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DISRUPT BIAS, DRIVE VALUE
*A New Path Toward Diverse, Engaged,
and Fulfilled Talent*

by **Sylvia Ann Hewlett**
Ripa Rashid
and **Laura Sherbin**

“Groundbreaking [...] their ability to quantify the cost to companies when employees feel the sting of bias—and to point toward ways companies can prevent that sting from happening—will help employers add important next steps beyond bias awareness training to truly improve the experience, performance, and productivity of employees.”

—**Ella Bell Smith, Founder and President, Ascent; Professor of Business Administration, Tuck School of Business, Dartmouth University**

“[A] novel approach to the persistent problem of bias in the workplace, based on remarkably thorough study.”
—**Amy C. Edmondson, Novartis Professor of Leadership and Management, Harvard Business School**

“[The authors] bring to life in a very granular fashion, with data and analysis, evidence of where and how bias happens in the workplace. They go on to lay out a very practical action plan to deal with it. This book treats the topic of bias with a fresh empirical lens—and is full of surprises!”
—**Tiger Tyagarajan, President and CEO, Genpact**

NEW YORK, November 14, 2017—New book, **DISRUPT BIAS, DRIVE VALUE: A New Path Toward Diverse, Engaged, and Fulfilled Talent (A Rare Bird Books paperback original; November 14, 2017)** by co-authors **Sylvia Ann Hewlett, Ripa Rashid, and Laura Sherbin**, is the definitive, data-driven guide to reducing bias in the workplace.

As recent news headlines have demonstrated, the traditional approach to confronting bias in corporate America has not been working. Most companies focus on bias interventions that help individuals become more aware of their own biases. These interventions, however, do not include the perspective and experiences of individuals who actually *perceive* bias. As a result, most organizations have no way of knowing where bias is actually happening, what it’s costing, or how to disrupt it, until now.

“For the first time, we are able to identify how bias occurs in the grooming and promotion of talent,” says Laura Sherbin, co-president of the Center for Talent Innovation and a managing partner of Hewlett Consulting Partners (HCP). “And we take it a step further by providing organizations with an understanding of where bias imposes the most cost—and how organizations can disrupt it at those pain points.”

The book is based on a Center for Talent Innovation (CTI) study, **DISRUPT BIAS, DRIVE VALUE**, which surveyed 3,570 college-educated professionals—who were all working fulltime in white-collar occupations. With hard data, the authors reveal how perceptions of bias in the workplace dramatically correlate with employee behaviors such as flight risk, brand sabotage, and disengagement—all posing significant costs to companies. First, they determined who perceives bias in the areas of ability, ambition, commitment, connections, emotional intelligence, and executive

presence. These perceptions comprise the “ACE Model.” Then, they ran correlations and discovered that when employees perceive bias in two or more of these categories, they are:

- Three times as likely to plan to leave their employers within the year
- More than twice as likely to have withheld ideas or solutions in the past six months at work
- Five times as likely to speak about their company in a negative manner on social media

“The hit delivered to the bottom line should be alarming for any business leader,” says Ripa Rashid, co-president of CTI and managing partner of HCP. “As all companies scramble for competitive advantage, this is a cost that employers simply can’t afford to sustain.”

Most importantly, the authors recommend to readers three clear company interventions that they conclude will reduce perceived bias: 1) diverse leaders in senior positions, 2) team leaders who practice specific inclusive behaviors, and 3) sponsorship, or support from senior colleagues for career progression.

“Having diverse leaders in place, we find, is crucial to disrupting bias,” says Sylvia Ann Hewlett, CEO of CTI and HCP. “Executives who are inherently diverse serve as role models for diverse employees, demonstrating that difference is valued and that diverse individuals can thrive at their organizations.”

The book concludes with a tactical playbook to guide companies in training their leaders to be inclusive, to sponsor talent unlike themselves, and to diversify the top tiers of management.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS:

SYLVIA ANN HEWLETT is the founder and CEO of the Center for Talent Innovation and Hewlett Consulting Partners LLC. A Cambridge-trained economist, her research focuses on global and diverse talent management. She is author of twelve critically acclaimed books, including *Forget a Mentor, Find a Sponsor* (Harvard Business Review Press, 2013). Hewlett has taught at Columbia and Princeton universities. In 2014, the European Diversity Awards honored her with its Global Diversity Award.

RIPA RASHID is co-president of the Center for Talent Innovation and Hewlett Consulting Partners. A graduate of Harvard University and INSEAD’s MBA program, Rashid spent over a decade as a management consultant and held senior positions at MetLife and Time Warner. She is coauthor of *Winning the War for Talent in Emerging Markets* (Harvard Business Review Press, 2011).

LAURA SHERBIN is co-president of the Center for Talent Innovation and Hewlett Consulting Partners. She is an economist specializing in work-life issues and gender. Holding a PhD from American University, Sherbin has taught at Columbia University. She has coauthored several Center for Talent Innovation reports and two Harvard Business Review Research Reports, including *The Athena Factor: Reversing the Brain Drain in Science, Engineering, and Technology*.

ABOUT THE CENTER FOR TALENT INNOVATION:

The Center for Talent Innovation (CTI) is an NYC-based think tank that focuses on global talent strategies and the retention and acceleration of well-qualified labor across the divides of demographic difference including gender, generation, geography, sexual orientation, and culture. CTI’s research partners now number more than 90 multinational corporations and organizations.

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WHAT LEADERS CAN DO TO BEGIN “DISRUPTING BIAS”:

- **Hire and promote candidates** who embody and understand the power of difference.
- **Codify and socialize** company standards and expectations.
- **Implement a “tone from the top”** that endorses a variety of acceptable approaches to leadership.
- **Create role model playbooks** of executives in action that feature diverse styles and approaches.
- **Ensure all voices get heard.** That may mean making room for a remote team member or one whose first language isn’t English to contribute, assigning every member a speaking role prior to the meeting, or silencing members who interrupt hesitant speakers.
- **Make it safe to propose novel ideas.** Offer your own out-of-the box ideas to show that radical notions carry no penalty.
- **Give actionable feedback.** Institutionalize a five-minute debrief after every meeting to identify strengths and places for improvement.
- **Take advice and implement feedback.** Don’t just ask for input, but show that you’re willing to change your mind as a result.
- **Empower decision-making among team members** by giving them ownership of pieces of your strategy and lending them the support they need to succeed.
- **Share credit for team success,** in part by cutting yourself out as the middleman and letting team members present directly to senior management.

**From DISRUPT BIAS, DRIVE VALUE:
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