

**Professional Development Situation: Meeting**

**Skill Focus: Facilitating Inclusive Learning Experiences**

**Time Required: 60 minutes**

## CONFRONTING MY OWN BIASES

Participants will take a Project Implicit test in order to reflect on the needs of nondominant youth in their programs.

### Agenda

What are Implicit Biases?—15 minutes

Taking an Implicit Bias Test—30 minutes

Reflection—15 minutes

### Materials

- Computer with internet connection for each participant.
  - Recommended: ask each participant to bring a laptop.
- Poster paper and pens for optional chalk-talk

## Before the Session

- **Read this meeting guide** to become familiar with the content and allow time to personalize the activities to best suit your presentation style. Read all informational materials.
  - *Italics indicate text that can read aloud or emailed to participants.*
- Send a reminder email about the meeting. Determine if any participants require accommodations (sight; hearing; etc.).
  - *The next professional development opportunity to enhance our STEM skills will be on DATE at TIME at LOCATION. Our focus for this session will be “Facilitating Inclusive Learning Environments” for our youth. **This session is specifically geared toward helping us work on biases that we hold as a result of our life experiences and cultures. Please come with an open mind, and bring a laptop***

**to work on.** *I am happy to answer any questions you have and look forward to seeing you at the meeting. I can be reached at CONTACT INFO.*

- Gather all materials needed for the session.
- [Read about the Implicit Bias tests](#) and take at least one [Implicit Bias Test at Harvard's Project Implicit website](#) (we recommend the **gender-career test as a first test**). Think carefully about whether or not you are prepared to talk about possible biases that arise in your meeting. The results of these tests can make people feel uncomfortable, and we have included a script that you can use to discuss the results with participants.
- Develop a list of possible questions participants might have during the meeting. Create potential responses to be explored through informal conversation. Review any key terms or ideas that may be unclear.
- On the day of the session, test the internet connection.

## Session Outline

### What are Implicit Biases? (15 min)

- Introduce the idea of implicit bias. (You can do this through a discussion or a chalk-talk so that all participants' ideas get out. A chalk-talk is a facilitation tool in which a question is written on a large piece of paper or whiteboard and all participants are invited to contribute by writing instead of speaking.)
  - *What is a bias?* (Allow people to respond to each other before you jump in. Possible responses: a thought or belief you have, people commonly think biases are always negative but they can be positive too)
  - *Do you always know about the biases you have?* (No; they are often subconscious; most of us would never say we are biased toward attractive people, for example, but we almost always tend to elect them)
  - ***An implicit bias is one that you don't necessarily know that you have.***
  - *Why would educators want to know about their implicit biases?* (It helps them work with youth more fairly, helps them be more inclusive, it helps them grow as professionals and as compassionate human beings)

### Project Implicit (30 min)

- Transition to having people do a bias test on Project Implicit.
  - *Get out your laptops* (or turn on the computers if in a lab).
- Read the following text to orient participants to what they're about to do.
  - *We are going to take a test for implicit biases about gender roles and careers. It's going to ask you do some matching of concepts, like male/female to power or*

*business. The computer times your responses to these matching questions and can help you figure out if you have strong implicit biases that interfere with your ability to match these ideas. If you feel like you're going to be uncomfortable doing this, it's okay. **You should not judge yourself for the kinds of biases you have.** They rise out of your experiences, most of which you might not be able to control. If someone has a bias that associates men with strength, it does not mean someone is automatically a misogynist. Rather, these associations come out of an accumulation of years of experiences, some of which we can't control. **Implicit biases aren't a conscious choice, so try not to be too hard on yourself if you get a result that you're not proud of.***

- Direct participants to go to <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>
- Ask them to read the splash screen and click "I wish to proceed" at the bottom.
- For their first implicit bias test, ask participants to take the Gender-Career association test. The tests take 10-15 minutes to do.
- After participants take their first test, ask them to peruse the list of other possible biases and to take another test if they choose.

### Conclusion (15 min)

- Call the room together.
  - *Was anyone surprised by their results?* (If a lot of hands go up, encourage folks to talk with their table groups about how they felt about their results.)
  - *What was your experience taking the test like?*
  - *Do you think that this kind of self-reflection is relevant to your practice as an educator in STEM?* (Again, this might be better as a small-group topic.)
- Give a bit of information about how bias interacts with real life.
  - *Biases might be present in our subconscious but we have to remember that they don't always manifest in real life. Researchers have had difficulty linking implicit biases to overt behavior, mostly because people don't know how their biases impact them. What is the most important is that, as an educator, we keep working to have positive experiences that might push our biases and expand our thinking so that we can appreciate and support all students.*
    - *Possible question: So these biases don't affect us?*
    - *Possible answer: Logic would tell us that on some level, they help us make snap judgments about youth. One test that can be especially difficult to take is the test of race and whether it's easier to associate "good" words with white faces or black faces. Some people have found [evidence that implicit biases are part of the reason that youth of color are](#)*

disproportionately sent to the principal's office in K-12 settings. So the short answer is that *it's complicated*, but we should do everything we can to understand how we might be treating youth from historically underserved backgrounds.

- Help participants understand what they can do with this information.
  - *Now that you know a bit more about how your brain responds to these stimuli, take time to process how that might be affecting your interactions with youth or your assumptions. You can read more about the role of bias in educational settings, or you can just reflect on the kinds of beliefs you have about girls in your setting. We hope this process serves to plant a seed about what it means to confront bias and stereotypes as an adult facilitator.*

## After the Session

- Email the participants:
  - *Thank you for your participation in the recent Click2Science training on “Facilitating Inclusive Learning Environments”. I hope you found it useful and applicable to your practice. I am including the link to the Harvard Project Implicit [here](#). Consider sharing these tests with a co-worker, supervisor, or friend. Please let me know if you have any questions. You can reach me at CONTACT INFO.*

Want to Earn Credit? Click2Science has teamed up with Better Kid Care to provide continuing education units. Check it out at: <http://www.click2sciencepd.org/web-lessons/about>