Addressing Unconscious Bias

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Overview

- What is unconscious bias?

- When does it matter?

- What can we do about it?

- If we do something about it, what will change?

Schemas: Non-conscious Hypotheses

- Schemas (expectations or stereotypes) influence our judgments of others (regardless of our own group).

- All schemas influence group members' expectations about how they will be judged.
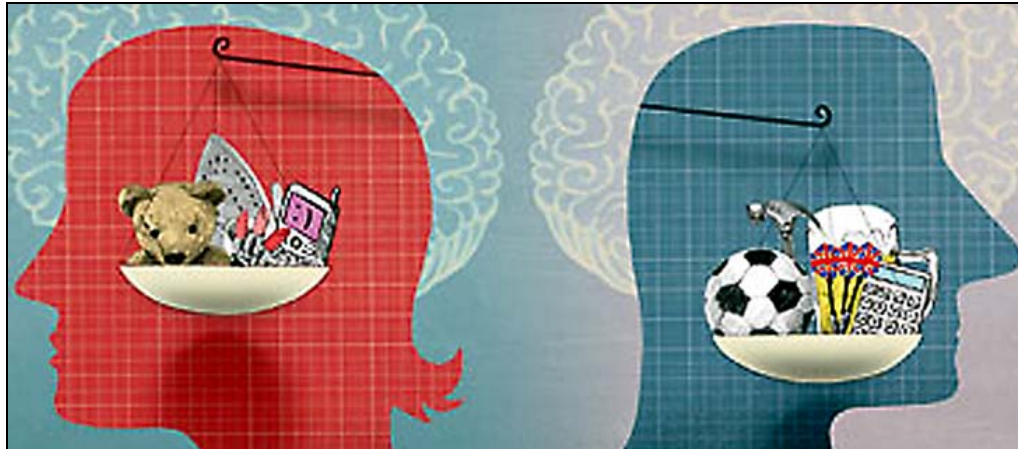
Schemas do…

- allow efficient, if sometimes inaccurate, processing of information.
- often conflict with consciously held or "explicit" attitudes.
- change based on experience/exposure.

Nosek, Banaji, & Greenwald (2002). *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research and Practice*, 6, 101-115.
Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu (2002). *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 82*(6), 878-902.

Schemas are…

- **Widely culturally shared**
  - Both men and women hold them about gender.
  - Both whites and people of color hold them about race/ethnicity.
  - People are often not aware of them.

Fiske (2002). *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 11*, 123-128.

Schemas are…

- **Applied more** under circumstances of:
  - o Ambiguity (including lack of information)
  - o Stress from competing tasks
  - o Time pressure
  - o Lack of critical mass

Fiske (2002). *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 11*, 123-128.

# When do schemas result in unconscious bias?

- When the schema for a type of candidate and the schema for an outcome conflict:
  - Hiring
  - Evaluation
  - Fellowship
  - Award
  - Promotion

When do schemas affect evaluation outcomes?

- Numerous studies show that schemas affect evaluation, for example:
  - Blind auditions
  - Evaluation of resumes
  - Evaluation of CVs
  - Evaluation of job credentials
  - Evaluation of fellowship applications
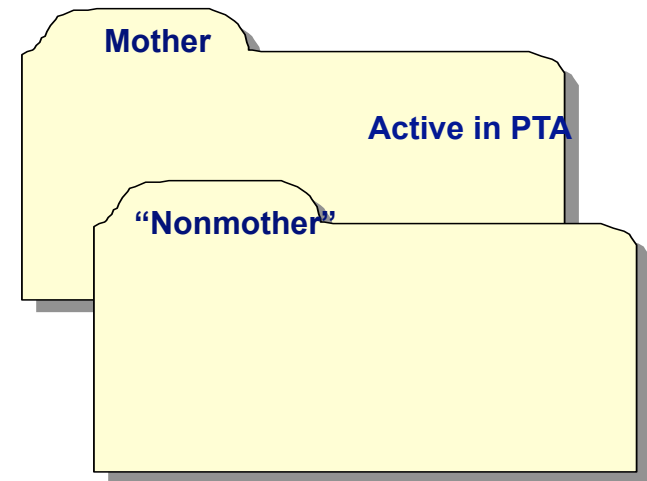
Evaluation of Identical CVs: Gender

- When evaluating identical application packages, male and female University psychology professors preferred 2:1 to hire "Brian" over "Karen" as an assistant professor.

- When evaluating a more experienced record (at the point of promotion to tenure), reservations were expressed four times more often when the name was female.

Karen

Brian

Steinpreis, Anders, & Ritzke (1999) *Sex Roles*, 41, 509.
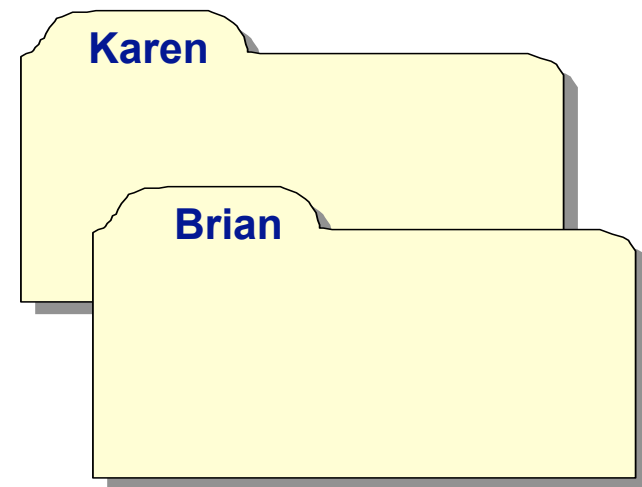
Hiring, Assessments, and Salaries: Mothers

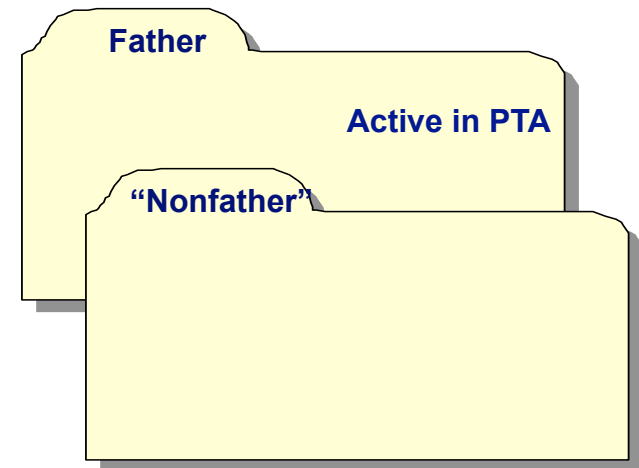When evaluating identical applications:

- Evaluators rated mothers as less competent and committed to paid work than nonmothers.

- Prospective employers called mothers back about half as often as nonmothers.

- Mothers were less likely to be recommended for hire, promotion, and management, and were offered lower starting salaries than nonmothers.

Mother

Active in PTA

"Nonmother"

Correll, Benard and Paik (2007) *American Journal of Sociology*, 112 (5), 1297-1338.

Hiring, Assessments, and Salaries: Fathers

When evaluating identical applications:

- Fathers were not disadvantaged in the hiring process.

- Fathers were seen as *more* committed to paid work and offered *higher* starting salaries than nonfathers.

Father

Active in PTA

"Nonfather"

Correll, Benard and Paik (2007) *American Journal of Sociology*, 112 (5), 1297-1338.

Critical Mass Affects the Use of Schemas

- When there are many individuals, we differentiate among them and cannot rely on group-based schemas.

- In both experimental and field settings, increasing the female share of those being rated increased ratings of female applicants and employees.

Valian (1998) *Why So Slow? The Advancement of Women*. Cambridge: MIT Press, p. 280;
Heilman (1980) *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 26: 386-395*;
Sackett et al (1991), *Journal of Applied Psychology, 76(2): 263-267*.

Accumulation of Advantage and Disadvantage…

- Any one slight may seem minor, but since small imbalances and disadvantages accrue, they can have major consequences in salary, promotion, and prestige, including advancement to leadership positions.

- "Mountains are molehills piled one on top of the other." (Valian, 1998, p. 4)
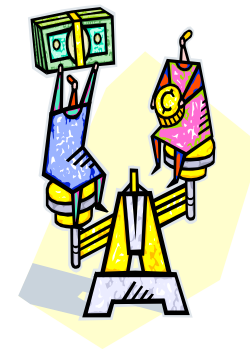
Merton (1948) *Antioch Review*, 8, 193-210 and (1968) *Science*, 159, 56-63.
Valian (1998) *Why So Slow? The Advancement of Women*. Cambridge: MIT Press, p. 280.
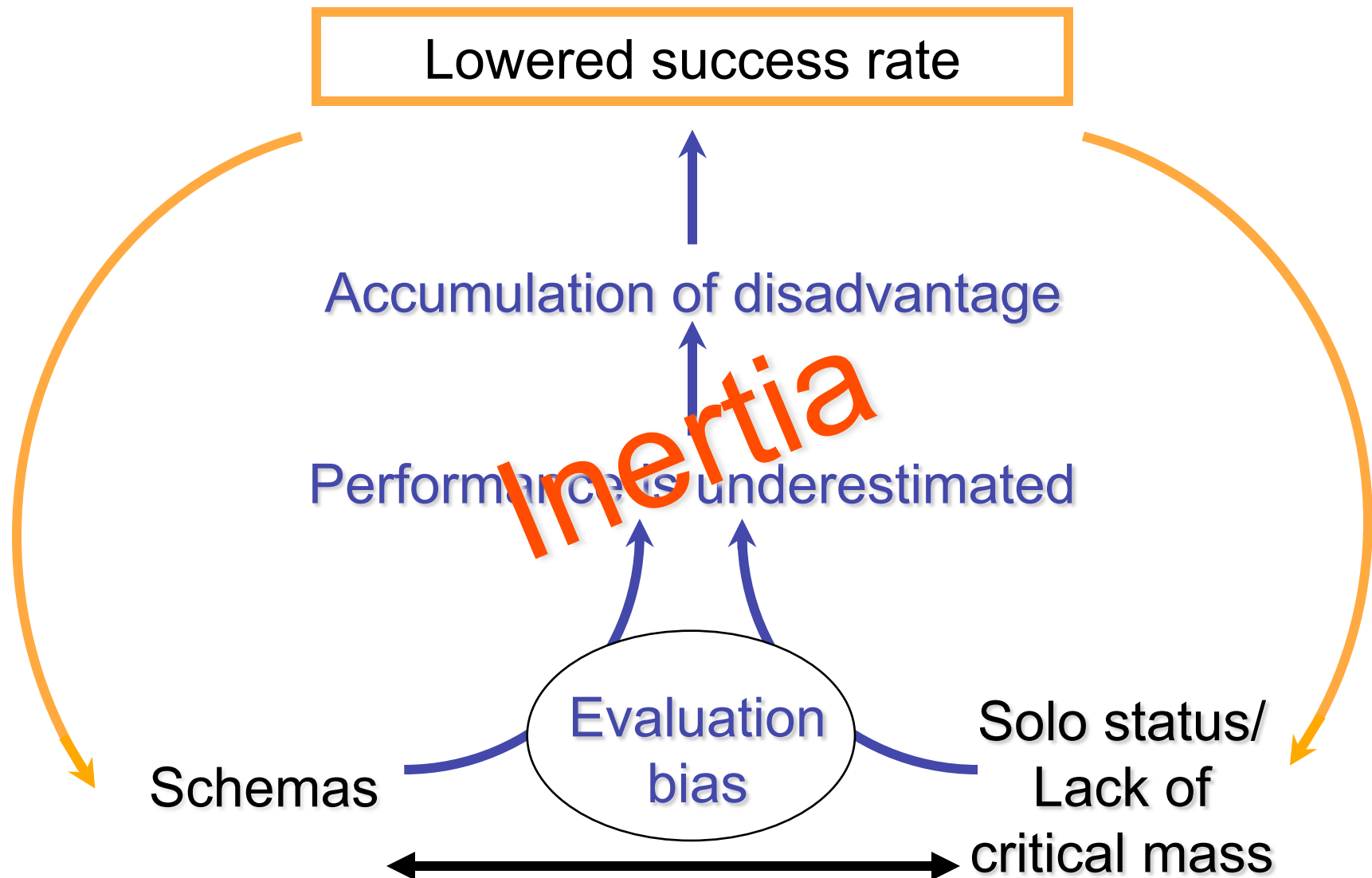
Impact of Schemas on Careers: Processes for Different Groups Are Similar

- **Similarities for different groups**
  - Importance and impact of schemas
  - Lack of critical mass leads to reliance on schemas
  - Evaluation bias operates
  - Accumulation of disadvantages operates

Impact of Schemas on Careers : Processes for Different Groups Are Different

- **Differences between groups**
  - Content of schemas
  - Likelihood of solo status greater for racial/ethnic minorities than white women; unknown for sexual minorities and people with disabilities
  - Less full pipeline for racial/ethnic minorities than white women; unknown for sexual minorities and people with disabilities
  - Added complexity for women of color and others with intersecting identities (e.g., gay African American men, lesbians)

If We Do Not Actively Intervene, The Cycle Reproduces Itself

Lowered success rate

Accumulation of disadvantage

Inertia

Performance is underestimated

Evaluation bias

Schemas

Solo status/ Lack of critical mass

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What can we do about unconscious bias?

- Awareness
- Policies
- Practices
- Accountability

Strategies for Mitigating Unconscious Bias

- Increase conscious awareness of bias and how bias leads to overlooking talent

  - Implicit Association Test: https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/

- Broaden awareness in community

  - Increase sense of responsibility

  - Decrease probability of guilt and blame

STRIDE Committee

The STRIDE Committee promotes **excellence** among faculty in all fields by engaging the campus community in efforts to improve the university environment.

STRIDE provides information and advice about practices that will maximize the likelihood that diverse, well-qualified candidates for faculty positions will be identified, and, if selected for offers, recruited, retained, and promoted at the University of Michigan.

We're STRIDE, not STRID!

Does STRIDE work?

College	AY2001-2002		AY2003-2008	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Medical School (Basic Sciences)	2	2	25	13
College of Engineering	32	2	76	28
College of LSA (Natural Sciences)	28	5	59	30
Total % Women		13%		31%

This table shows the proportion of men and women hired in each of the three colleges that employ the largest number of scientists and engineers at the University of Michigan.

Note the marked, and statistically significant, increase in the proportion of women hired, comparing the two "pre-STRIDE" years with the four "post-STRIDE" years (chi square=9.10, p=.01).

Developed Peer Pedagogy to Broaden Awareness and Influence Practices

- Confidence to articulate both presentations and handbook came with sense of causal model that:
  - Relied on empirical evidence
  - Accounted for persistence of outcome
  - Accounted for findings about key elements
  - Systemic; no "bad actors"
  - Led to practical solutions

What practices matter?

- Recruitment of applicant pool
  - Increase representation of low base-rate groups in pool
- How deliberations are completed
  - Decrease ambiguity in criteria
  - Increase/document knowledge of candidates
  - Rely on evidence
  - Avoid use of global judgments

Recruitment of the Applicant Pool

- Recruit proactively year-round
- Recruit from wider range of institutions
- Recruit specifically for low base-rate groups
- Use of "open searches" (broad vs. narrow job definitions)

Job Description: Open Searching

- Consider implications of the job description: search as broadly as possible.

- Work with a single search committee for all positions, to allow opportunities for people with unusual backgrounds to emerge.

Active Recruiting

- Widen the range of institutions from which you recruit.

- Consider candidates, including women and minorities, who may currently be thriving at less well-ranked institutions. They may be there because of:
  - Early career decisions based on factors other than ranking of institution
  - Past discrimination by top tier institutions
  - Candidate's own internalization of schemas

Active Recruiting and Open Searches <u>Can</u> Help Increase Diversity
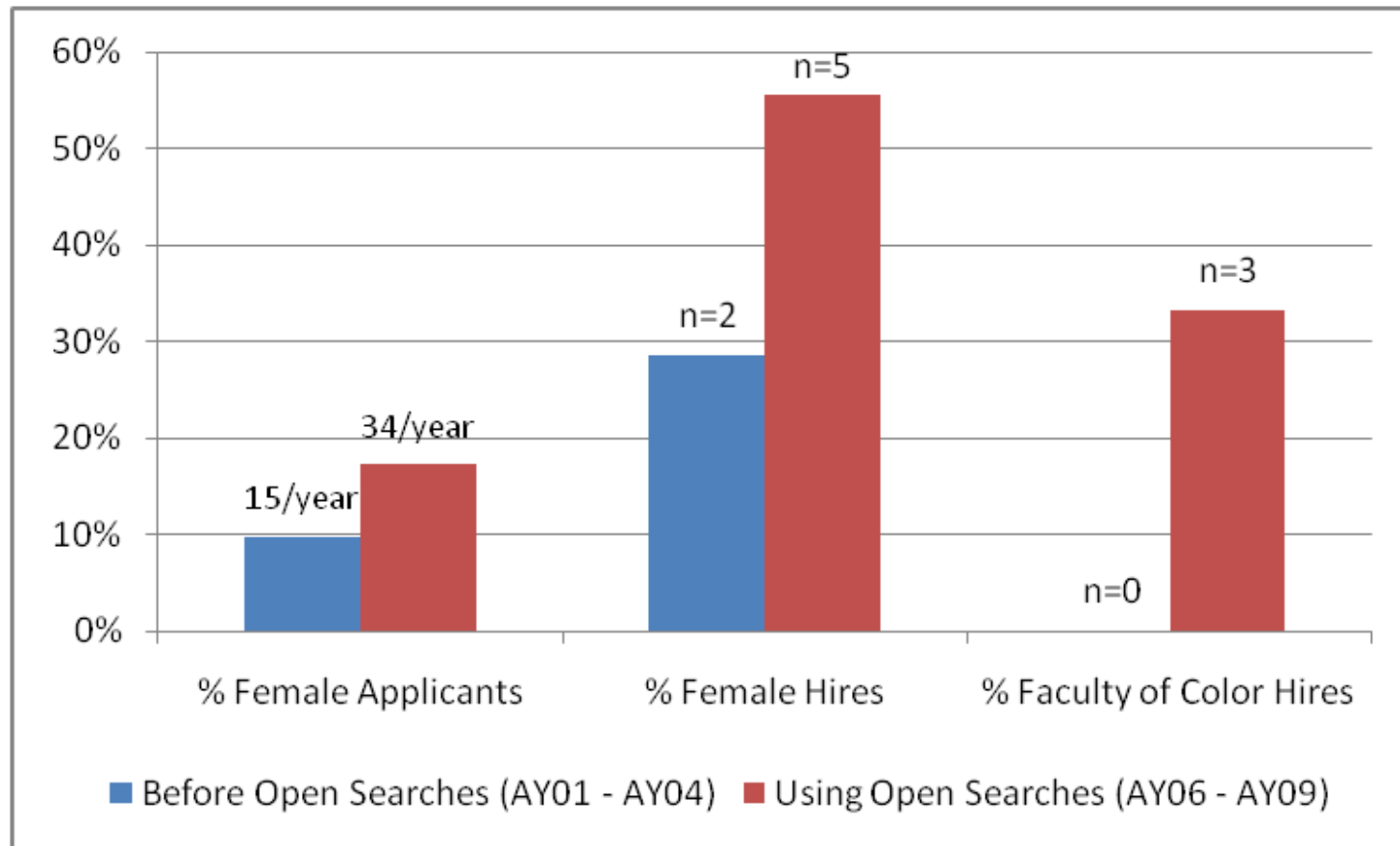
The difference achieved by one UM department

UM Faculty Experience with Open Searches Has Been Positive

"The open searches led to both a larger number of applicants AND a more diverse applicant pool."

"I was not sure if the 'open search' is the best way to attract the best candidates to apply for job. I am convinced now it is indeed an excellent strategy to add 'new blood' to our department."

"The open searches led to a department-wide discussion of all of the applicants. This has the added benefit of everyone on the faculty knowing the candidate and being invested in their success from their first day on campus."

Consider Representation in Final Pool of Interviewees

- Bringing in more than one female and/or minority candidate can disproportionately increase the likelihood that a woman and/or minority will be hired.

Heilman , 1980, *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance,* 26: 386-95.
Hewstone et al., 2006, *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations,* 9(4): 509–532.
Huffcutt & Roth, 1998, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 83(2): 179-189.
Van Ommeren et al., 2005, *Psychological Reports, 96: 349-360.*

How Deliberations Are Conducted

- Composition of the search committee
- Clarity of the criteria for the job
- Consistent use of evidence
- Avoid use of global judgments

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Search Committee Composition

- Include people who are committed to diversity and excellence.

- Include women and minorities.

Why does group composition matter?

Study of Racial Diversity in Jury and Search Deliberations:

Compared with all-white juries, diverse juries deliberating about an African American defendant:

- Took longer to discuss the case
- Mentioned more facts
- Made fewer inaccurate statements
- Left fewer inaccurate statements uncorrected
- Discussed more race-related issues

Jury deliberations are analogous to faculty search deliberations.

Sommers (2006) Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 90 (4), 597-612.

Focus on Multiple Specific Criteria during Evaluation

- Avoid "global" evaluations

- Specify evaluations of scholarly productivity, research funding, teaching ability, ability to be a conscientious departmental/university member, fit with the department's priorities.

- Weigh judgments that reflect examination of all materials and direct contact with the candidate.

Bauer and Baltes, 2002, *Sex Roles 9/10, 465.*

Candidate Evaluation Tool

Please indicate which of the following are true for you (check all that apply):

☐ Read candidate's CV

☐ Read candidate's scholarship

☐ Read candidate's letters of recommendation

☐ Attended candidate's job talk

☐ Met with candidate

☐ Attended lunch or dinner with candidate

☐ Other (please explain):

_____

_____

Please rate the candidate on each of the following:	excellent	good	neutral	fair	poor	unable to judge
Potential for (Evidence of) scholarly impact						
Potential for (Evidence of) research productivity						
Potential for (Evidence of) research funding						
Potential for (Evidence of) collaboration						
Fit with department's priorities						
Ability to make positive contribution to department's climate						
Potential (Demonstrated ability) to attract and supervise graduate students						
Potential (Demonstrated ability) to teach and supervise undergraduates						
Potential (Demonstrated ability) to be a conscientious university community member						

http://www.umich.edu/%7Eadvproj/CandidateEvaluationTool.doc

MICHIGAN

STRIDE
Strategies & Tactics for
Recruiting to Improve Diversity & Excellence

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How can we be sure that recommended practices are used?

- Create formal policies
  - ○ Mandate and monitor attendance at STRIDE Faculty Recruitment Workshops
  - ○ Monitor composition of Ph.D. pools, applicant pools and interview pools
  - ○ Review/approve search advertisements (open?)
  - ○ Review/approve composition of search committees
  - ○ Request descriptions of recruitment practices

Policies that Matter Go Beyond Recruitment

- Annual reviews
  - How is information collected?
  - Who reviews/discusses it?
  - According to what procedures?
- Teaching evaluations
- Grant/fellowship reviews
- Third year reviews
- Tenure reviews
- Promotion reviews
- Award competitions

Remember the People You Consult

- Letters of recommendation (inside and outside)
- Phone calls for suggestions of candidates
- Assessments from students/teaching evaluations

Letters of Recommendation for Successful Medical School Faculty Applicants

Differences

Letters for men:

- Longer
- More references to:
  - CV
  - Publications
  - Patients
  - Colleagues

Letters for women :

- Shorter
- More references to personal life
- More "doubt raisers" (hedges, faint praise, and irrelevancies)

  "It's amazing how much she's accomplished."

  "It appears her health is stable."

  "She is close to my wife."

Trix & Psenka (2003) *Discourse & Society*, Vol 14(2): 191-220.

Build in Accountability

- Create and broaden awareness
- Cultivate practices that mitigate bias
- Monitor both processes and outcomes
- Create policies that support fair evaluation processes
- Build in accountability for outcomes
  - Link rewards to outcomes
  - Link evaluation of leaders to outcomes