

## **Hannah Jepson**

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Lead Coach - LGBTQ Centre for Inclusion

### **Exploring the impact of Unconscious Bias in our schools**



**Warning: This session will not stop you from being biased**



# Learning Objectives

- Understand what unconscious bias is
- Understand types of bias and how they manifest
- Understand how bias links to diversity and inclusion
- Reflect on our own biases
- Take away some practical solutions to mitigate for bias in your schools

# Contracting

- Be honest
- Be present
- Generous listening
- Commit to change

# Activity

- Write down four people you really admire
- Feedback – is there anything you notice?

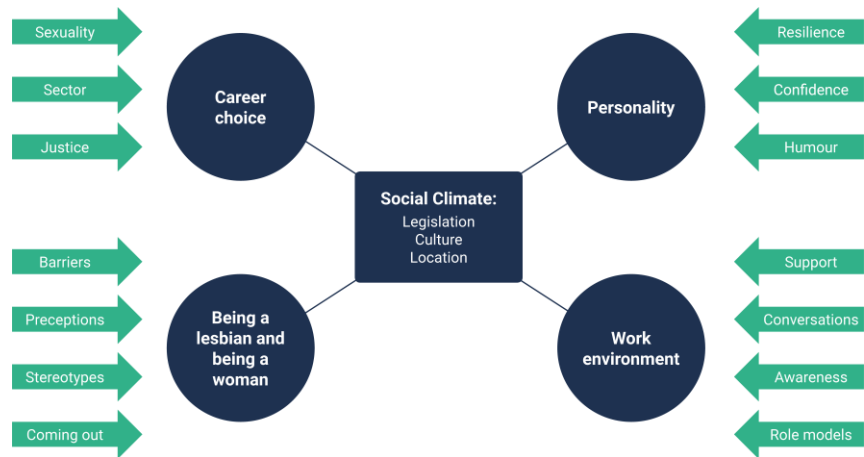
10 minutes

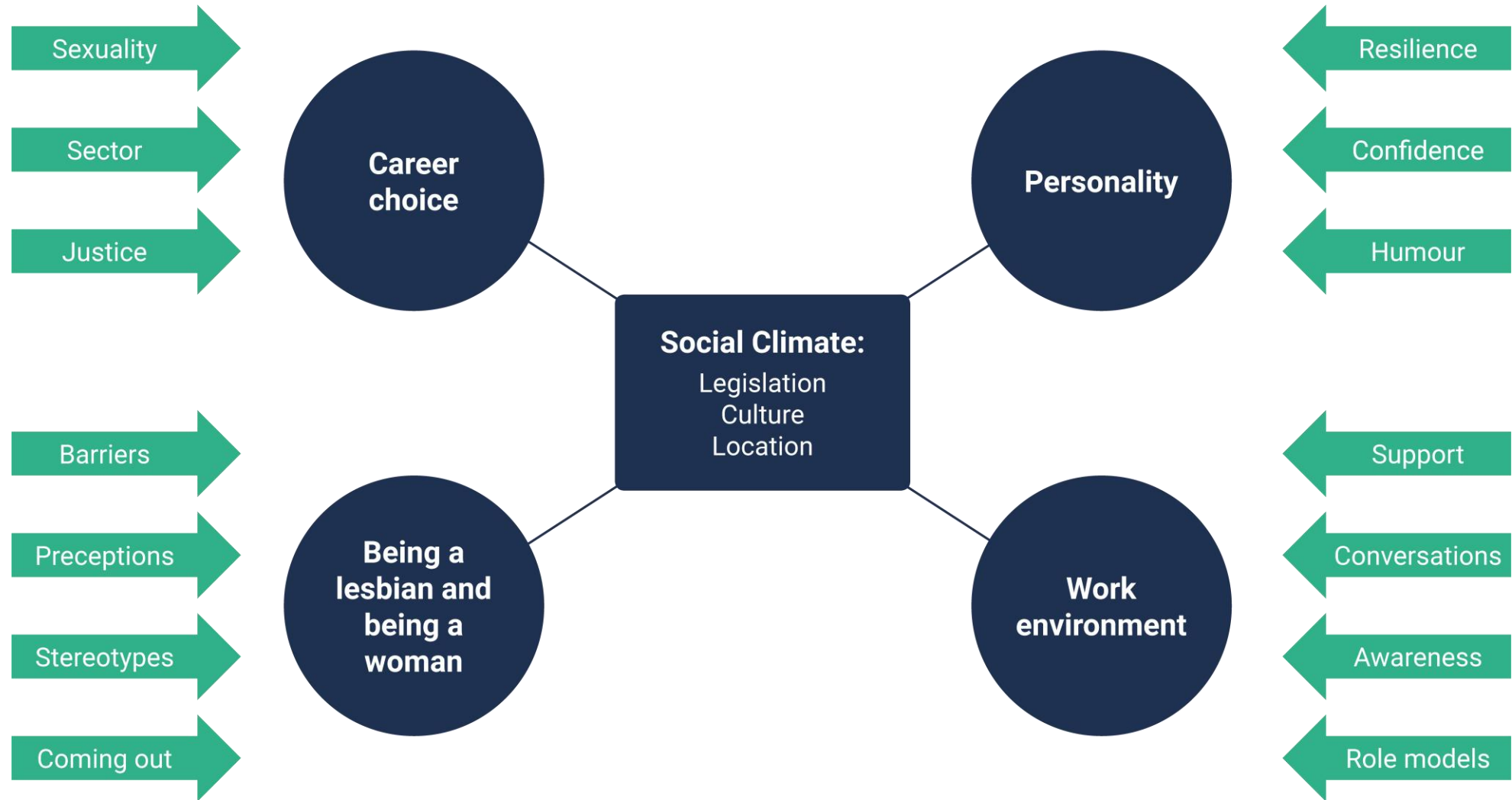


# My story



LEEDS  
BECKETT  
UNIVERSITY

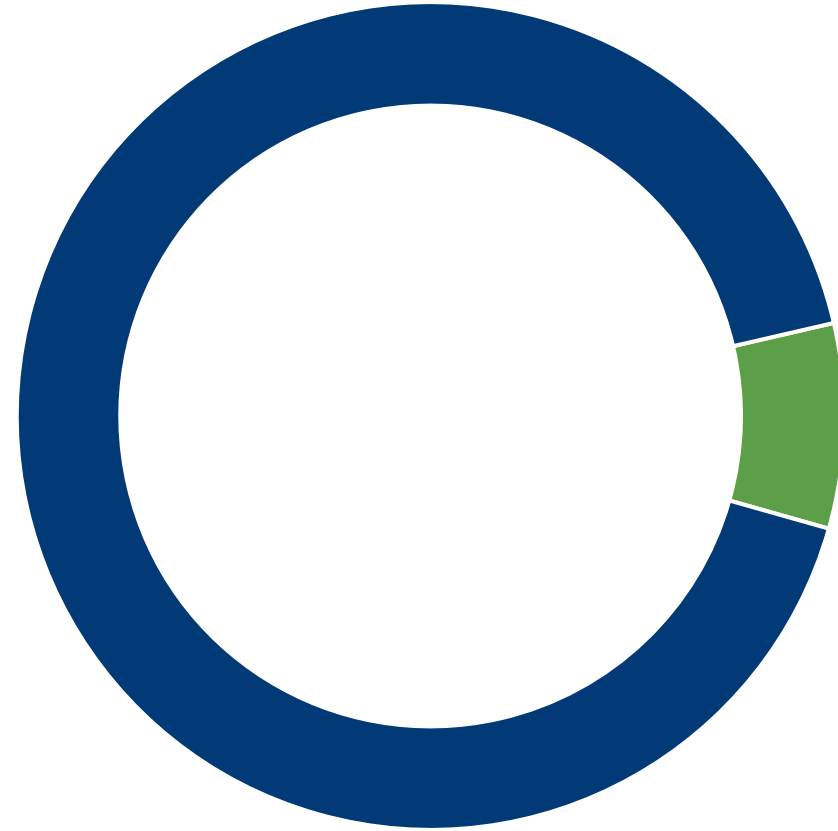






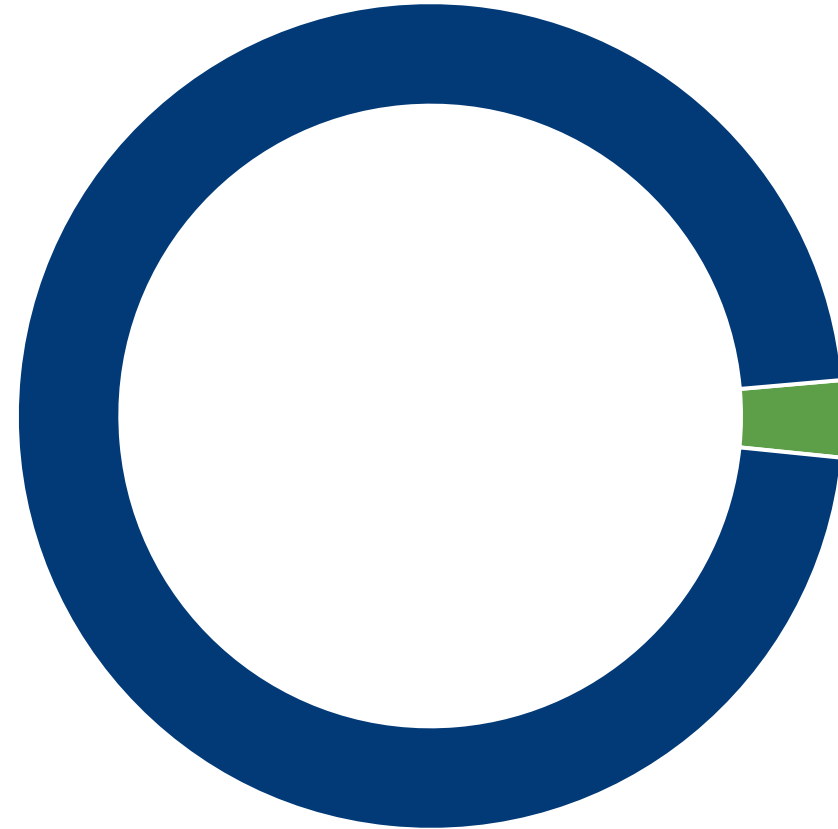
## Some national statistics

8% of teachers are BAME



## Some national statistics

3% of school leaders are BAME



## Some national statistics

74% of teachers are women



## Some national statistics

66% of headteachers are women



## Some national statistics

Number of openly LGBT+ School leaders: UNKNOWN

# What about your area?

- Reflect on the leadership of your school
- Does it represent the community that you serve?
- If not, why might this be?

# Discussion

“You can’t be what you can’t see...”

Why is D&I important:

- Your school
- The UK
- The world in 2020?

# Why?

- Diverse leadership fosters social cohesion and supports (young) people to grow and develop in an environment of visible, diverse role models (Deloitte, 2018)
- Schools should reflect the communities they serve
- Research shows that diverse teams are more creative, innovative, adaptable and productive (CIPD, 2019)
- Diverse and inclusive organisations have happier more motivated staff and experience less turnover (McKinsey, 2018)



# Why?

- It is the right thing to do: The moral case (Meyer's minority Stress Model, 2003)
- Businesses in the top quartile for ethnic/cultural and gender diversity outperform on profitability (McKinsey, 2018)
- The law: Equality Act 2010
- Solving complex problems: Rebel ideas, Matthew Syed

# 9 Protected characteristics?



- **Equality** is about ensuring everybody has an equal opportunity and is not treated differently or discriminated against because of their characteristics.
- **Diversity** is about taking account of the differences between people and groups of people and placing a positive value on those differences.
- **Inclusion** describes an individual's experience within the workplace or in wider society and the extent to which they feel valued and included.

# Heuristics

Human brain process around 11 million pieces of information per second

A mental shortcut that allows you to solve problems quickly – A good thing!



# Bias: A lazy heuristic

- Implicit or Unconscious Bias happens out of our control and automatically
- Held by us all
- Learned stereotypes, deeply engrained
- Borne out of our experiences
- Protective mechanism
- Automatic associations
- Categorisations based on our schemas

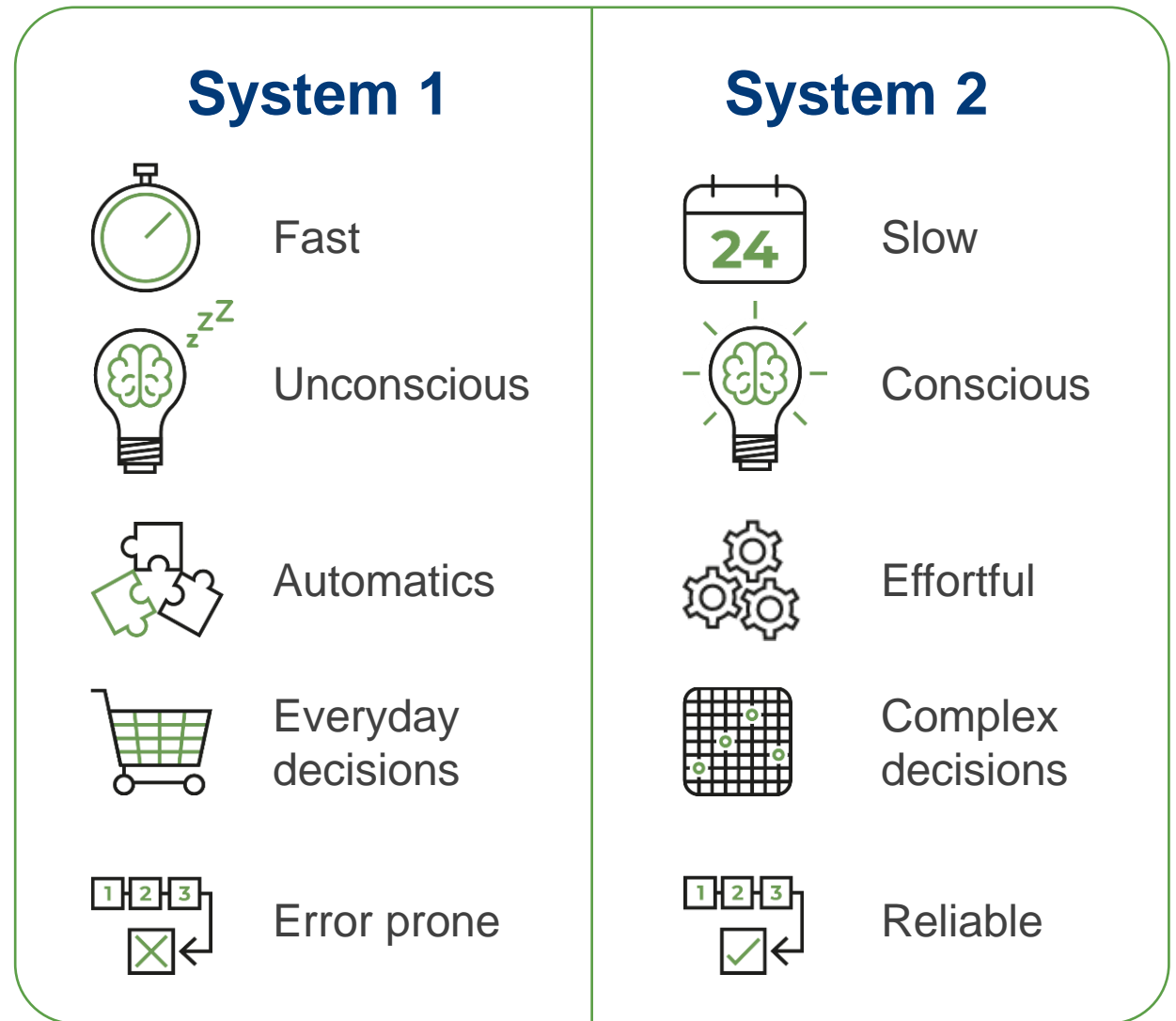
# Bias has kept us alive for years...



# Theoretical models to explain bias

1. Daniel Kahneman, Thinking Fast and Slow
2. Steve Peters, The Chimp Paradox

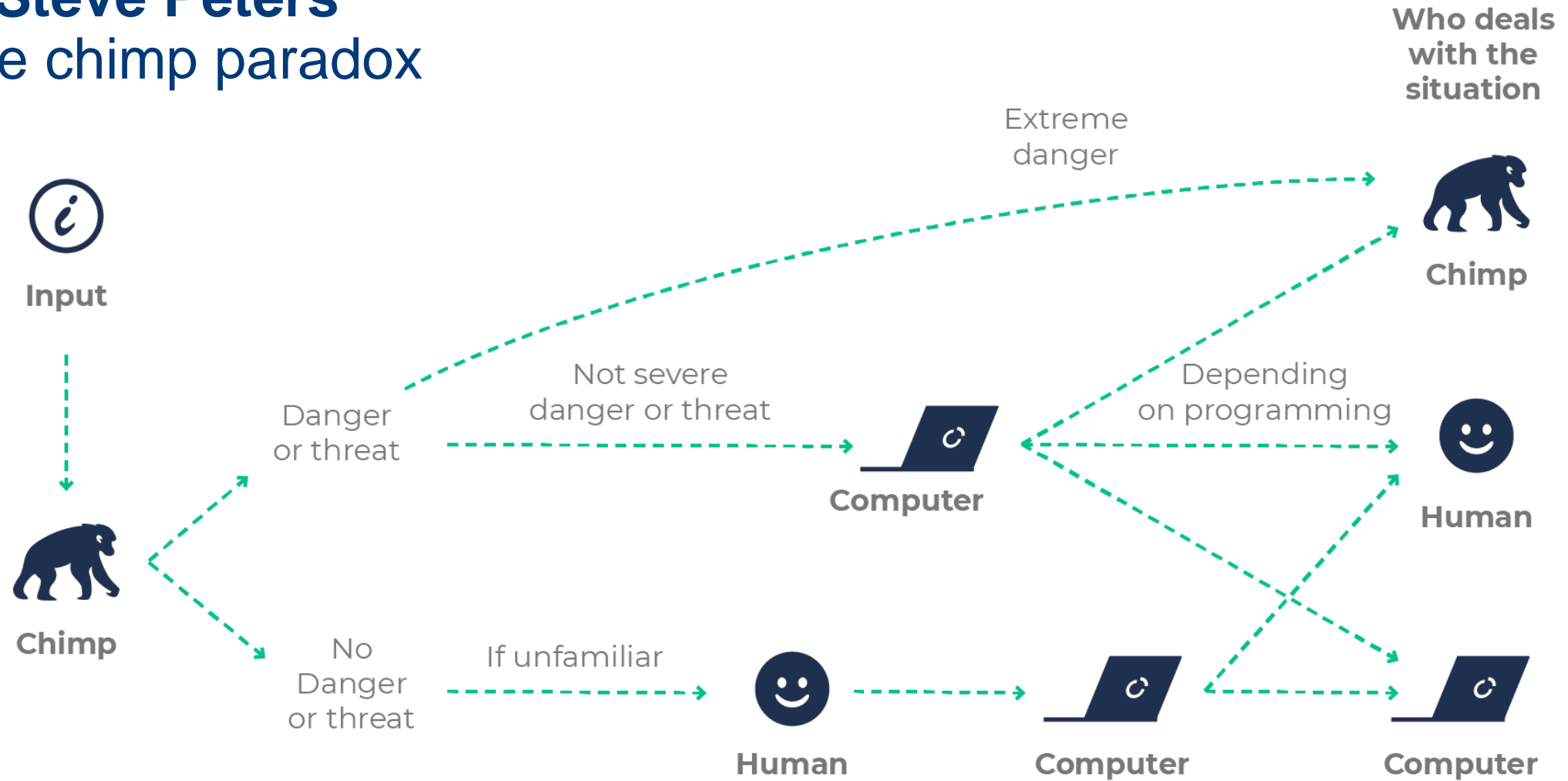
# 1. Daniel Kahneman, Thinking Fast and Slow



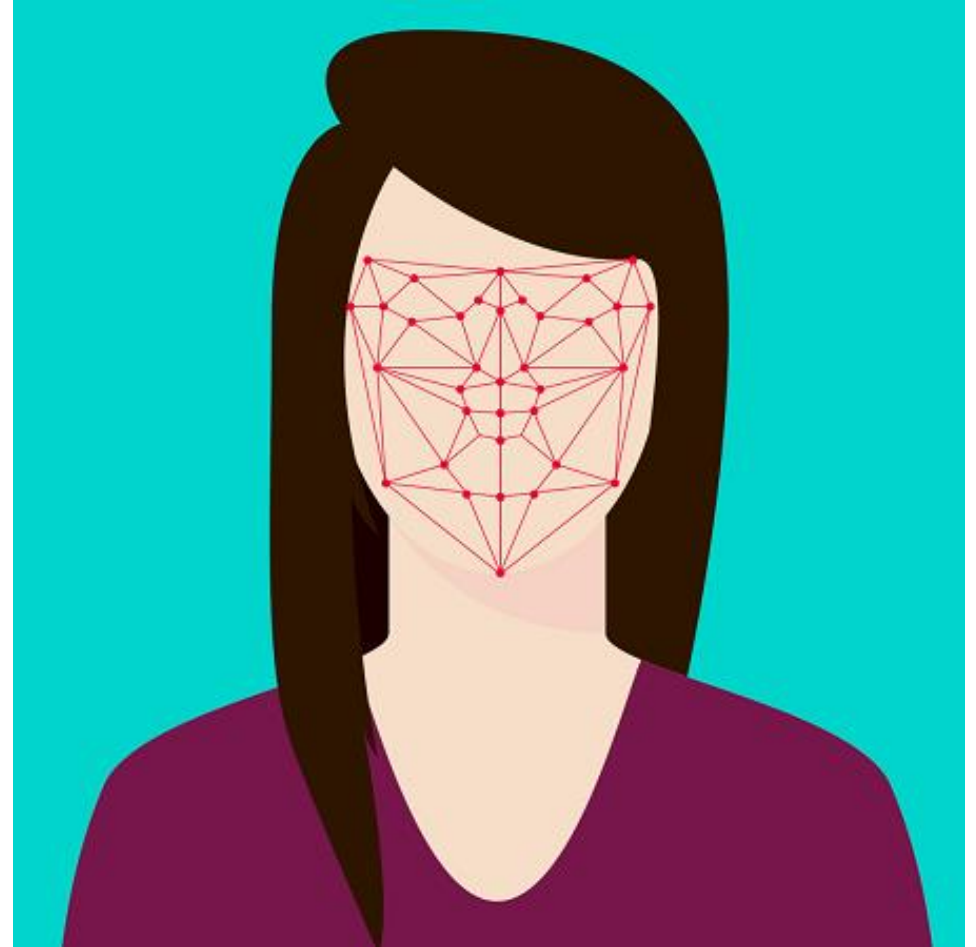


## 2. Steve Peters

### The chimp paradox



# The science of facial recognition



# Types of bias

1. Ingroup/ outgroup
2. Confirmation
3. Halo and Horns
4. Stereotype
5. Fundamental Attribution Error
6. Motivated blindness

# Stereotype threat?



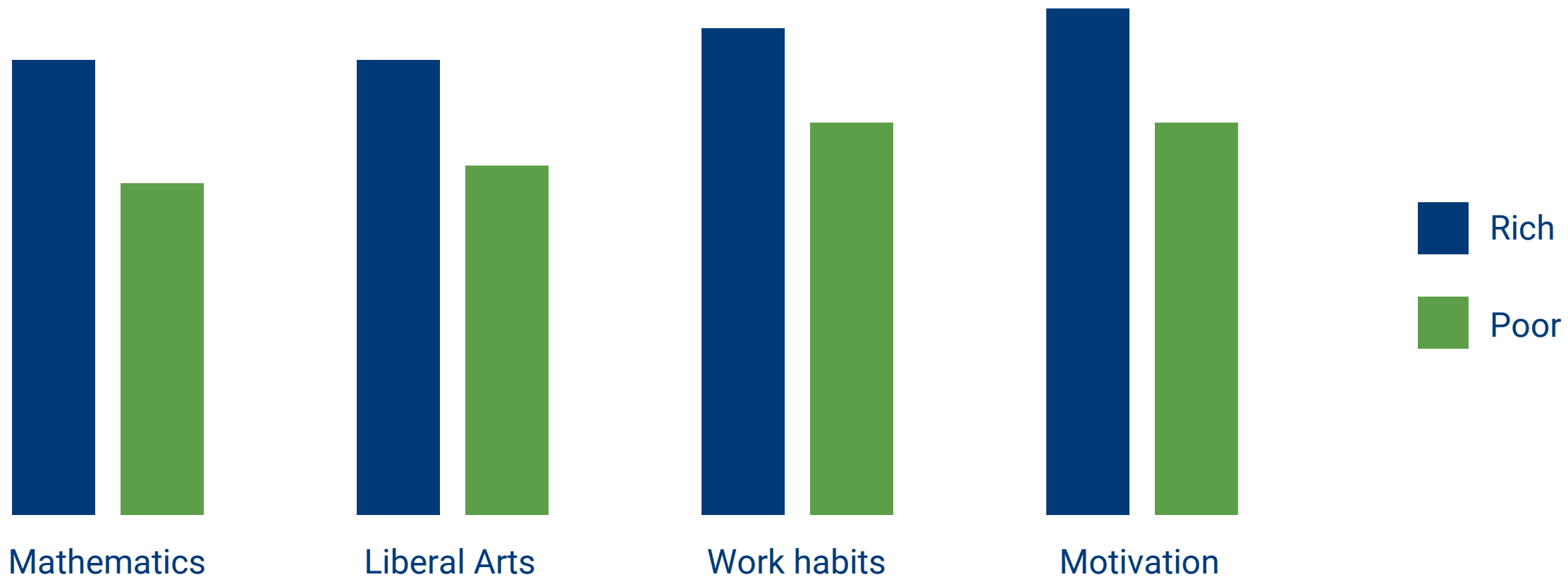
# Mentor's Dilemma?



# Darley & Gross (1983)

- Hannah
- Performance vs background
- Rich vs poor
- Subject, work habits and motivation

# Performance vs background



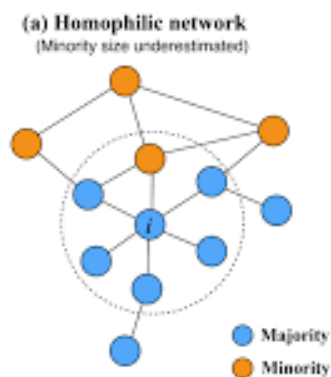
# Discussion

## Examples of Bias through history...

1. Ingroup/ outgroup
2. Confirmation
3. Halo and Horns
4. Stereotype
5. Fundamental Attribution Error
6. Motivated blindness



# The FA



# Types of bias in your context

1. Ingroup/ outgroup
2. Confirmation
3. Halo and Horns
4. Stereotype
5. Fundamental Attribution Error
6. Motivated blindness

# Case studies



**Paula** is single parent originally from a small country in West Africa. Her daughter has just started at school. Paula has arrived late to pick her daughter up 3 times in the last week. When she does arrive, she is abrupt with her daughter, they don't hug when they greet, and Paula shows little engagement with the staff.

**Jo** is a young parent originally from Romania who has got two children at school, he is polite to the staff but his written communication is almost illegible – his children are frequently absent on alternate days and Jo tends to blame his girlfriend's ill health for their lack of attendance. School has noticed there are many different women who come with Jo to pick the girls up

- What do you instantly feel/ think about the person when you read this?
- What conclusions do these scenarios lead us to draw?
- What are all the possible reasons for this behaviour?
- What actions could we take in order to change our initial reaction?
- What biases that we've discussed today could these scenarios bring about?
- How might these biases impact on our future relationships with parents?

# Exploring our biases

## The Implicit Association Test



# Bias happens when

1. We are tired
2. We are busy
3. We are stressed
4. We have to act fast
5. We are all the same
6. There is too much/ not enough information

# Bias can affect

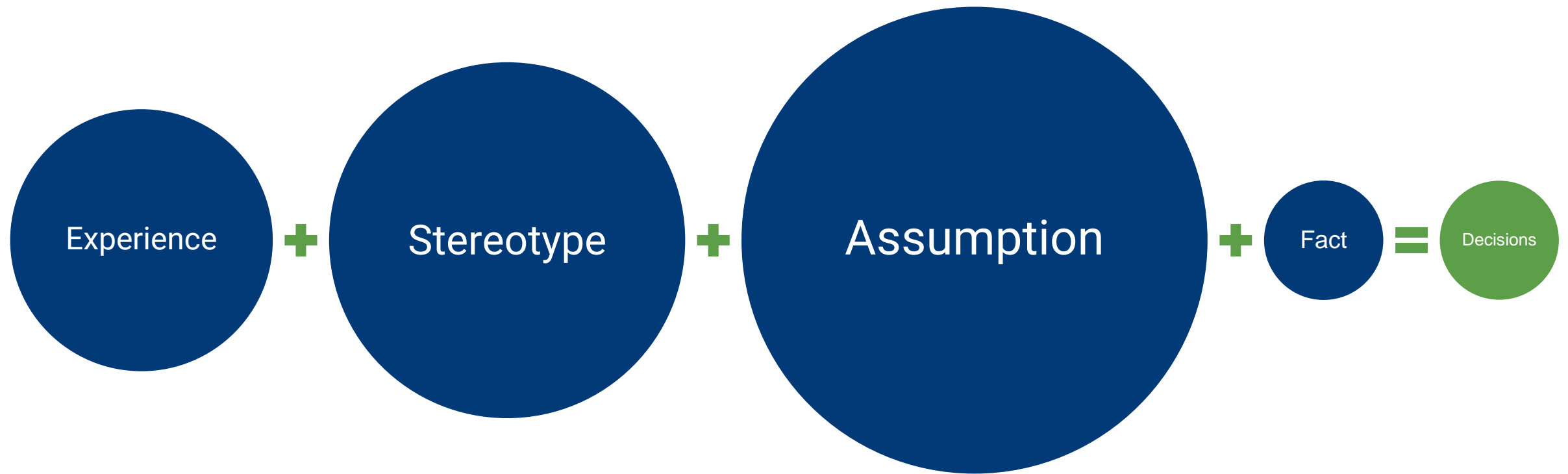
1. Hiring decisions
2. Promotion decisions
3. Appraisal/ review outcomes
4. Succession planning
5. Outcomes for young people



# Organisational Culture



Gruenert & Whitaker, 2015  
Building blocks of school culture



# Homogeneity prevails...



# Self-reflection

1. Does your school make it possible for everyone to bring their true selves to work?
2. Have you noticed your own biases at play
  - Which systems and processes might stand in the way of inclusion?
  - Which elements of school culture may stand in the way of inclusion?

# Making a change

- Re-frame in the moment
- IAT
- Design more objective processes throughout your organisation

# Male-gendered words

Active	Adventurous	Aggress*	Ambitio*	Analy*	Assert*	Athlet*	Autonom*	Boast*	Challeng*	Compet*
Confident*	Courag*	Decide	Decisive	Decision*	Determin*	Dominant	Domina*	Force*	Greedy*	Headstrong
Hierarch*	Hostil*	Impulsive	Independen*	Individual*	Intellect*	Lead*	Logic	Masculine	Objective	Opinion
Outspoken	Persist	Principle*	Reckless	Stubborn	Superior	Self-confiden*	Self-sufficien*	Self-relian*		

# Female-gendered words

Affectionate	Child	Cheer*	Commit*	Communal	Compassion*	Connect*	Considerate	Cooperat*	Depend*		
Emotiona*	Empath*	Feminine	Flatterable	Gentle	Honest	Interpersonal	Independen*	Interpersona*	Kind		
Kinship	Loyal*	Modesty	Nag	Nurtur*	Pleasant*	Polite	Quiet*	Respon*	Sensitiv*	Submissive*	Support*
Sympath*	Tender*	Together*	Trust*	Understand*	Warm*	Whin*	Yield*				



# What else?

- Be bold and have the conversations
- Educate and lead the way
- Practical training for all staff
- Raise awareness



# What else?

- Inclusion audits
- Bias check-ins with yourself and your staff
- **Nudge**

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**E**<sub>asy</sub>

**A**<sub>ttractive</sub>

**S**<sub>ocial</sub>

**T**<sub>imely</sub>

# You're going on a Bias hunt

After this session, choose one of the following processes in your schools:

- Selection/promotion process for staff
- Attraction
- Ongoing staff development
- Reward processes for students
- Predicted grades

Map it out in detail and help each other spot where the process might be vulnerable to bias

# Moving into action...

## For marginalised individuals

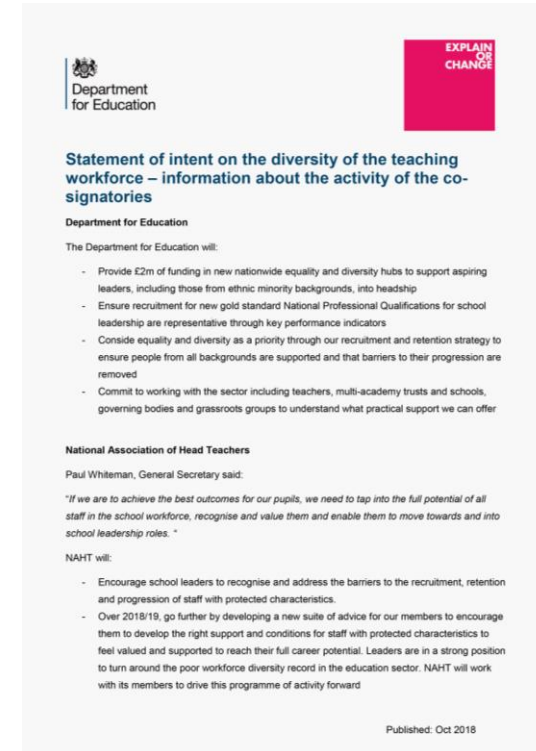
- Decide one specific way in which you want to be more authentic at work and write that as your goal
- Write down the first step
- Write down challenges you know you'll face
- Write down what you'll do on Monday

## For allies

- Write down your vision for your colleagues being able to feel included at work
- Write down 2 ways in which you can see the school's systems blocking this
- Evaluate each one – is it a necessary blocker or is there another way?
- What's the first step? Write down what you will do on Monday



# What's happening in the Sector



# It's a long road ahead but...

- Acknowledging our biases is the first step in changing our behaviour
- And that ultimately leads to a more inclusive workplace
- We know that organisations that are more diverse are better

“You never really understand a person until you consider things from their point of view... until you climb in their skin and walk around in it.”

- To Kill a Mockingbird





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