



Science-Based Approach to Inclusive Leading

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Hayden: Heart of the Yampa Valley



PURPOSE

We exist to be a place to thrive

VISION

Anyone looking for a more authentic life can find connection, acceptance, and prosperity

MISSION

Empower each neighbor with sustainable investments, sufficient outdoor recreational resources, an inclusive & welcoming culture, and diverse means & opportunities

VALUES

Authenticity, Heritage, Welcoming, Inclusivity, Community, Optimism, Thoughtfulness, Intelligence

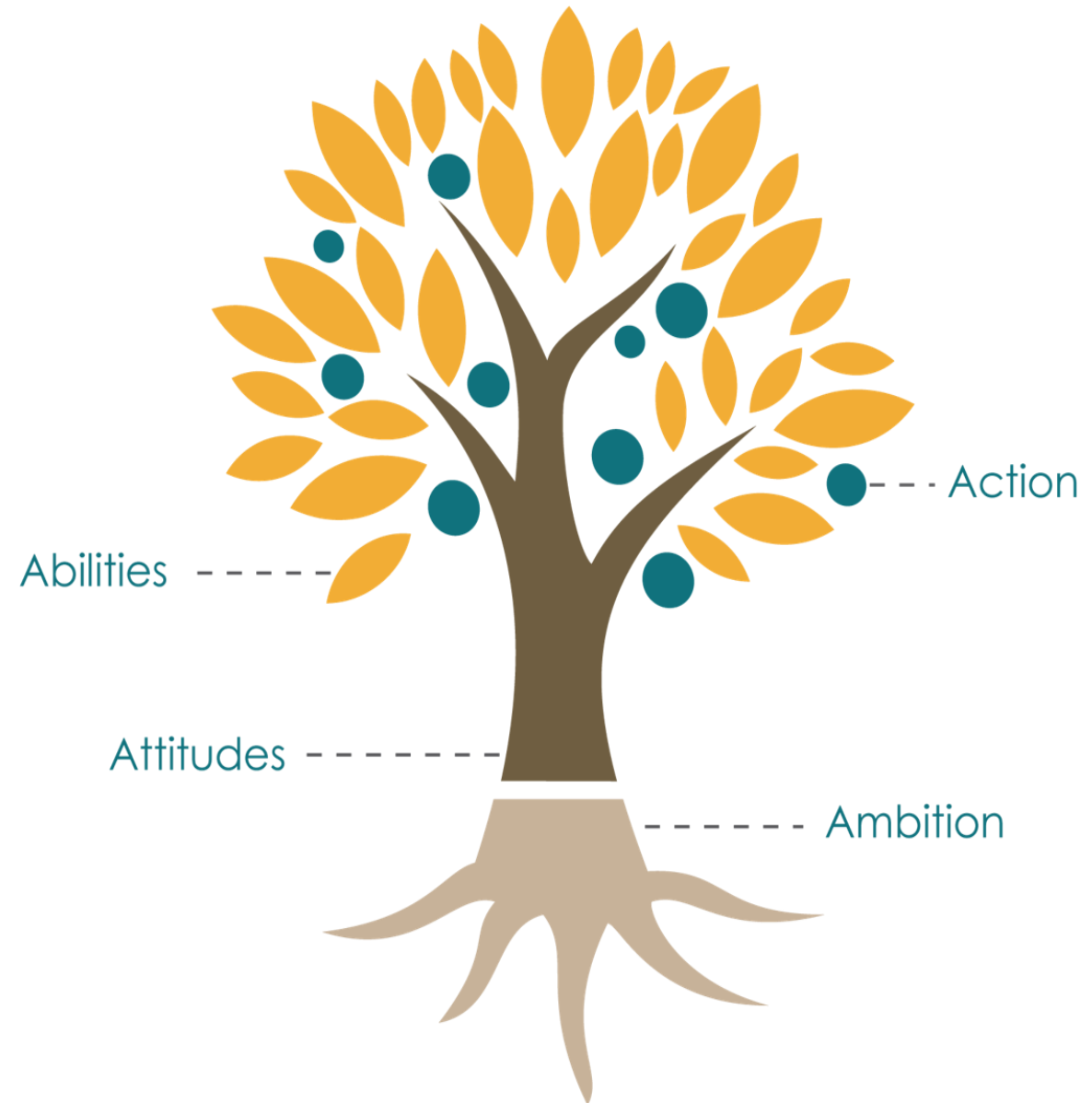
Presentation Bang

- The science of inclusion or Neuroleadership
- You may not be a jerk
- Implicit Bias, Brain wiring, and behavior; unrealized but keys to success
- YOUR ROI for being a diverse and equitable organization



The Science of Inclusion

- The Science of Inclusion or Neuroleadership is modeled around the science of defensive thinking and results driven strategies.



The Science of Inclusion

- Diversity and inclusion go together –one cannot exist without the other.
- To optimize performance, teams need to have a wide array of backgrounds, experiences, abilities, and perspectives.
- Organizational teams also need to be inclusive creating environments where everyone has the freedom and comfort to fully engage and participate.

<https://www.hrotoday.com/news/employee-engagement/the-science-of-inclusion/>

Key Inclusive Leadership Qualities

- Self-Aware: The most important trait in Neuroleadership.
- Empathetic: You work knowing that you are dealing with people, and people matter.
- Active: Remember, being active looks different for everyone.
- Trusting:

Presentation Expectations

- Questions will come at the end.
- We are going to discuss things today that may make you feel uncomfortable.
- This is one approach. There are others and they may work better for your organization.
- I don't pretend to be an expert, this is just work and research based on my last years of work with LLI, CCCMA, research, policy research, etc.
- If I offend you, its obvious that is not my intention; however, this can be offensive or threatening because it's different.
- If you disagree with this presentation I am ok with that, and actually encourage it; just be respectful.



Question

How long have we been a
free society?

Credit: Latino Leadership Institute next two slides

Freedom Timeline in US

- 1625 – 1865: 240 YEARS OF SLAVERY
- 1865 – 1964: 99 YEARS OF SEGREGATION
- 1964 – Present: 59 Years of Freedom



Question

How old are we when we start to form bias?

- Definition of Bias:
 - Noun: prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair.
 - Verb: Cause to feel or show inclination of prejudice for or against someone or something.

Implicit Bias: Pre-reflective attributions and attitudes towards people without our conscious knowledge.

https://www.google.com/search?q=definition+of+bias&rlz=1C1ONGR_enUS1049US1049&oq=definition+of+bias&aqs=chrome..69i57j0i512l9.7998j1j15&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8

Results

- Studies show that children start to apply stereotypes at a very young age: between the ages of 3 – 5, children begin to categorize people by race and express bias based on race. This happens regardless of the race or color of the child.



Source: Winkler, E.N. (2009) Children are not colorblind. How Young Children Learn Race. High Reach Learning.

The History of Human Migration



Brain Evolution



Bias from a Neuroscientific Perspective

- Biological Protections: As humans evolved during the hunter gather stages of life our brains became acutely aware of things that appeared “different” because during this time “different” could spell death.
- This had the unconscious effect of natural neuropathways developing bias around “difference” which still exist in our brains today.
- Examples may include strangers, difference of how someone may look, how someone may talk, dress, etc.

Reward vs. Threat

- Our brain at its basic level is largely controlled by rewards vs. threats.
- High Reward = High Engagement.
- High Threat = High Disengagement.
- Remember, we are social mammals.



Brain Knowledge (NeuroScience)

- The brain has three major systems:
 - The Brainstem – Controls all motor functions, facial expression, hearing, etc.
 - The Cerebellum – Coordinates voluntary muscle movement, balance, and equilibrium.
 - The Cerebrum – Controls temperature, thinking, judgement, reasoning, problem solving, emotions, etc.
- It loves predictability.
- It hardwires almost everything to drive automatic perception and response.
- You really can't de-hardware or rewire existing hardwiring.
- **YOU CAN CREATE NEW HARDWIRING THAT IF USED ENOUGH BECOMES THE NEW PATTERN THE BRAIN WILL GO TO REGULARLY.**

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/anatomy-of-the-brain>



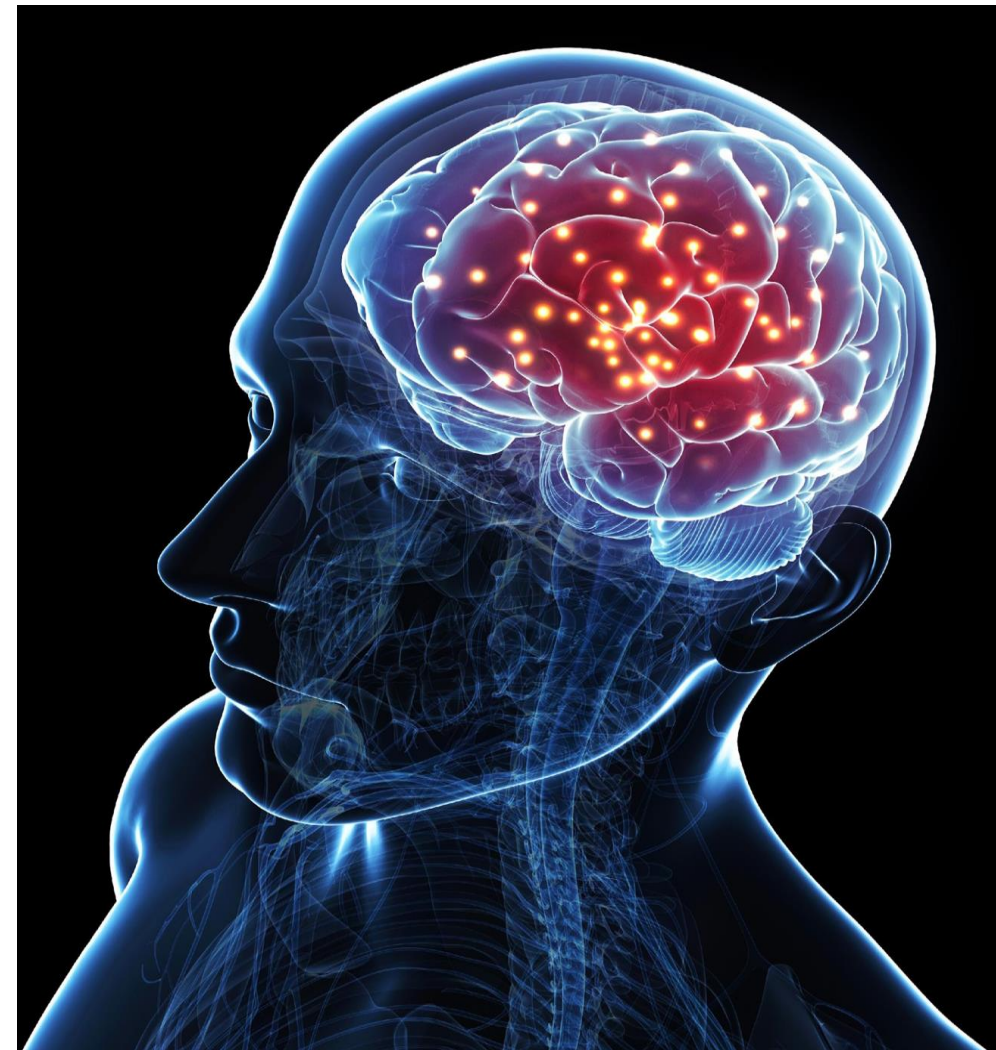
The Big Question

If we biologically developed/develop these neuropathways (to view difference as a threat), how do we create new neuropathways that help us build connections to become self-aware?

Brain Knowledge (NeuroScience)

- Thinking with the whole body:
 - Heart – emotional, values, relationships, anger, happiness, desire, connections to self, kindness, tolerance.
 - Gut – Self-preservation, purpose, safety, boundaries, fight vs flight, action, will to act, push past limits.
 - Brain – Cognitive perception, thinking, creativity, pattern recognition, reasoning, language, discovery, innovation.

Gorman, B. (2019, March 4). Change leadership: Why your head and heart and gut are critical to listen to. Forbes. Available at <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2019/03/04/change-leadership-why-your-head-heart-and-gut-are-critical-to-listen-to/?sh=6f3d52a4a965>



Inclusive Leadership Case Study Example

- A Town/City is hiring for a new mid-level position.
- The entity has adopted inclusive hiring practices and provided training to upper management.
- The hiring committee narrows down to three people:
 - Someone that is currently working in Government (County)
 - Someone working at a School (Semi-local government).
 - Someone from private sector.
- What does a good fit really mean?
- Take this same example and think about appointments to boards and commissions?
- If you are setting yourself up to be a diverse organization, then don't you want diverse perspective? Is the same work pattern diverse?
- Michael Bennet – Yes the Senator.

Inclusive Leadership Lessons to Learn (Keep it Simple)

- What can a Town/City do (especially if you are small and don't have the resources to dedicate to full-time staff)?
- Evaluation of policies.
- How do you get community involvement?
 - Time of day.
 - Interpretation.
 - Realize that Inclusive leadership is uncomfortable.
- Micro-aggression
 - Dress Code – Business attire
 - Acknowledge cultural difference creates different looks.
 - Holiday's off?
 - Its not about looking around the room and ensuring everyone looks different, its about ensuring that difference is embraced which takes self-awareness.

Inclusive Leadership Lessons to Learn (Keep it Simple)

- Job descriptions: Make them about skill set and not task oriented. Meaning, when hiring break things down to first principles.
- Demographics play a role: however, if your demographics don't lend themselves to diversity (Routt County) then reach beyond demographics.
- Who is really being harmed.
- You don't always need control.
- Leading inclusively is not just presentation, you must lead with action. Our actions will all be different, but you must lead with it.

Inclusive Leadership Lessons to Learn (Keep it Simple)

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 - Interpretation.
 - Realize that Inclusive leadership is uncomfortable.
- Micro-aggression
 - Dress Code – Business attire
 - Separation is not natural.
- The worst (or one of them), “She is some emotional”. Maybe if we lead with a little more emotion and were just self-aware we would be better off (remember leading with the heart).

Inclusive Leadership Lessons to Learn (Keep it Simple)

Acknowledge cultural difference creates different looks around the office.

Its not about looking around the room and ensuring everyone looks different, its about ensuring that difference is embraced which takes self-awareness.

Remember, we spend more time at work than home. Would you lead your home this way?

Pay people what they are worth: Theory of Sustainable Wages.

Finally: you don't lose a merit based system when you lead as a Neuroleader (which includes diversity). You actually gain buy in, loyalty, because you help people live in a reward state not a threat state.

ROI for Organizations that are Inclusive

- McKinsey reported that if we addressed gender equality in the workplace, we would add \$12 trillion dollars to the global economy.
- Organizations with racial and ethnic diversity outperform organizations with low racial and ethnic diversity by 35 percent.
- Diverse companies are also 70 percent more likely to capture new market shares. And this is important given that Nielsen has reported that 43 percent of millennials identify as Latino, Black, Asian, or multiracial.
- Organizations that hire neurodiverse individuals have a 85% retention rate of those people.

Possible ROI for Organizations that lead with Inclusion

- Inclusive organizations will have better employee retention.
- Political Division: While we all have our belief systems, when you become a Neuroleader and use the four traits listed, you will become an active listener.
- Last Case Study: History shows us that when groups of people of diverse backgrounds and perspectives get together they create something wonderful. The best example: The Renaissance.



THANK YOU

Mathew Mendisco, Town Manager, Town of Hayden

Big Thank You To:

Latino Leadership Institute

Colorado City and County Manager Association DEI
Committee

Town of Hayden Town Council

Everyone that is fighting for equity, diversity, and inclusion.