



Excellence in Leadership Program

Communicating Difference Matters

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UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
DENVER | ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

Workshop Goals

Communicating

- **Sharing meaning**
 - Explicit
 - Implicit
- **Verbal, nonverbal**
- **Formal, informal**
- **Mediated**
- **Power-laden**

Difference = Social Identity*

- Group oriented
- Membership (perceived by others and/or self)
- Meaningful to self and/or others
- Identifiable (labeled)
- Learned
- Assigned

*Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W. G. Austin & S. Worchel (Eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 33–47). Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Why Difference Matters

Why Higher Ed Matters

Challenges in Higher Ed

- Relegate responsibility to particular
 - individuals or groups
 - units
 - disciplines/areas of study
- Polarize diversity and quality
- Perpetuate institutional –isms
- Tend to be reactive

Promising Practices

- Visible, sustained commitment
- Diversity as everyone's responsibility
- Strategic planning
- Ongoing professional development
- Multiple assessments
- Rewards and accountability
- Research about diversity

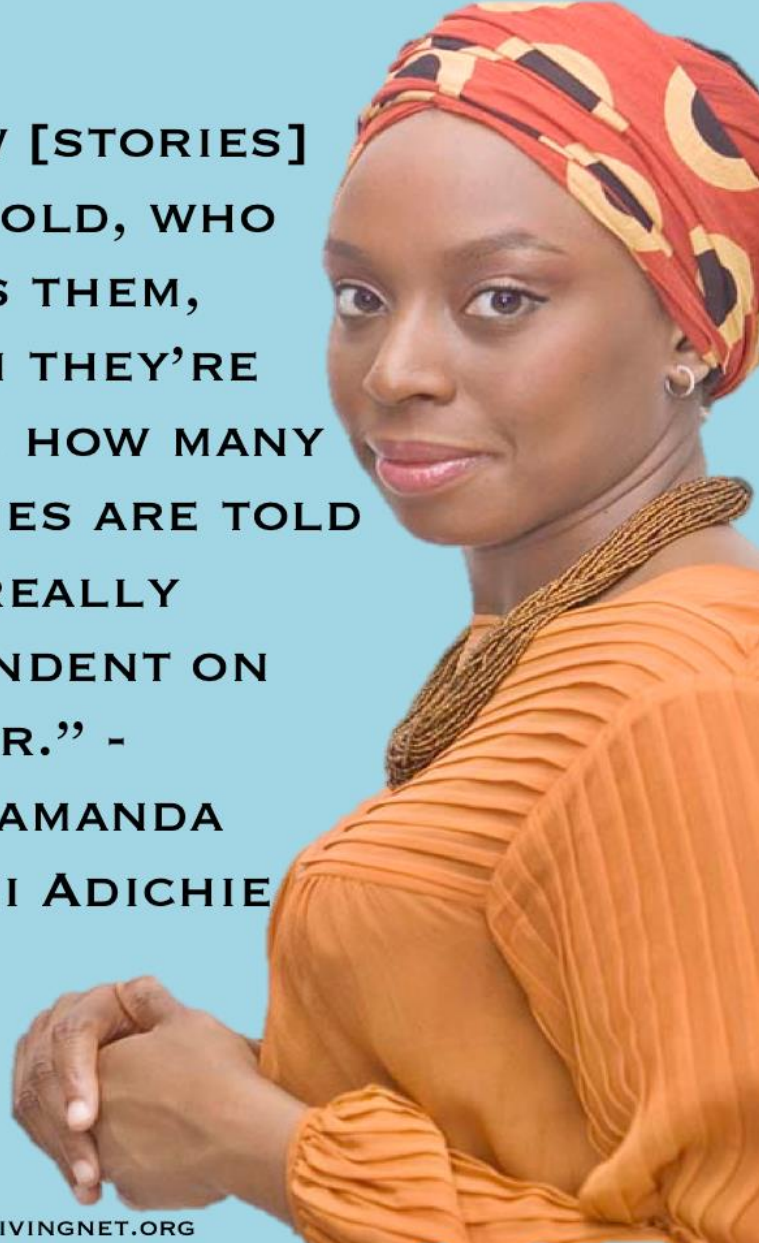


“The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story.”

-Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

www.thegirlgod.com

**“HOW [STORIES]
ARE TOLD, WHO
TELLS THEM,
WHEN THEY’RE
TOLD, HOW MANY
STORIES ARE TOLD
ARE REALLY
DEPENDENT ON
POWER.” -
CHIMAMANDA
NGOZI ADICHIE**



Unconscious Bias

[video](#)



Categories Related to Bias

Why focus on UB?

**Even the most well-intentioned person
unwittingly allows unconscious
thoughts and feelings to influence
apparently objective decisions.**

Mahzarin R. Banaji, Max H. Bazerman, & Dolly Chugh, *How (Un)ethical Are You?*, *Harvard Business Review*, December 2003.

UB Factors

- Power dynamics
- Myths and assumptions
- Elitism
- Norms, traditions
- Overload
- Time constraints
- Ambiguous or incomplete rubrics

How to Manage UB

- Remember that we all have biases.
- Commit to managing your biases.
- Learn more about biases.
- Be mindful of T.U.I.*
- Doubt objectivity.
- Focus on fairness.
- Sloooow down.
- Seek counter-stereotypes.
- Individuate.

Managing UB Institutional Level

- Take a strategic approach.
- Improve decision-making processes.
- State and seek inclusive outcomes.
- Establish rules & norms.
- Foster awareness and accountability.
- Cultivate an inclusive environment.

Inclusive Environment

- Promote affirmative interaction.
- Strive to be fully present.
- Establish guidelines for interaction.
- Engage in dialogue, not debate.
- Solicit feedback.
- Give credit where credit is due.
- Agree to share concerns respectfully.
- Practice the “platinum rule.”

DM Recommendations

- (Re)Commit to difference matters
- Engage in self-reflexivity
- Be proactive
- Become more informed
- Work within your sphere of influence
- Identify and apply best practices
- Gather and share resources
- Other ideas?

