



Implications of Implicit Bias for Understanding and Training on Racially Biased Policing

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Presentation to Address

- How the social science research can help us re-conceptualize racial bias in policing
- Implications of implicit bias for training
- Special training for first-line supervisors.



A Broader View of "Racial Profiling"

“Racial Profiling”: Police v. Stakeholders

- The charge has been that racially biased policing exists because police are racist and therefore overtly/intentionally targeting minorities
 - Implied in this charge:
 - There are many “bad people” in policing
 - They are intentionally doing bad things
 - Agency executives either support or are unconcerned.

The social science on implicit bias allows us to broaden our view...

- Stakeholders and Executives: RBP isn't produced solely by "bad" people.
- Chiefs can be more open to the possibility that the problem of police racial bias DOES exist (even in the best agencies).
- Both can think/talk in terms not just of "racism," but of "bias."

- This conceptualization allows:
 - Police to reduce defensiveness
 - Allows them to implement interventions without castigating their personnel as bad people
 - Stakeholders to JOIN police in addressing the problem.

Implications of Implicit Bias for Training

Academy and In-Service RBP Training
And
Training for Mid-Managers/Command



"Basic" RBP Training

Academy/In-Service

“Standard” Training

- Traditional “diversity training”
 - e.g., cultural differences
- Review of 4th Amendment as pertains to traffic/pedestrian stops
- Professional behavior during traffic stops.
- All of these are important components of training
- But none of these address “implicit bias.”

Chicago Academy Training: Message to Recruits

- All of us have preconceptions (biases, stereotypes) regarding people (based on gender, race, disability, weight, etc.)
- Policing with preconceptions is detrimental to just, effective and safe policing.
- That is, biased policing isn't just socially unacceptable, it keeps you from achieving your own policing objectives and undermines your safety.

Methods

- Adult learning techniques
- No lecture
- Compelling role play with debriefing
- Other exercises

- Recruits were engaged!

Role Plays

- “Woman with a gun”
- “Gang bangers on the corner”
- Sexual assault of a male.

Building on CPD Strengths

- Breadth is a strength, but will develop further the racial component
 - Police facing much more criticism in the race realm
 - The biases that humans have in the realm of race/ethnicity are linked to a major objective of policing – identifying criminals....

Considering

- Added emphasis on the race-crime link
- Incorporation of Implicit Association Tests.
 - <https://implicit.harvard.edu>
 - Race IAT, Weapons IAT....

Considering

- Additional topics:
 - Effects of racially biased policing on individual citizens, police and community
 - Key decision points at which racial bias in policing can occur
 - Policy on racially biased policing
 - Ways to reduce perceptions of racial bias.



Mid-Level Managers and Command Staff

Command, Mid-Level Managers

- How racially biased policing might manifest
 - Racist officers
 - Officers with human biases (implicit racial bias)
 - In decisions of policy-makers
- How good people might police in a biased fashion
 - This is key to facilitating recognition of a problem.
 - How to prevent bias
 - How to identify bias
 - How to handle bias.



First-Line Supervisor Training

Training in how to identify and respond to officers who may be acting in a racially biased manner.

First Line Supervisor (Cont.)

- First line supervisors are key to monitoring officers on the street.
- But dealing with race issues as a manager in ANY employment setting is fraught with difficulties.
- Need to provide guidance.

First Line Supervisors (Cont.)

- Identifying Biased Officers:
 - What are they looking for?
 - How much evidence required before intervention?
 - In many instances, we'll have “indications,” not “proof.”

First Line Supervisors (Cont.)

- How to intervene?
 - Need protocol for intervening at low level of evidence.
 - If clearly bias/racism: In-place systems can likely handle. Supervisory intervention, complaint process, etc.

Summary/Conclusions

- Social science research helps us:
 - Reconceptualize the issue and bring “opponents” together
 - Design training to reduce racial bias.



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