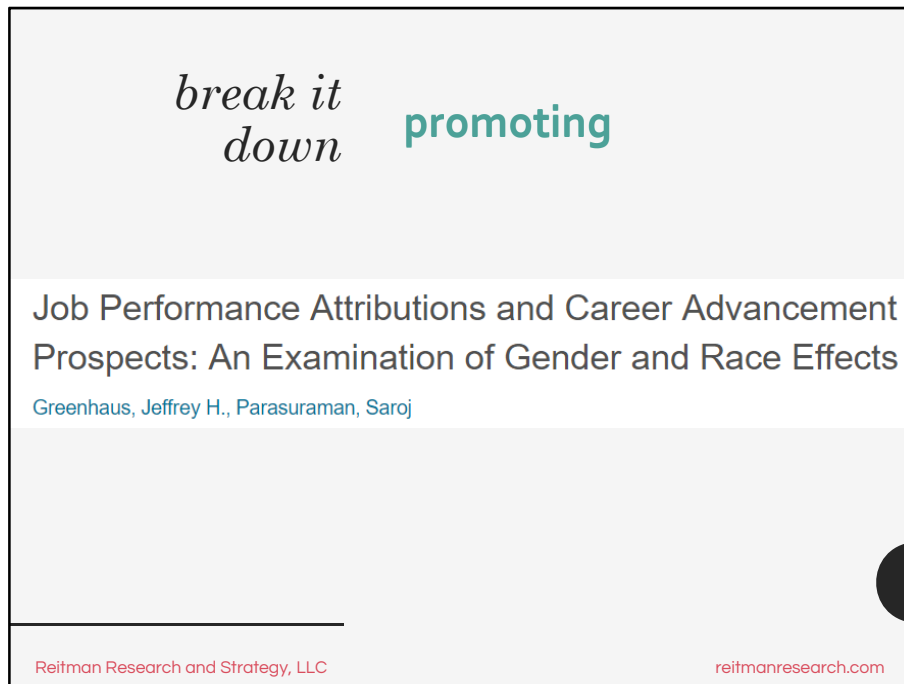


What kinds of things get in the way of racially equitable promotion process? Well, the way support people and assess their progress.



Here again implicit bias makes an appearance in who you mentor or train or share information with. Here we'll hear a story about students reaching out to professors for mentoring. <https://www.nytimes.com/video/us/100000004818668/check-our-bias-to-wreck-our-bias.html>

This video also hints at some things you can do if your research shows that you are demonstrating bias, which we can talk about later in our workshop.



And of course we'll see issues with how performance is evaluated.

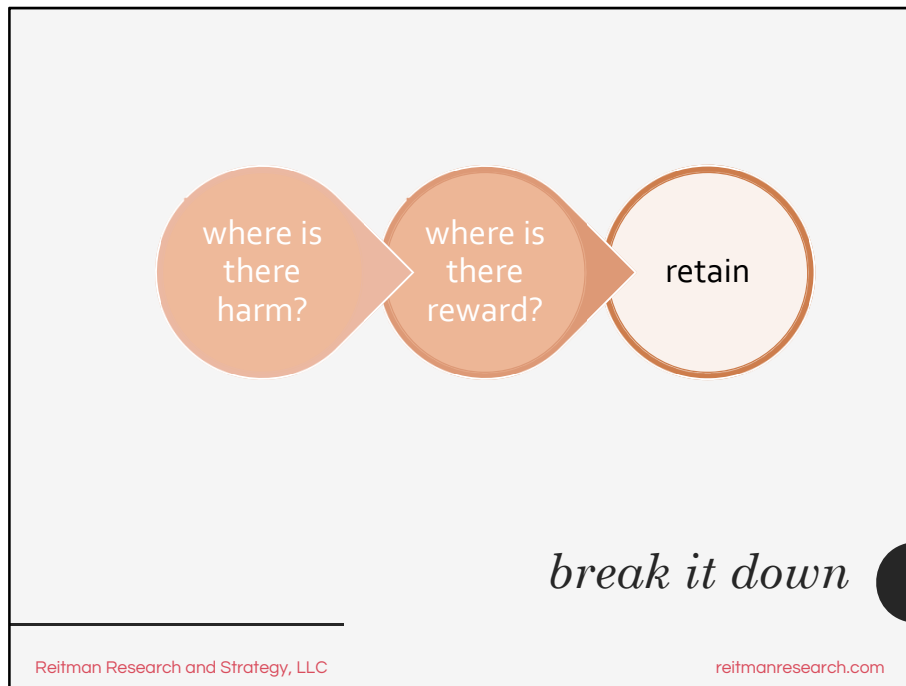
This study here “examined the impact of managers’ gender and race on job performance attributions made by their supervisors. Among the most highly successful managers, the performance of women was less likely to be attributed to ability than the performance of men. In addition, the performance of black managers was less likely to be attributed to ability and effort and was more likely to be attributed to help from others than the performance of white managers.”



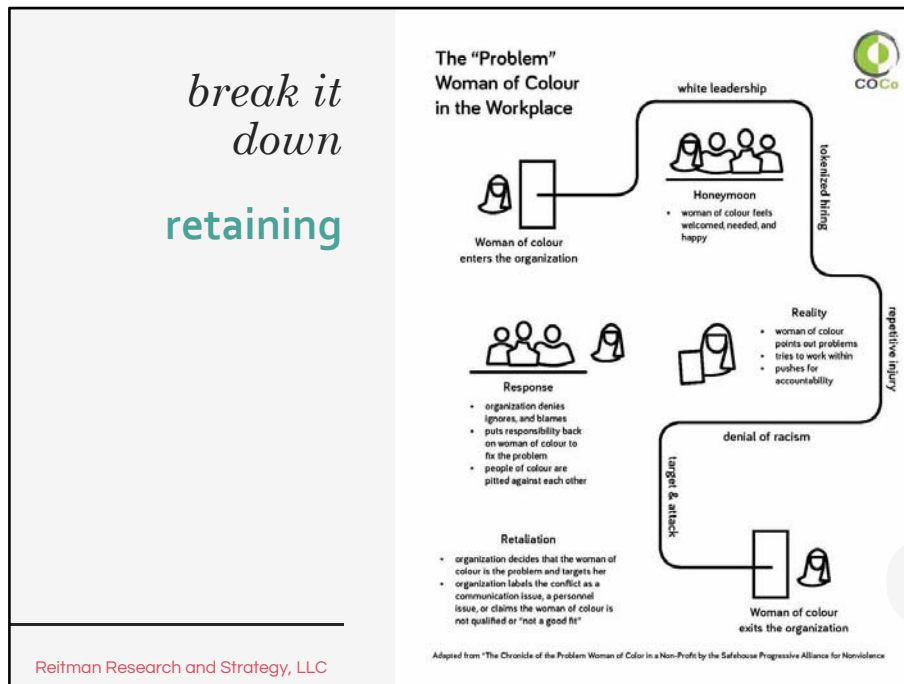
And of course we'll see issues with how performance is evaluated.

There are also specific types of bias people of color come across in the performance evaluation process. The "prove it again" bias creates a situation where groups stereotyped as less competent often have to provide more evidence in order to be judged equally competent. Black people might also face "tightrope bias" that creates less acceptance for anger or self-promotion when it comes from a black person, and require them to create "comfort strategies" to ensure that white people are comfortable in order to get ahead.

As one black woman put it in a recent HBR article, "I've been told to smile in the office and, at the risk of coming across as too aggressive, I tend to wait until everyone else has spoken before choosing to weigh in. Part of that is simply because I'm an introvert. But another part is because I've been conditioned by society and its predominantly white institutions to feel that as a black woman I come across as aggressive, bossy, and selfish when I speak my mind compare to a man or white woman making this same statements. Many people feel as though they can't be their true selves in the workplace at the risk of seeming unprofessional."



What kinds of things get in the way of racially equitable retention? Well, the way folks are either harmed or rewarded.



This just came out a few months ago from Coco, a social justice organization in Quebec. It “spoke to many of the stories employees in the nonprofit sector had told us about their own experience” And of course, when it comes to rewards, all the factors that come into formal promotions processes like attributing success to talent/effort or external help play a role in ongoing recognition as well.

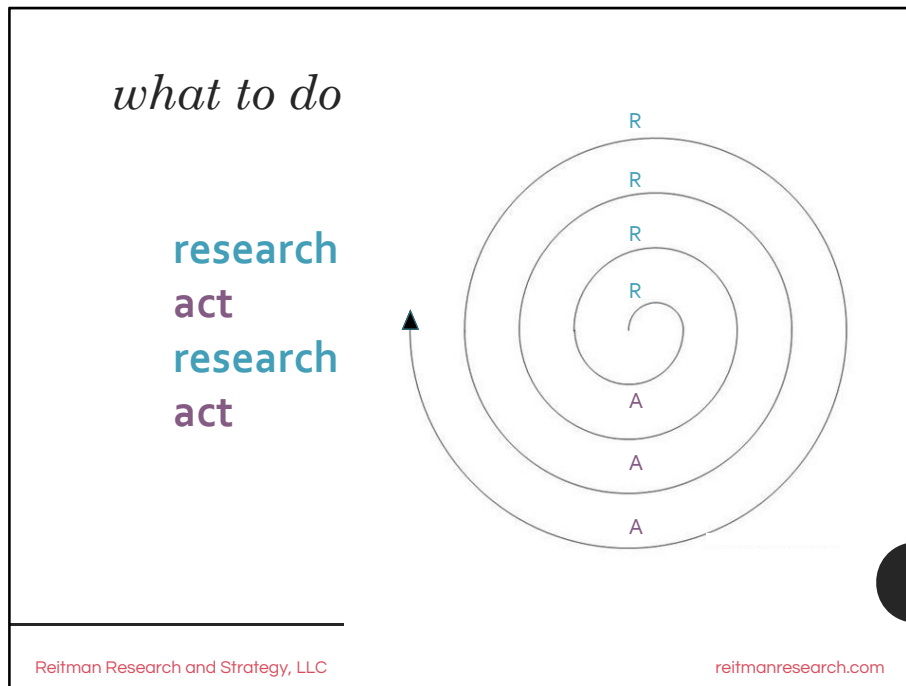
Ok we’re going to digest that and take a break for about ten minutes, and come back to talk tools.

what to do

- Overview
- Research exercises
- Act and research again
- Next steps

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Now we get to the part where we do something about it! Here's an overview of the section



The process of addressing racial equity is iterative, like a spiral. First you conduct research then you act on the basis of what you found. Then you do more research to see if anything has improved, then you act again. The motto I like best is: “Make mistakes, keep going”

what to do

**Why
research
first?**

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Why research first, before training or any other intervention? 1) Because though there are some common themes, every organization is different in how it is, or has, been approaching this topic, or even just operating in general. It's important to find the intervention that best suits what you actually need. 2) Research is also a really excellent way to build buy-in for the work – people learn and feel heard throughout the exploratory process.

what to do

- Four exercises
 - Comparing characteristics
 - Tracking numbers
 - Analyzing practices
 - Asking questions

We'll be trying out four exercises together

what to do comparing characteristics

Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist, Multicultural Organization
SHOWN'S TALK — MELIETH'S TALK — OVERKILL — ANTI-RACIST MELIETH'S TALK
 Race and Culture Differences: Same or Different? — Patterns of Racism and Cultural Differences — Race and Culture Differences: Same or Different?

An Evolutionary Institution	A "Club" Institution	A Compliance Organization	An Affirming Institution	A Transforming Institution	A Fully Inclusive and Equitable Multicultural Organization
Intentionally and explicitly includes all groups: Black, American, Asian, American, Latinx, and others. Leaders and public relations do their utmost to demonstrate authentic inclusiveness and respect for all people and practices, including all forms of diversity.	Explicit or implicit inclusion of all groups: Black, American, Asian, American, Latinx, and others. Leaders and public relations do their utmost to demonstrate authentic inclusiveness and respect for all people and practices, including all forms of diversity.	Explicit or implicit inclusion of all groups: Black, American, Asian, American, Latinx, and others. Leaders and public relations do their utmost to demonstrate authentic inclusiveness and respect for all people and practices, including all forms of diversity.	Explicit or implicit inclusion of all groups: Black, American, Asian, American, Latinx, and others. Leaders and public relations do their utmost to demonstrate authentic inclusiveness and respect for all people and practices, including all forms of diversity.	Explicit or implicit inclusion of all groups: Black, American, Asian, American, Latinx, and others. Leaders and public relations do their utmost to demonstrate authentic inclusiveness and respect for all people and practices, including all forms of diversity.	Explicit or implicit inclusion of all groups: Black, American, Asian, American, Latinx, and others. Leaders and public relations do their utmost to demonstrate authentic inclusiveness and respect for all people and practices, including all forms of diversity.

Early Stage Organizations

We find that Early Stage organizations typically have low staff and leadership demographic diversity, and staff within these organizations experience low inclusivity and low equity based on our indices. We also typically see relatively high incidences of discrimination and lower than average staff perceptions of diversity, equity, and inclusion. While leaders and staff members in these organizations likely have good intentions, these intentions are not yet translating to higher diversity or stronger staff experiences around inclusion. These organizations are often hindered and held back by regulatory white teams. Our data shows that staff within these organizations perceive that management commitment is low and that the organization is not consistently practicing diversity, equity, and inclusion among other competing priorities, which may explain why intention is not translating to action.

When focusing intentionally on diversity, equity, and inclusion, these organizations may face resistance or pushback in the form of statements like, "I don't even know what an equal means when we refer to diversity, equity, and inclusion," "How do diversity, equity, and inclusion help us to do our work better?" or "We are too busy to focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion this year, maybe next year!"

Organizations currently aligned with this profile should focus parallel efforts on dimensions of diversity, equity, and inclusion. These organizations should consider articulating beliefs around the anticipated benefits of diversity, equity, and inclusion and how these benefits enable inclusion impact. These organizations can create a clear plan to accelerate progress using promising practices and a focused set of investments, positioning and enabling leaders to model desired behaviors. Based on our experience in the field, as these organizations make progress, they will likely see a slow (and unlikely) increase across staff perceptions of diversity, equity, and inclusion as well as increased management commitment, staff perceptions of effectiveness of DEI work, and net promoter scores. They may see a parallel slow decrease in staff witnessing and/or experiencing discrimination.

Our Early Stage Organizations typically score as follows:

Diversity	Lower	Higher
Equity	Lower	Higher
Inclusion	Lower	Higher
Net Promoter Score	Lower	Higher
Incidents of Discrimination	Higher	Lower

As a very first step, organizations can come together and take a diagnostic assessment that allows stakeholders to say where they think the organization is within a continuum or among a set of organizational types. In your packet on pages 3 – 8, you have two different tools that allow you to do this comparison. Pick one and mark up the phrases that you think most closely resemble your organization. We'll take 5-10 minutes for you to do this, and then I'll ask a series of questions:

- [Discussion]
1. How was this process for you? Did any part of it feel challenging or rewarding?
 2. How do you feel about where your organization landed?
 3. How do you think you might use these tools (or tools like them) to do a comparative assessment in your organization? [END AT 11:00]



Sometimes when we look at our workplaces, we may have diversity but not inclusion and equity. In other words, there may be representation, but it is segregated in certain positions or pay scales. Fortunately, there is a way to quantify how segregated your workplace is, using methods derived from how we measure geographic segregation.

Look at the worksheet from ROC United's Racial Equity Toolkit on page 10. I'm going to give you the first 6 numbers to fill out, then I'll ask you to go through the rest of the steps and report your answer in a poll at pollev.com/meredith.

Step 1: 100

Step 2: 80

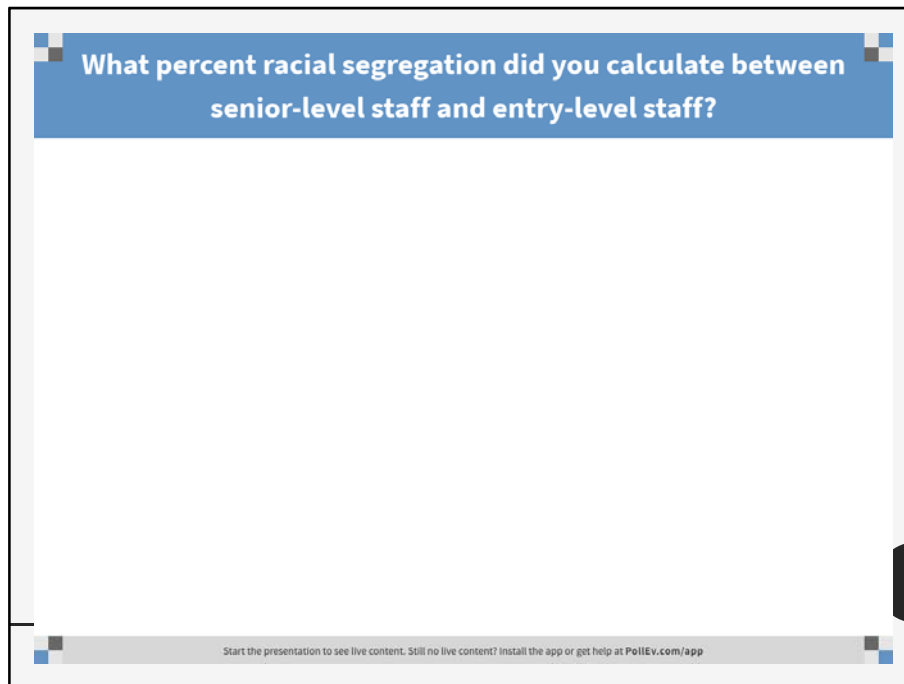
Step 3: 20

Step 4: 50

Step 5: 5

Step 6: 45

So you see here we have a diverse workforce that is one-third people of color, but it is not inclusive nor equitable because it has a high level of occupational segregation.



Poll Title: What percent racial segregation did you calculate between senior-level staff and entry-level staff?

https://www.poll Everywhere.com/free_text_polls/A5MBvDUbcY87cEL

what to do analyzing practices

The image shows two worksheets from a racial equity toolkit. The left worksheet is titled "RECRUITMENT, OUTREACH, AND ADVERTISING" and the right is "APPLICATION AND HIRING PROCESS". Both worksheets have a vertical "WORKSHEET" label on the left side. Each worksheet contains several sections: "SOCIAL EQUITY CHOICE POINTS" with a table for scoring, "POINTS EARNED" with a line for the total score, "EVALUATION" with a text area, and "INDUSTRY BEST PRACTICES" with a list of practices and a "HOW/WHEN" column for notes. The "SOCIAL EQUITY CHOICE POINTS" section includes criteria such as "There are explicit racial-equity inclusion goals and timetables for recruiting the applicant pool" and "The staff members who are responsible for reviewing and hiring applicants are racially diverse, and all HR personnel must be trained in strategies to advance racial equity".

On pages 11-12 you'll see more from a ROC's racial equity toolkit. Go through and give yourself a score for each choice point (0 – absent, 1 – present, but weak, 2 – strong) and we'll come back together and have a discussion.

I'll ask similar questions to what I asked before when we were comparing characteristics:

1. How was this process for you? Did any part of it feel challenging or rewarding?
2. How do you feel about where your organization landed?
3. How do you think you might use these tools (or tools like them) to analyze practices in your organization?

what to do asking questions

They take my kindness for weakness.

They take my silence for speechless.

They consider my uniqueness strange.

They call my language slang.

They see my confidence as conceit.

They see my mistakes as defeat.

They consider my success accidental.

They minimize my intelligence to "potential".

My questions mean I'm unaware.

Not to ask means I don't care.

Any praise is preferential treatment.

To voice concern is discontentment.

If I stand up for myself, I'm too defensive

If I don't trust them, I'm too apprehensive

I'm deviant if I separate

I'm fake if I assimilate

My advancement is somehow unfair.

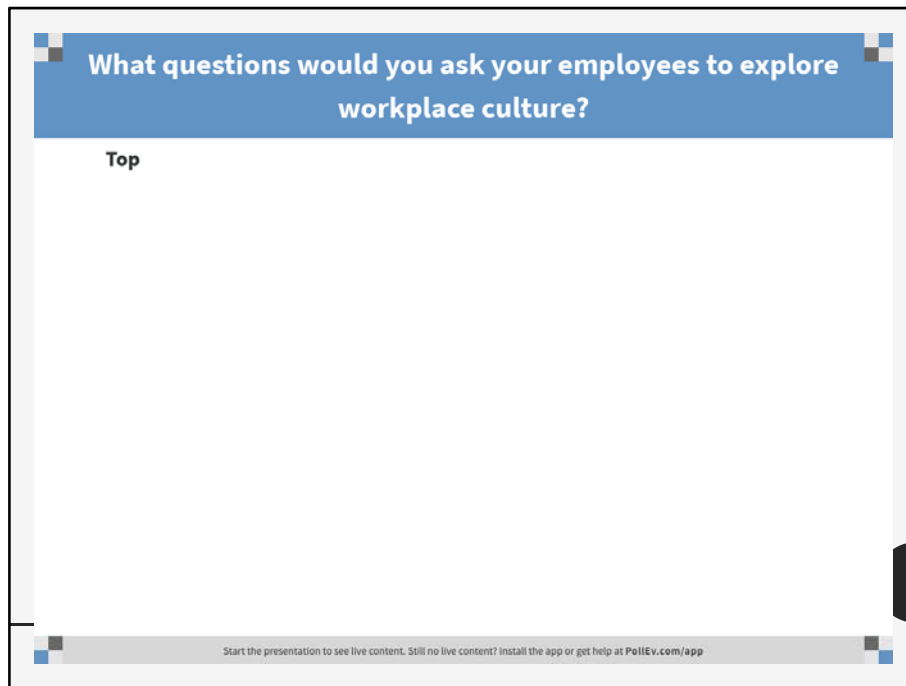
When I reach the top, it's considered rare.

My character is constantly under attack.

Pride for my race somehow makes me "too black".

(Moore, 2002)

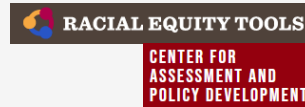
Finally we come to the straight-up social science – all about asking questions. Take a minute to think back to the poem I started this workshop off with. What sorts of questions would you want to ask of your workplace to explore whether employees felt any of these things? Enter your answers and add your upvotes to other people's questions at pollev.com/meredith



Poll Title: What questions would you ask your employees to explore workplace culture?
<https://www.polleverywhere.com/discourses/Q740LYbRecn6z2D>

what to do **act on findings**

- 1) Decide what to prioritize
- 2) Make mistakes and keep going

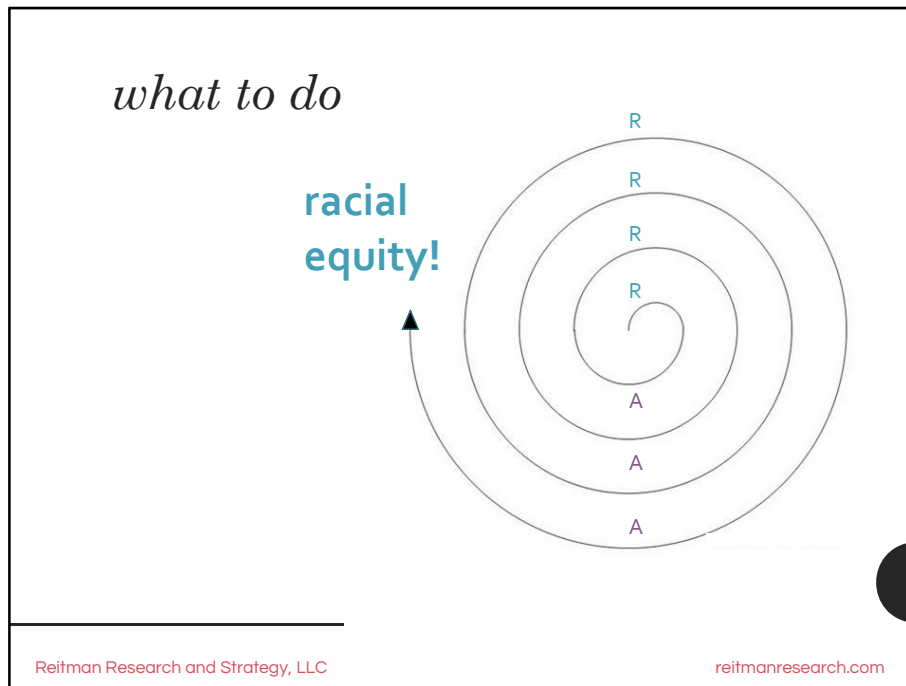


Now, after you have some findings, you can act! Decide what you're going to prioritize (is it what seems most urgent, most important, easiest to tackle?), and then open yourself up to making mistakes. There are **many** tools out there to help, once you diagnose the problem. I recommend two resources.

what to do **research again**

- 1) What has changed?
- 2) Expected and unexpected impacts

Once you've done an initiative, make sure to see if it made the impact you wanted! Or any **other** impacts! And keep in mind it may look like things are getting worse before they are getting better as things come to the surface that were hidden before (but that's a step in the right direction).



And then keep going – a learning organization will be incorporating this kind of activity into its quarterly or yearly process, always trying to get a little closer to its racial equity goals.



So now we come to the end and I have a final question for you.

Poll Title: What is the very first thing you are going to do?
https://www.polleverywhere.com/free_text_polls/eUVGLfIOXu3RPdO

thank you!

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