



Shining a Light on Unconscious Bias — *The Leadership Perspective*

7th Annual Emerging Trends in
Wellness Conference 2020

BOSTON, MA



**Expectations
for this 45
minute
session**

Just a taste...



Exercise of the unconscious

IX

Exercise of the unconscious

SIX

Why does our brain need efficiencies?



**98% of
our thoughts
are
unconscious**

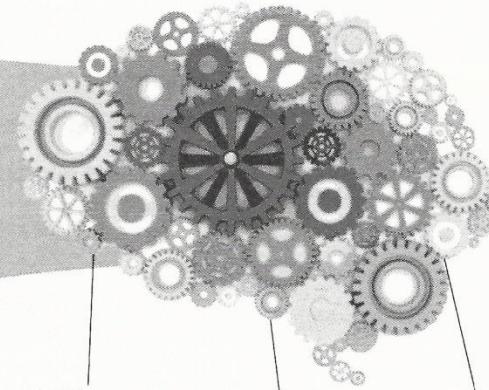
**11 MILLION
PIECES OF
INFORMATION
AT ANY
ONE TIME**

Perceptions

Interpretations

Preferences

Selective Attention



Intelligence,
judgment, and
behavior
(frontal lobe)

Memory
(temporal lobe)

Language
(parietal lobe)

**40-50 PIECES OF
INFORMATION
GET ABSORBED**

Unconscious vs Conscious

Implicit (unconscious) Bias

Out-group

In-group



Attributes

Physical appearance

- Skin color
- Hair color
- Gender
- Age
- Height & weight
- Fitness level
- Health habits
- Clothing being worn
- Tattoos
- Foreign accent
- Generational group

Personality

- Introversion/ Extroversion
- Attitude (i.e. hostile, angry)
- Attitudes [pessimist/optimist]
- Values

Ideology

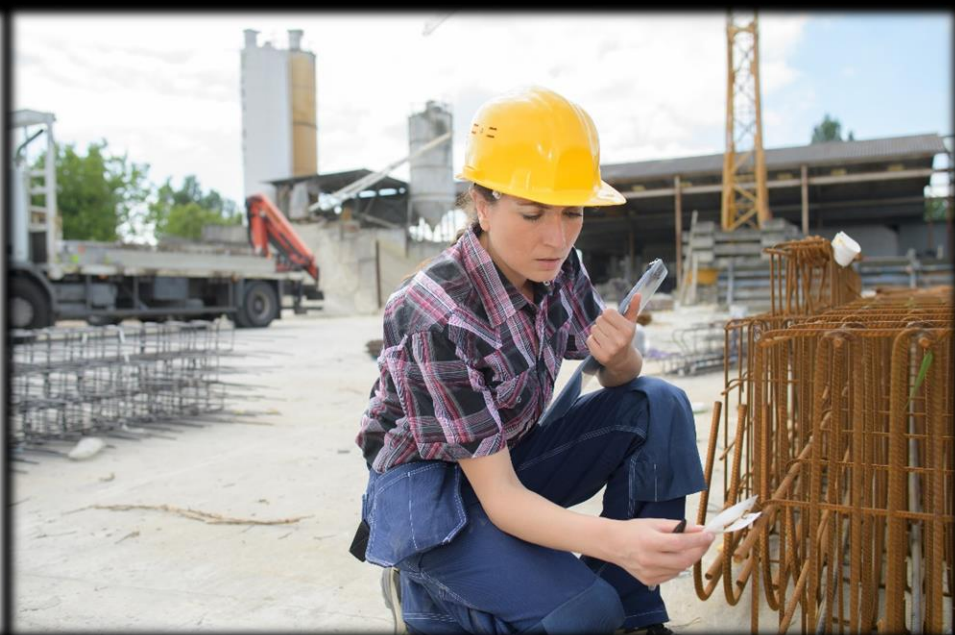
- Religion
- Political affiliation
- Gender identity

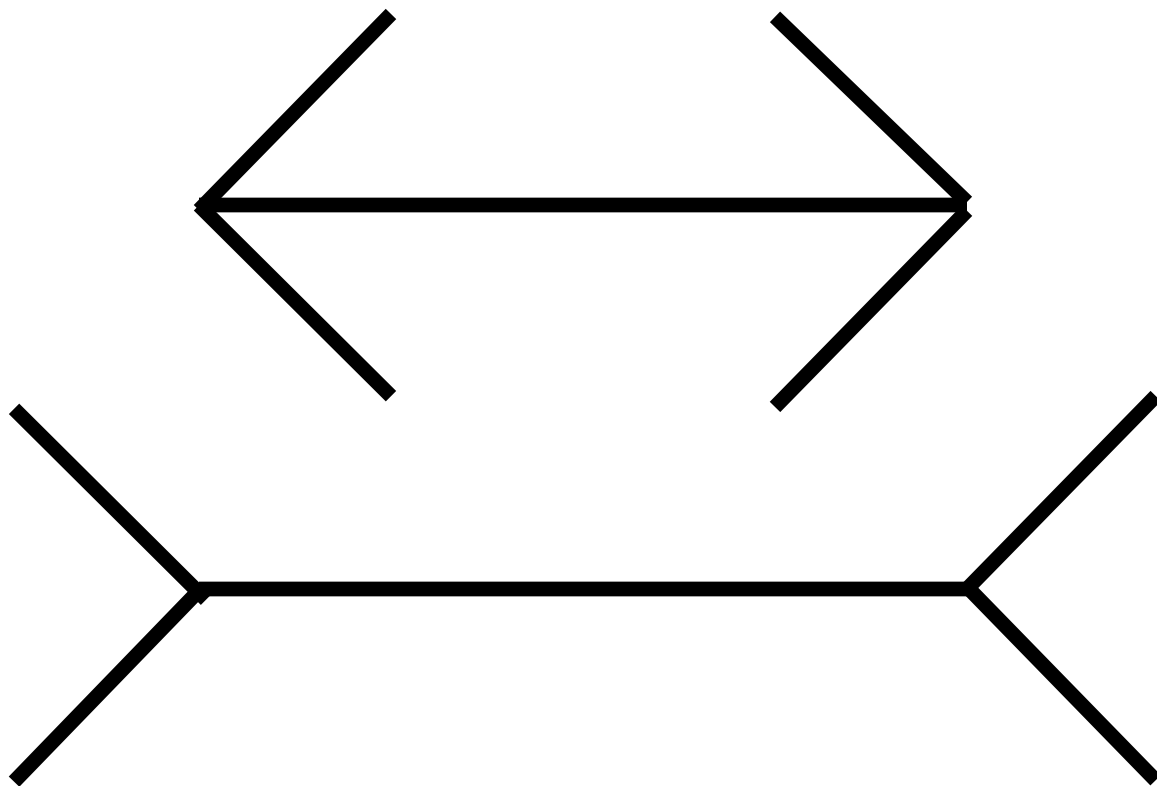
Other

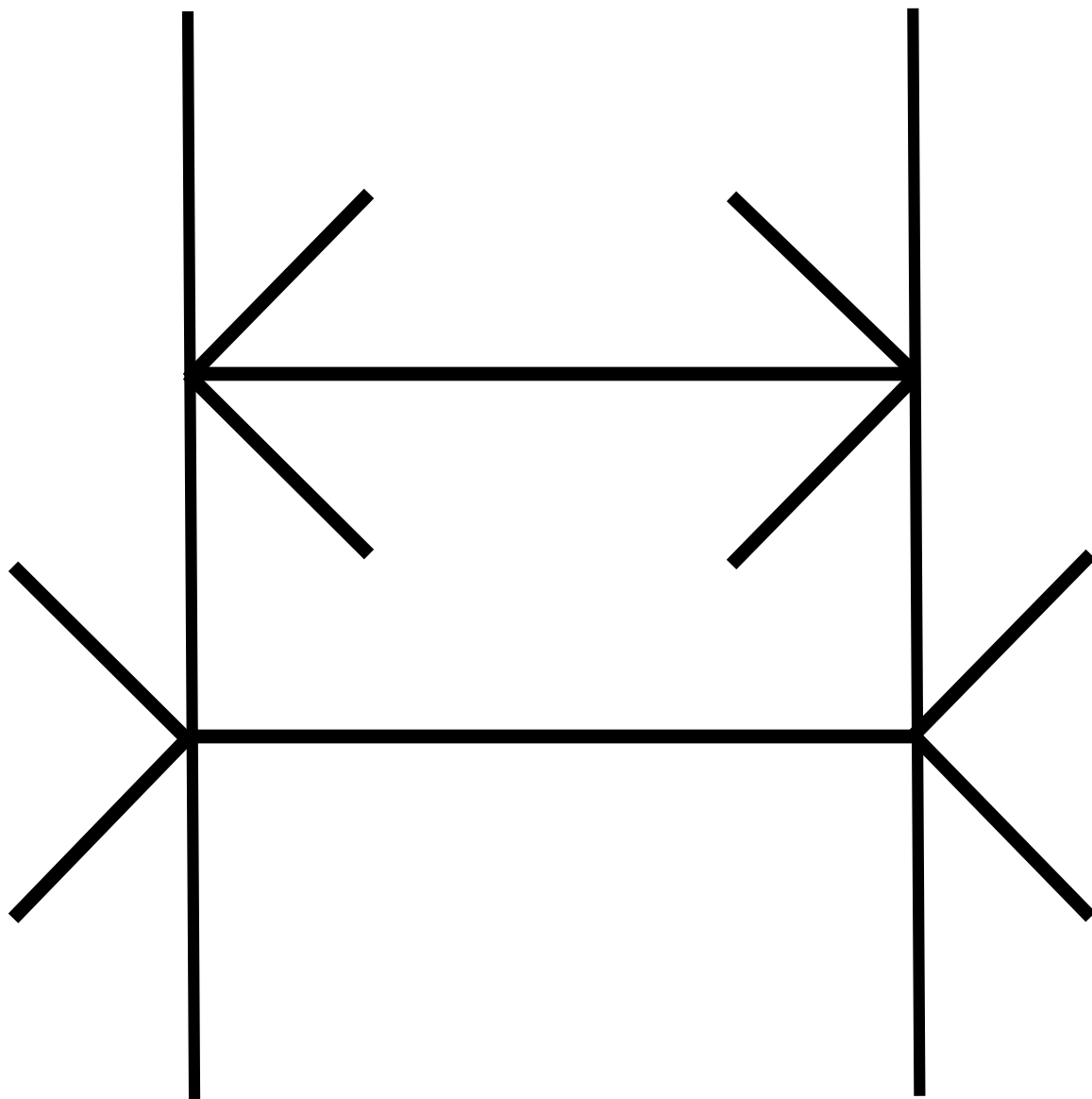
- Lifestyles
- Hobbies/Interests
- Appear weak
- Job title
- Marital or parental status
- Disability status (ex: using wheelchair)
- Where went to college
- Where grew up
- Educational achievements



Efficiencies with stereotypes







Stereotypes and phrases we know of or have heard about these groups



Black Men

-
-
-
-
-
-



Latinos

-
-
-
-
-
-



Asians

-
-
-
-
-
-

Stereotypes and phrases we know of or have heard about these groups



Black Men

- Angry
- Athletes
- Drug dealers
- In prison
- Lazy
- Less intelligent



Latinos

.



Asians

.

Stereotypes and phrases we know of or have heard about these groups



Black Men

- Angry
- Athletes
- Drug dealers
- In prison
- Lazy
- Less intelligent



Latinos

- Uneducated
- Like to dance
- Latin lovers
- Catholic
- Lazy
- Job stealing
- Transgender people



Asians

.

Stereotypes and phrases we know of or have heard about these groups



Black Men

- Angry
- Athletes
- Drug dealers
- In prison
- Lazy
- Less intelligent



Latinos

- Uneducated
- Like to dance
- Latin lovers
- Catholic
- Lazy
- Job stealing
- Transgender people



Asians

- Polite
- Smart
- Old people
- Bad drivers
- "The yellow ones"

Stereotypes and phrases we know of or have heard about these groups



Homosexual Men

-
-
-
-
-
-



Down Syndrome

-
-
-
-
-
-



Blonde Women

-
-
-
-
-
-

Implicit bias explains...



Heidi & Howard Study

<http://www.leadershippsychologyinstitute.com/women-the-leadership-labyrinth-howard-vs-heidi/>



Resume Study: Bertrand, M. et. al. Are Emily and Greg More Employable than Lakisha and Jamal? *National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper No. 9873*. July 2003



CEO Study:

Judge, et. al. The Effect of Physical Height on Workplace Success and Income, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, June 2004, p. 435

Those over 6' tall

15%
of American Men

60%
of CEOs



Unconscious bias effects our BEHAVIORS

Even when we are committed to
inclusion and don't want them to

Why does it matter?



Micro-Inequities and Micro-Aggressions

- Unequal treatment of people
- Talking over others
- Not listening to people's ideas
- Body language
- No eye contact
- Sit farther away
- Showing indifference, snubs
- Overt disrespect, insults



How unconscious bias slips into workplace



New Hires

- Recruiting
- Interviews
- Hiring decisions

Employee Growth Opportunities

- Making job assignments
- Listening to all ideas
- Training opportunities & career development
- Performance review
- Promotions
- Mentoring

Training Program

- How people treated in program
- Who gives input into new training program content

Company Policies

- Personnel policies
- HR policies

Product Development

- Group think

Customers

- Marketing campaigns
- Understanding customer needs
- How we treat customers

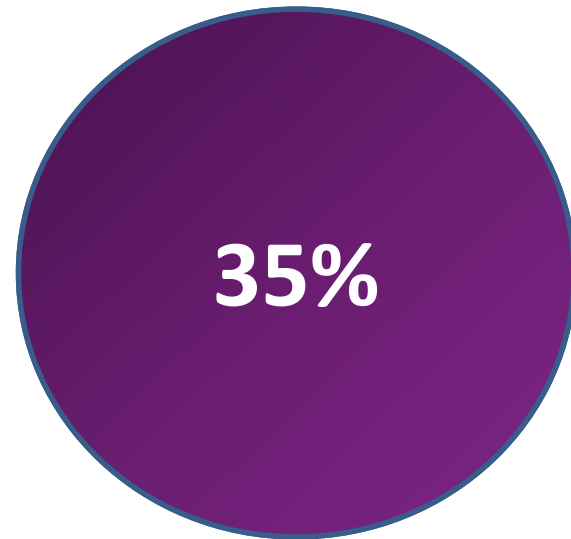
Companies with diverse workforces perform better financially*

Companies more likely to outperform:

**Gender-diverse
companies**



**Ethnically-diverse
companies**



Common types of unconscious bias

- Affinity
- Confirmation
- Attribution
- Generational
- Gender



Affinity bias

- Drawn to people similar to ourselves
- Ignore negative traits of those people
- Neutral to those unlike ourselves, or may focus on their faults



Affinity bias--hiring



Affinity bias



“With malice toward none and charity for some”

A.G. Greenwald and T.F. Pettigrew
2014 paper in *American Psychologist*



Confirmation bias

- Tendency to seek out information that supports our pre-existing beliefs
- We form an opinion first and then seek out evidence to back it up, rather than basing our opinions on facts



Confirmation bias



Attribution bias

(Fundamental attribution error)

- We attribute our poor behavior to the situation, context or external circumstances
- We attribute other's poor behavior to their character



Attribution bias



Where have you seen these unconscious biases in your workplace?

- Affinity
- Confirmation
- Attribution
- Generational
- Gender



**“The problem with the world is
that we draw our family circle too
small.”**



Mother Teresa

Resources on handout

- Books
- Free trainings
- YouTube videos



Strategies for employees



- Micro-affirmations
- Perspective taking/empathy map
- Look for commonalities/spend time with people different from you

Strategies in HR to minimize unconscious bias



Hiring



Systematically engage the slow brain

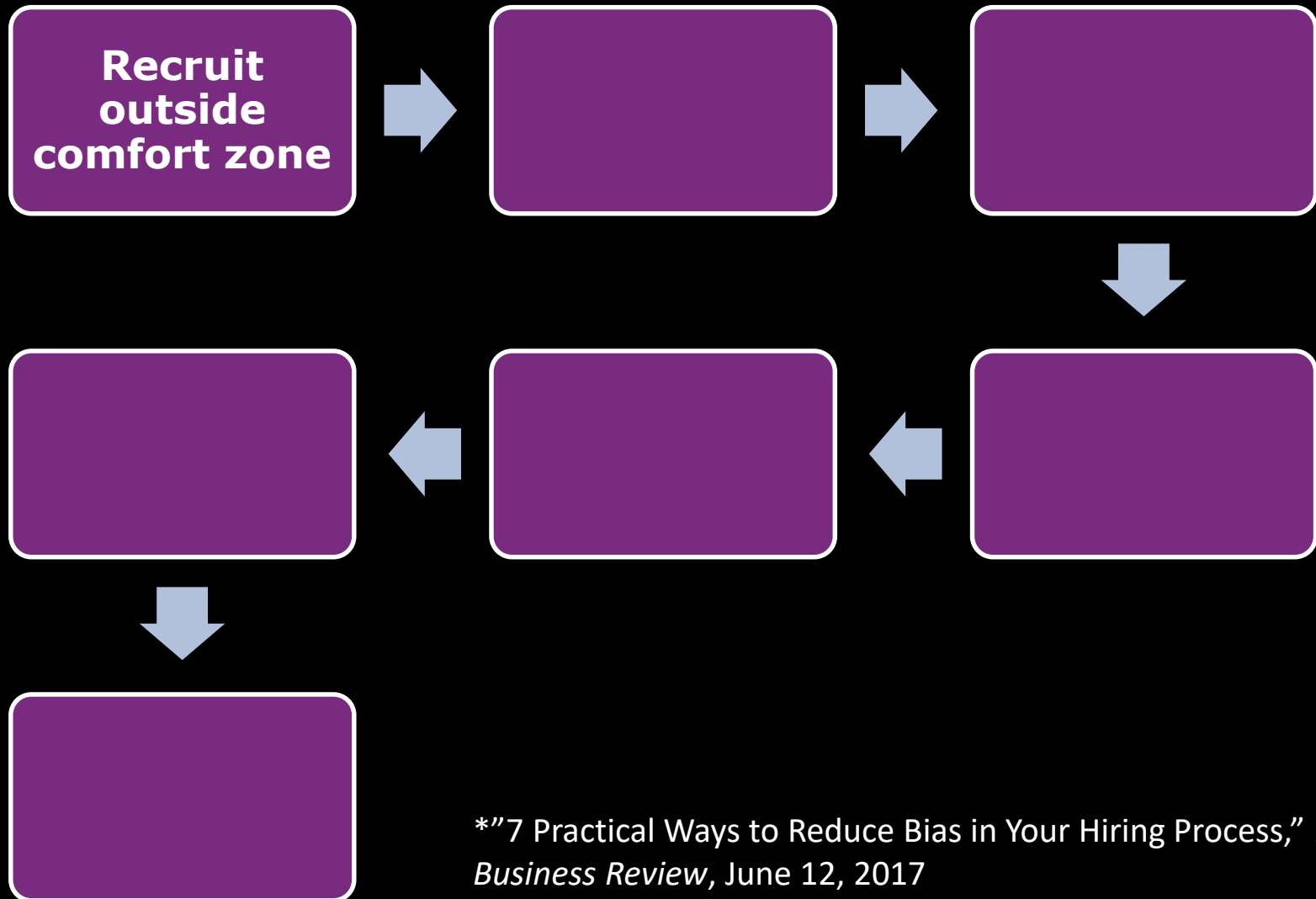
- **Pause**
- **Slow down**
- **Be mindful**



A close-up, low-angle shot of a cello player in a dark suit, with other musicians in the background, overlaid with the text "Set up systems". The cello player's hands are visible, holding the bow and the neck of the instrument. The background is dark and out of focus, showing other musicians playing violins. The text is in a white, serif font, positioned in the upper right quadrant of the image.

Set up systems

Minimizing bias in hiring*



**"7 Practical Ways to Reduce Bias in Your Hiring Process," Harvard Business Review, June 12, 2017*

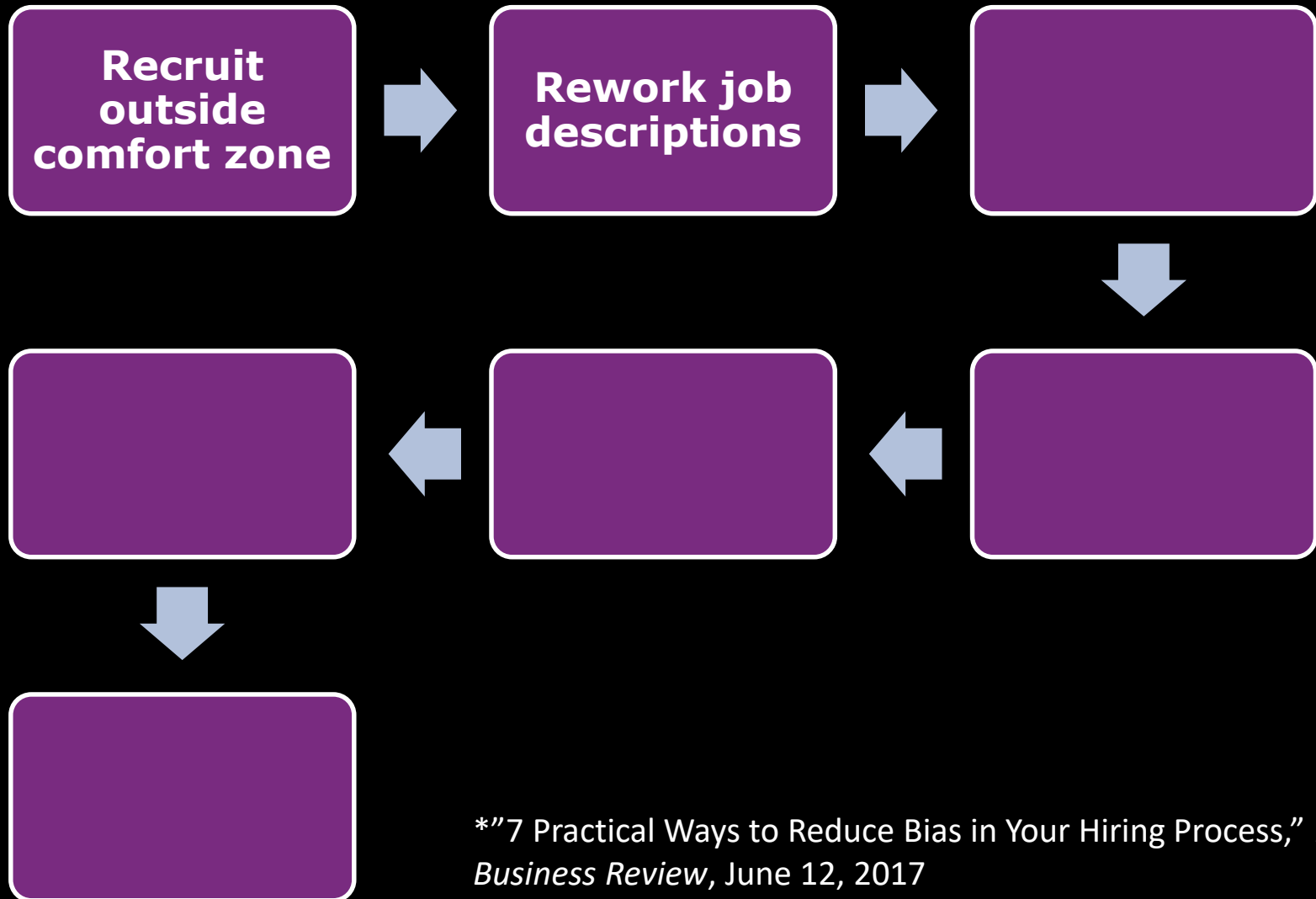
Recruit outside comfort zone*

Stanford
University



*"Seven Steps to Reduce Bias in Hiring," *Wall Street Journal*, www.wsj.com

Minimizing bias in hiring*



**"7 Practical Ways to Reduce Bias in Your Hiring Process," Harvard Business Review, June 12, 2017*

Rework job descriptions

indeed™

craigslist

simplyhired.

ebay
classifieds

Jobs2Careers
JOB SEARCH ENGINE

monster™

LinkedIn

facebook

twitter

bright

Just Jobs
all jobs with one search

juju
job search engine

TipTopJob.com

careerbliss

MyNewJobSearch

OLX

oodle
marketplace

careerJET.com

jobinventory
Your Next Job Is Here

DiversityJobs
diversity at work

TopUSAJobs.com

glassdoor™

jooble

Yakaz

CareerVitals

AfterCollege

careerbuilder.com™

Dice

The Ladders.

Percent of qualifications felt need to be met before apply

60%



?%



Percent of qualifications felt need to be met before apply

60%



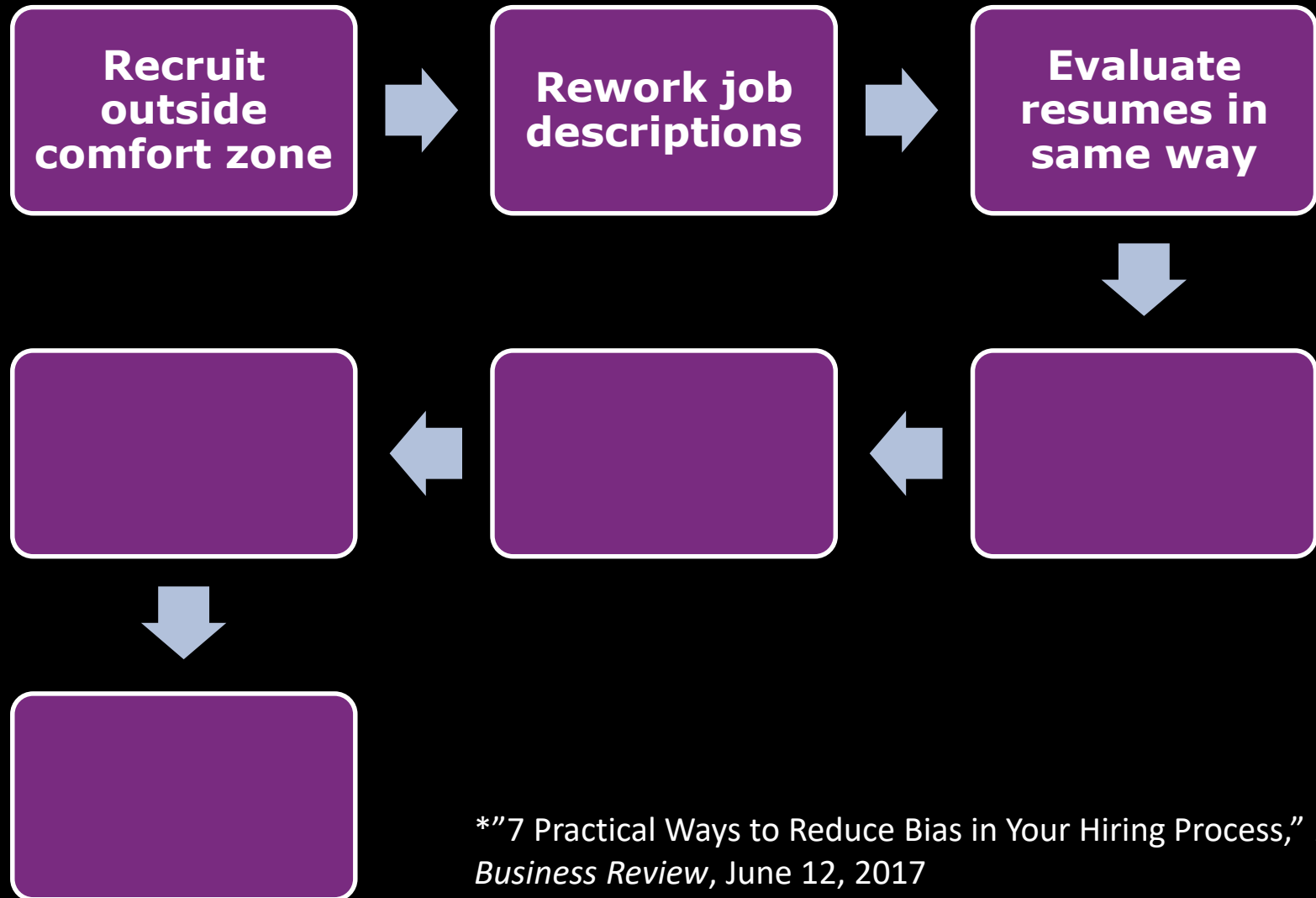
100%



Watch for language in job descriptions that might signal biases



Minimizing bias in hiring*



**"7 Practical Ways to Reduce Bias in Your Hiring Process," Harvard Business Review, June 12, 2017*

Evaluate resumes in same way

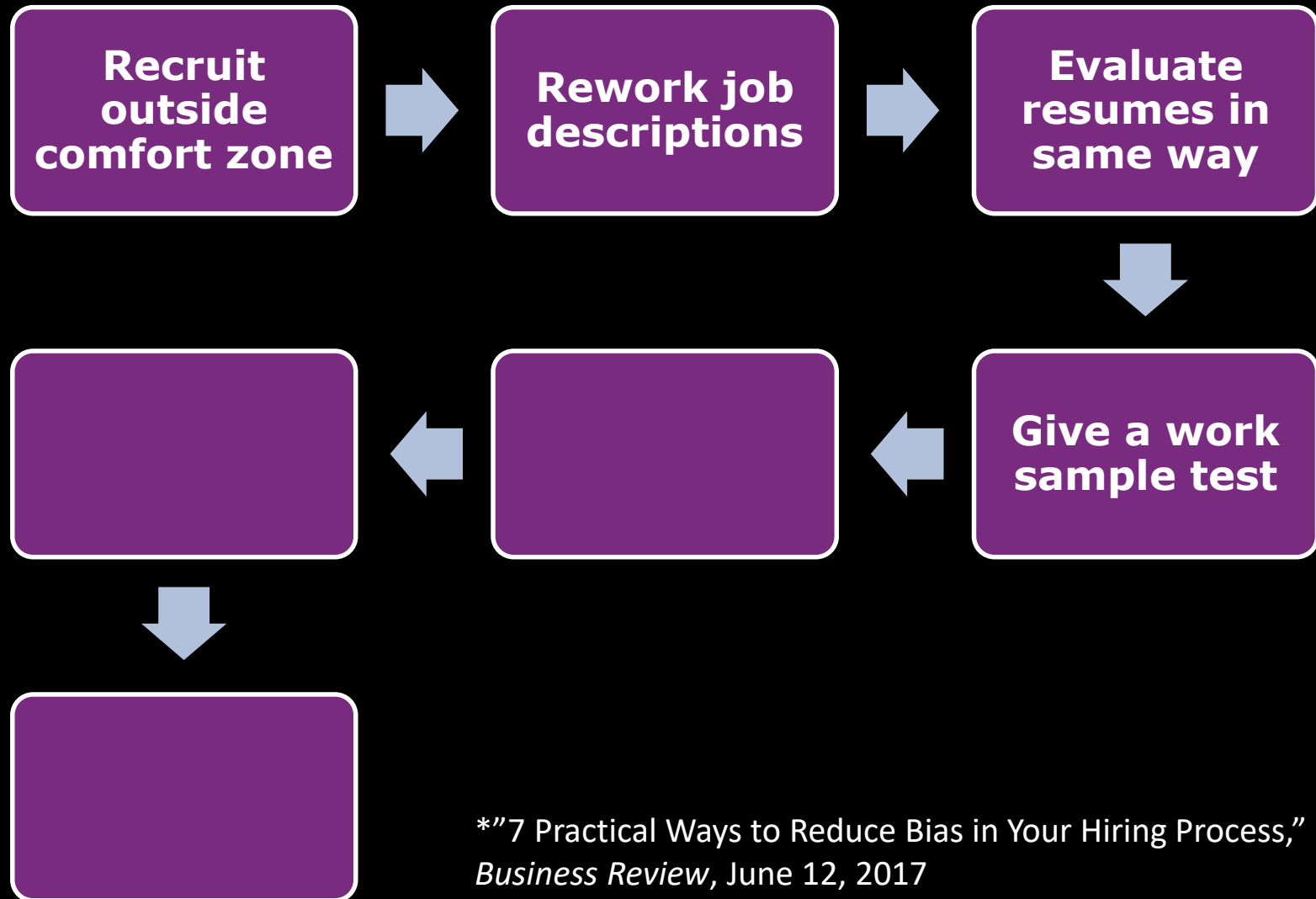


Systematic questions for resume review



- **Does it remind you of someone?**
Is that positive or negative?
- **Does something jump out strongly?**
Is that relative to the job?
- **Does person remind you of yourself?**
Is that relative to the job?

Minimizing bias in hiring*

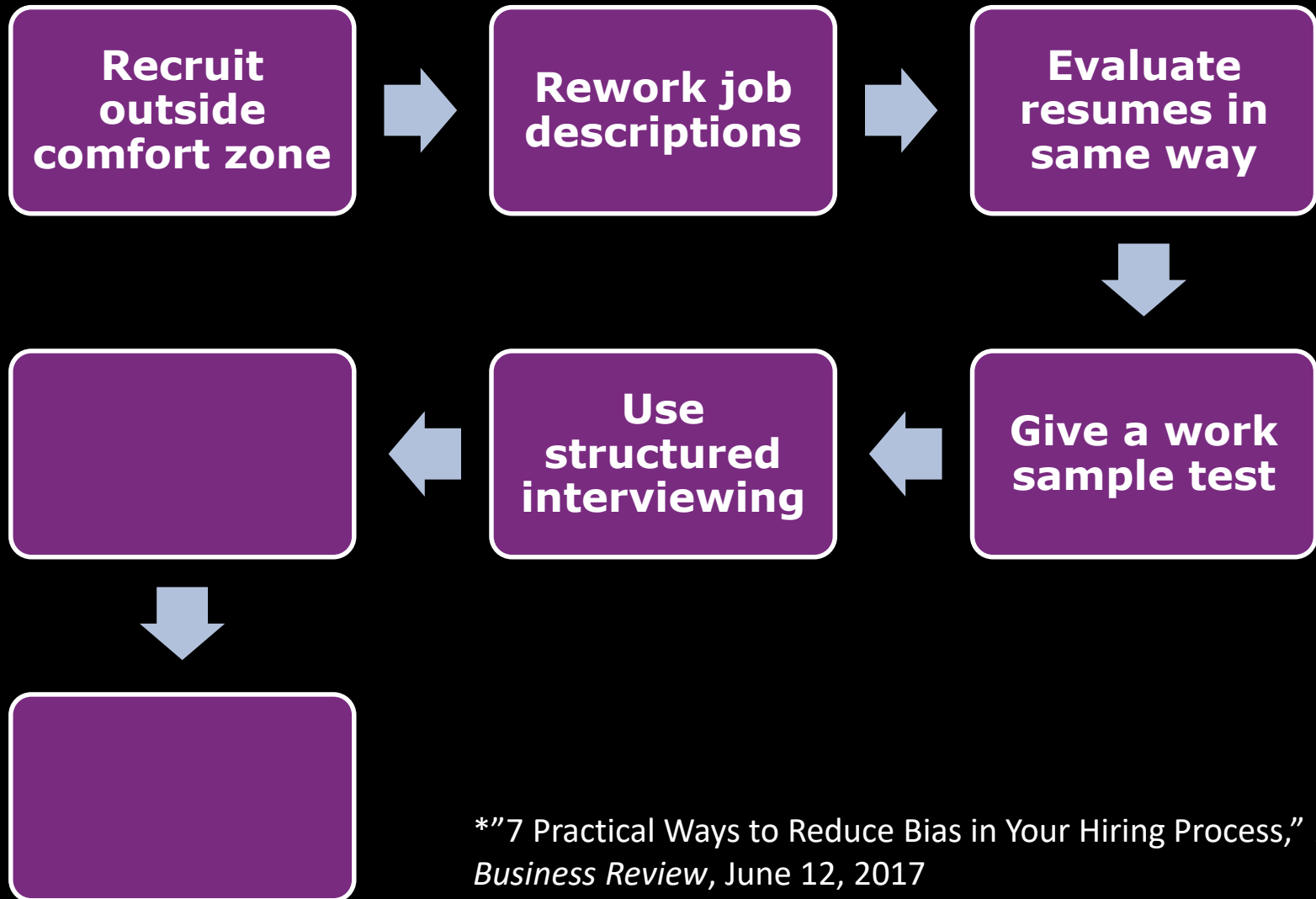


**"7 Practical Ways to Reduce Bias in Your Hiring Process," Harvard Business Review, June 12, 2017*

Give a work sample test



Minimizing bias in hiring*



**"7 Practical Ways to Reduce Bias in Your Hiring Process," Harvard Business Review, June 12, 2017*

Use structured interviewing



Use behavioral interviewing

- **Tell me about a time...**
- **Give me an example of a time...**



Job description qualification

Excellent presentation and written communication skills



Behavioral question

Give me an example of your oral and written communication skills using different forms of media



Pre-determine answers you are looking for

Define

- Great
- Good
- Poor



Rating potential answers



Great answer: Concrete examples showed comfort with a number of forms of media as well as excellent and effective outcomes from the communications

Good answer: Concrete example showed comfort with one form of media but only marginally articulate the outcome of the communication

Poor answer: Did not display comfort with various forms of media or had never used them.

Ask yourself...

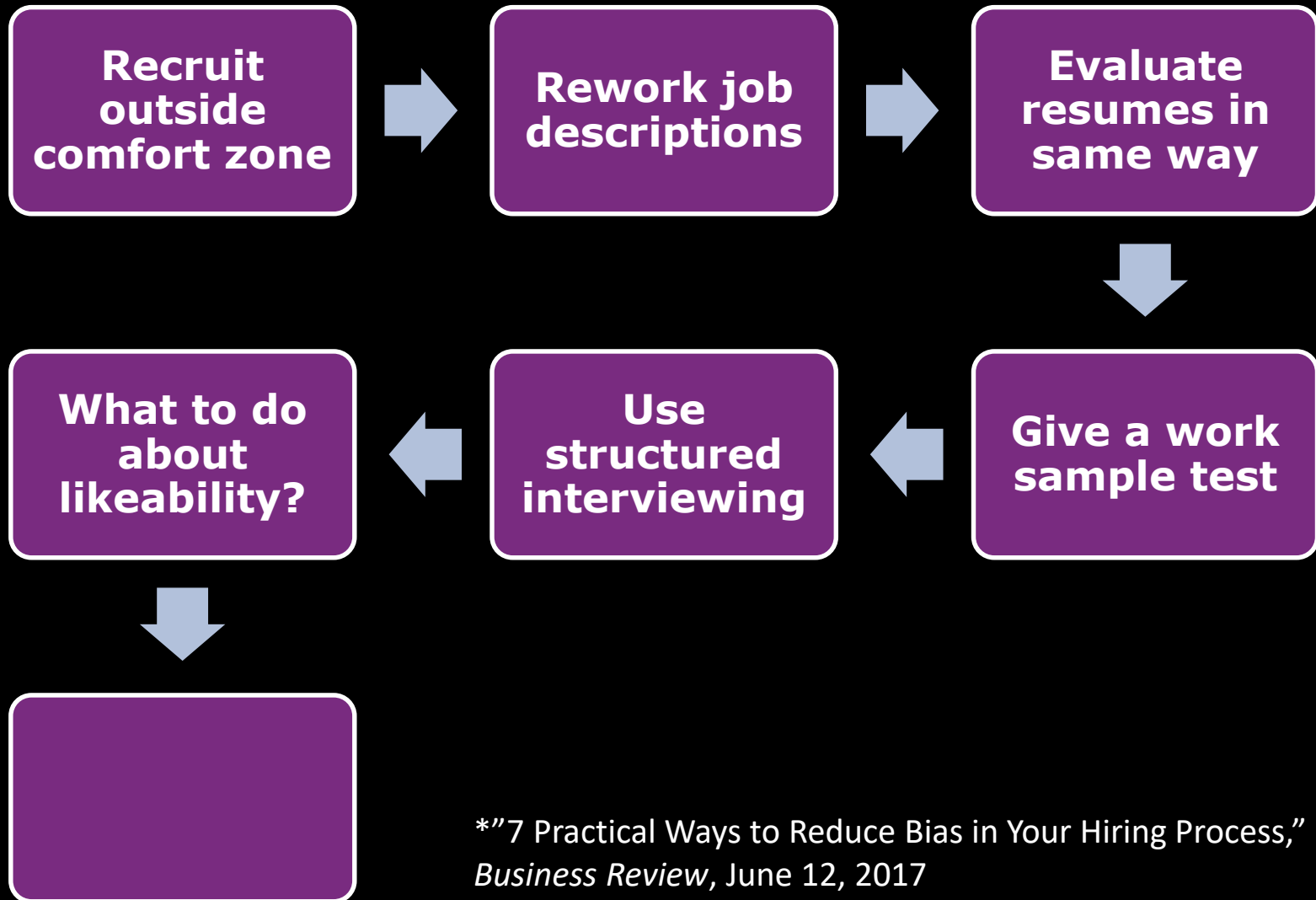
"So What?"



Hire using diverse panel review



Minimizing bias in hiring*



**"7 Practical Ways to Reduce Bias in Your Hiring Process," Harvard Business Review, June 12, 2017*

What to do about likeability and “culture fit”?

Rate this as you would any other skill



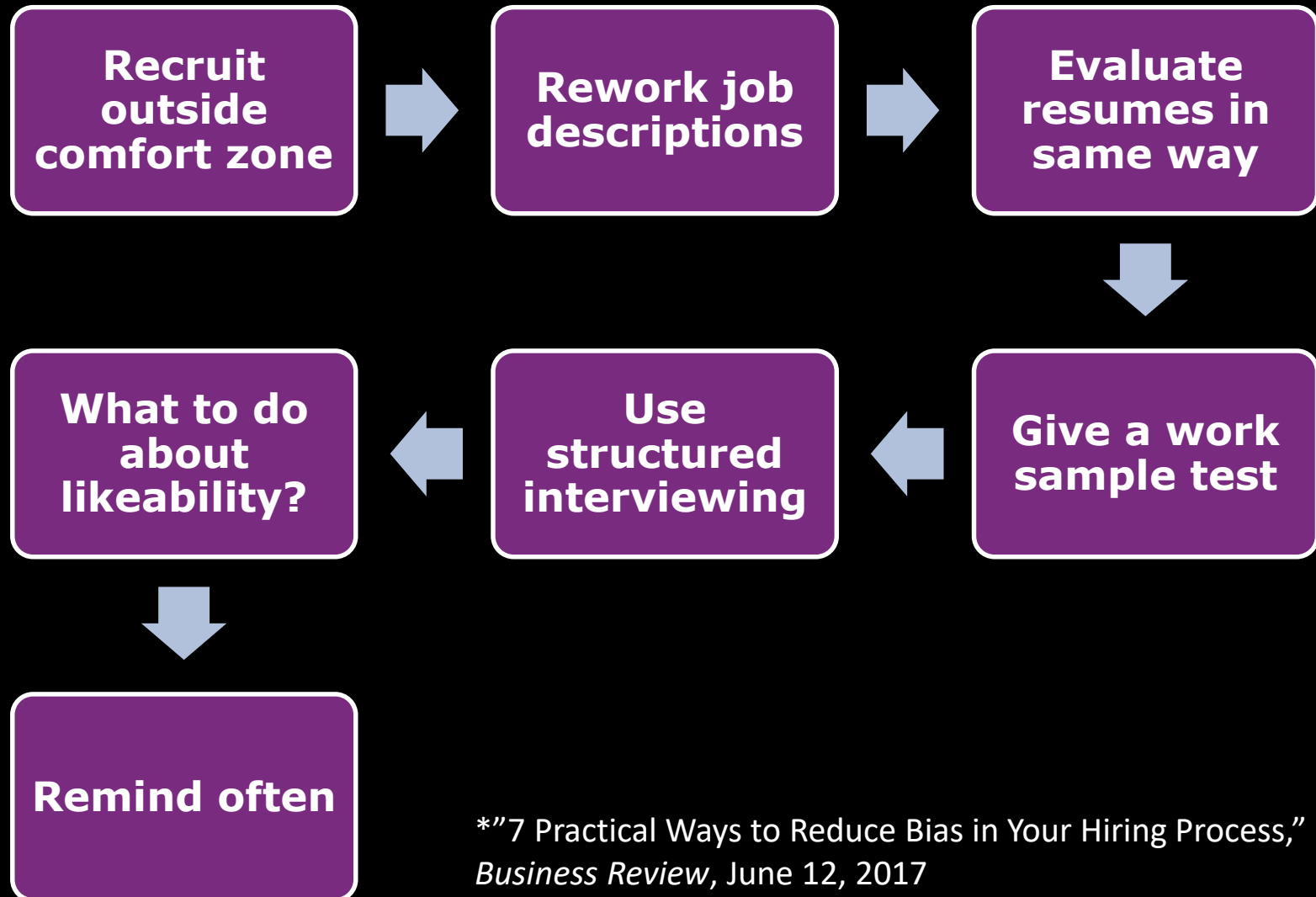
Likeability

Behavioral interview question

Tell me about a time your behavior had a positive impact on your team



Minimizing bias in hiring*



**"7 Practical Ways to Reduce Bias in Your Hiring Process," Harvard Business Review, June 12, 2017*

Remind often



Strategies in HR to minimize unconscious bias



Hiring



**Promotions/
projects**



Who gets a promotion or opportunity to be project lead?



Systematically engage the slow brain

- **Pause**
- **Slow down**
- **Be mindful**



Actively doubt your objectivity



Strategies in HR to minimize unconscious bias



Hiring



**Promotions/
projects**



**Performance
reviews**

Affinity bias – performance reviews



Performance Reviews





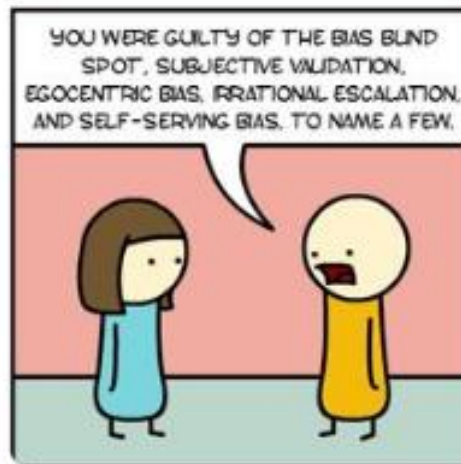
**“The unchallenged brain is
not worth trusting”**

**Helen Turnbull
TED talk**



Recap

- Everyone has unconscious bias
- It's efficient
- It's limiting
- It affects our behavior
- Our slow, rational brain, is constantly in conflict with fast brain
- Slow down, pause and be mindful to help minimize our unconscious bias
- Use systems whenever possible to take our brains out of the picture



Thank You!



Inspiring Peak Performance through Authentic Positivity

janet@AffirmYourself.com
www.AffirmYourself.com