


Micromessaging and Classroom Climate

Louisiana PIPE Conference Breakout
Wednesday, June 25, 2014


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Goal

Apply knowledge of implicit bias and micromessaging to create strategies that improve access and equity for every student.



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Objectives

After completing this session, you will be able to:

- Describe micromessaging as a form of communicating implicit bias in the classroom and in our culture
- define micromessages, micro-inequities, and micro-affirmations
- Understand and address micro-inequities and apply micro-affirmations in the classroom
- Describe the core ingredients of NAPE's Micromessaging program, the seven units, and the larger framework that supports high- quality professional development


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Activity: Welcoming Awareness

Introduce yourself to the group

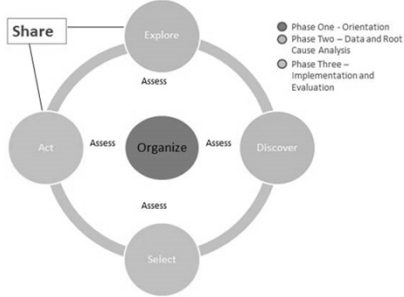
- Name
- Title
- Organization/unit




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Adapt a Recognized Model: The Educator as Classroom Scientist: PIPE-STEM™

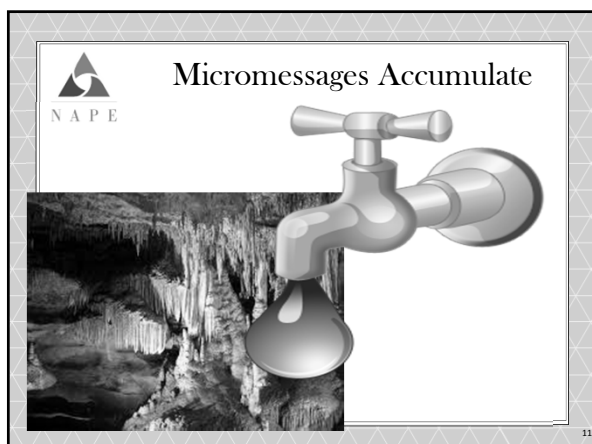
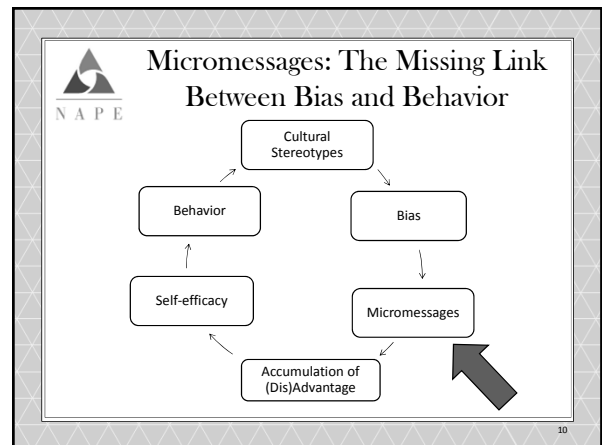
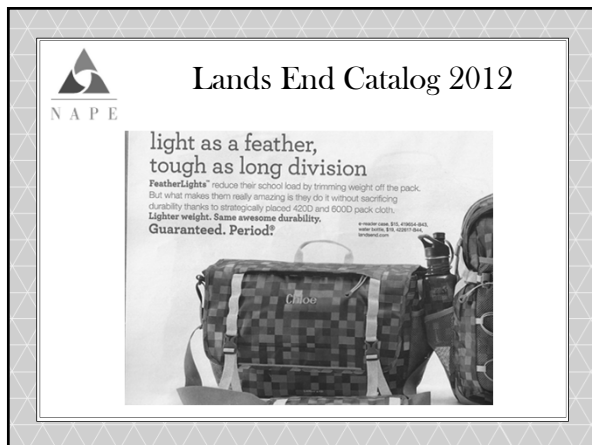
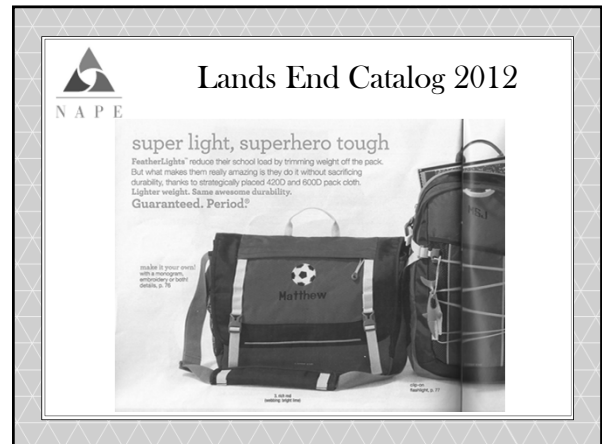
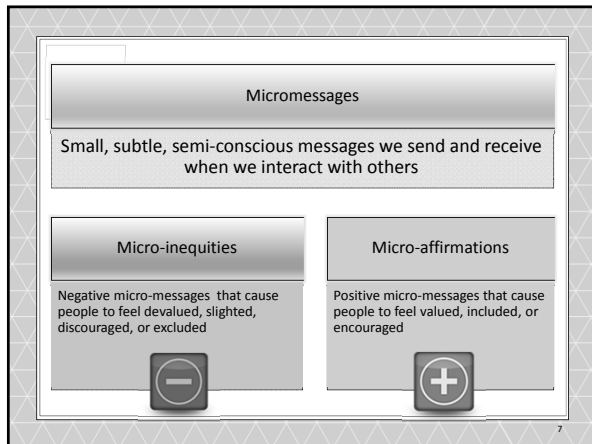


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Micromessages

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Activity: Examining the Small

In your journal, write about a specific incident when you were being:

- unintentionally discouraged or hurt by something *SMALL* someone said or did
- deeply valued by your colleague or family member in a *SMALL* yet powerful way

How did you know?
What did that person do to communicate your value?

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Review: Bias Manifested in STEM Careers

1. Women and minorities remain underrepresented in many scientific and technical careers.
2. Females who pursue technician education and other STEM fields are still stigmatized, and harmful stereotypes persist.
3. Females' academic achievements in STEM still have not translated into workplace parity, particularly for minority females.
4. The culture of STEM career fields too often creates circumstances that isolate and exclude persons with disabilities, as well as other underrepresented populations.

Why Think About Micromessaging?

Teacher Student

Intent → Micromessages → **IMPACT** Performance & Outcomes

Impact is more important than Intent!

Key Micromessaging Elements

Micromessages

Verbal, Para-Verbal, Non-Verbal, Contextual, Praise and Criticism/Omission

Key Micromessaging Elements

Micromessages

Praise and Criticism: Verbal (What is said, How it's said), Para-Verbal (Body language)

Omission: Non-Verbal (Body language), Contextual (Who or what else is present-culture, artifacts, etc.)

Contextual: Feedback messages


Activity: Guess the Element

Cue	Element
1. Wait longer for boys' answers than girls' answers	Para-verbal
2. Discipline boys more than girls for similar behavior	Criticism
3. Avoid eye contact with female/male student; only look at male/female students	Non-verbal
4. Consistent use of generic "he" or "man" to represent both men and women	Verbal
5. Only use males as examples of scientists	Contextual
6. Does not tolerate girls calling out answers but tolerates that behavior from boys	Omission

WORD BANK
Verbal, Omission, Para-verbal, Contextual, Non-verbal, Criticism


Super Strategies

- Create a new awareness of micromessages in the classroom and on the campus through discussion with peers, colleagues, and students.
- Evaluate your pedagogy and instructional practices for micromessages using peer observations, student surveys, and climate surveys.
- Take a look at the different ways that the messages in your classroom are conveyed.
- Reflect on the power of micromessages in your life.
- Be cognizant of "little issues;" don't allow them to damage relationships. Speak and spell a person's name correctly, make eye contact when conversing, and always be friendly and attentive. All of these are simple tasks that go a long way in fostering an atmosphere of fairness.



Implicit Bias

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Unconscious (or Implicit) Bias

Social stereotypes that we form outside of our own consciousness:

- Stem from our brain's adaptations
- Create unconscious barriers in the classroom
- Impact how we relate to people

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Effects of Unconscious Bias

influence how we reach decisions from our gathering, sorting, and filtering of information


influence our evaluations of people and their value

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Physicist - the usual suspects

Someone in this lineup is a physicist...can you tell which one?




Adapted from Women in Science, Engineering and Technology Initiative presentation by E. Haines and A. Maguire

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Physicist - the usual suspects


98% of the public couldn't tell which of these people is a physicist...did you get it right?



Project: History Student, Co-ordinator, Graphic Designer, PA, Policy Officer, Co-ordinator, Physicist

Adapted from Women in Science, Engineering and Technology Initiative presentation by E. Haines and A. Maguire

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Activity: Making the Unconscious Conscious

Recall the small things you identified in the "Examining the Small" activity as you respond to these prompts:

- How could the small things shared that **encourage** or **discourage** us **impact recruitment and retention** in STEM?
- Has a **student ever shared with you anything** that meant a great deal to her/him and that **surprised you**? Was it **encouraging or discouraging for the student**? Did it **change the way you treated the student**?

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Unconscious Gender Bias: Power and Impact



Study

- 360 College Students (1:1 gender split) rated academic articles in politics, psychology of women, or education
- Two names reoccurred but for identical work: John T. McKay or Joan T. McKay

Question


With identical work, should there be any difference in how the students rate John vs. Joan?

Result

- Out of 5 possible points, John scored a **FULL POINT HIGHER** than Joan.
- There was consistent gender bias in favor of a male as an author of academic work.

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Unconscious Gender Bias: Power and Impact



Scenario

National study of a psychology faculty candidate. 238 current faculty members (50:50 ratio) evaluated the same resume with male or female name

Question



With identical resumes, should there be any difference in how the faculty vote to hire Ruth vs. Robert?

Result

- 45% voted to hire "Ruth," but 70% vote to hire "Robert." Male and female evaluators equally preferred the male candidate.
- Yet another example of bias influencing sex-based hiring.

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Activity: Unconscious Gender Bias: Implicit Association Test





Project Implicit

<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>


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Micro-Inequities



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Bias = Micro-Inequities



Unconscious

Unintentional


POWERFUL

PERVASIVE

Subtle

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Micro-affirmations



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Positive Micromessages

Micro-affirmations are micromessages we send that validate and recognize other people in positive and supportive ways.

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Activity: Changing Micromessages in Your Classroom

How can you change the micromessages in your classroom today?

1. List examples
2. Share with a partner
3. Share with the group

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Impact of Micro-Affirmations on Girls in Nontraditional Courses

- Increased their willingness to take risks
- Enhanced creativity and innovation
- Increased levels of engagement in complex tasks and open-ended thinking
- Improved caring about learning
- Increased interest in non-trad. field and development of students' self-efficacy.

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Super Strategies

- Practice recognizing and interrupting a micro-inequity in class.
- Consider that different populations perceive micro-inequities differently and that not all things mean the same to all people.
- Ward off subconscious micro-inequities by sending micro-affirmations. Focus on the strengths of the individual to filter potentially damaging comments or behaviors.
- Don't let micro-inequities go unnoticed. Find a way to acknowledge the occurrence, and address it in a positive way.
- Model behaviors that redirect micro-inequities to micro-affirmations.

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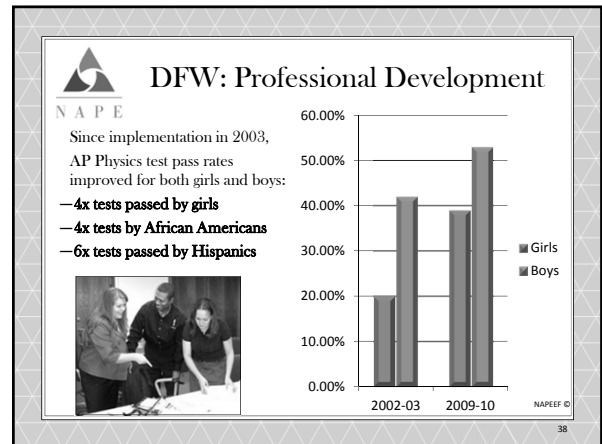
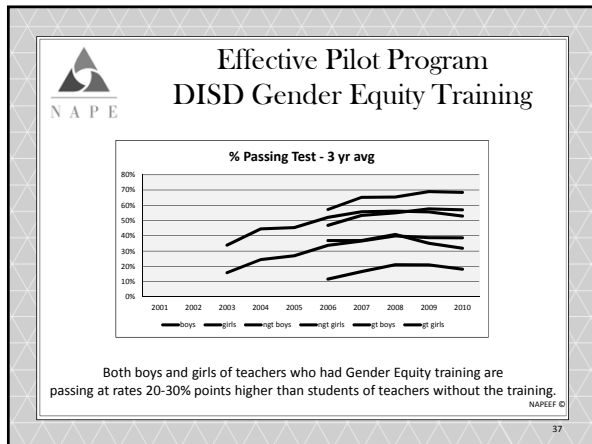
Micromessaging to Reach and Teach Every Student™

Setting the Stage: In this unit participants will learn to apply a data-driven process for program-based continuous improvement.

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Making It Happen

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Wrap-up and Questions

- ### Moving Forward
- As the scientist in your classroom, review your data and begin to formulate a hypothesis for any weaknesses or gaps that exist in student outcomes.
 - As a researcher in your classroom, think about how your methods might be changed to improve your students' performance.
 - As the coach in your classroom, consider the key messages you can make to your "team members" to affect their best game.
 - As the educator in your classroom, recognize and reflect on the power you have to impact the lives of students.

"I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something; and because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do something I can do."

-Edward Everett Hale

Questions? Contact Information

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Thank you for your participation this afternoon!