



# The Federal Manager

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## PRESIDENT'S PAGE



*FMA National President*  
**Patricia Niehaus**

### Take Action – Visit with Your Elected Leaders and Be Sure to Vote!

Hello, Team FMA,

As I write this, I'm looking forward to our Region Meetings this fall. Region 1 has selected Pittsburgh for their meeting in November. Region 2 is having their meeting on Amelia Island, Florida, in September. Regions 3 and 4 are doing a joint meeting in Sacramento in October. It'll be a busy fall.

I'd like to thank Dora Quinlan for agreeing to fill the void left with the passing of Pat Spade. Dora is a consummate professional and a true joy to work with. She will do a great job for FMA as our National Secretary. I'd also like to thank Renee Johnson for

stepping up to take over the Region 2 Director position which enabled Dora to move up to the National Secretary position. Renee is a dedicated member of FMA and has already been very active at the national level – she and her chapter spearheaded the introduction of what has become the Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act! FMA is truly blessed to have both of these ladies on our National Executive Board and I am delighted to be able to work with them. Another change expected for our Board members: George Smith, our National Vice President, has accepted a one-year assignment to Bosnia. We wish George well in his travels.

As you know, with the fall comes the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). Please keep FMA's official charity, the Federal Employee Education and Assistance (FEEA) Fund in mind when making your CFC pledges. They are the only national charity dedicated solely to helping federal employees and our families – and they do so much helping on a daily basis! From help with rent or car payments to scholarships for our kids, FEEA is there for feds. They also administer the FMA Scholarship program which helps FMA families pursue their higher education goals. Their CFC number is 11185.

We're also rapidly approaching the November elections. Congress has departed DC for their districts to campaign for the election and that means there are a lot of opportunities for our Political Action Committee (FMA-PAC) to send members to their Representatives' and Senators' fundraising events. Please keep in contact with their offices about events after the election as well as before. Many Representatives have meet-and-greets during the Holiday Season; this is an opportune time to remind them that FMA has members in their districts. As we often say, FMA-PAC gets more bang for its buck at local fundraisers where we may be able to send several members rather than just one person to an event in D.C. And, having been to several events in D.C. as well as my own district, you're much more likely to get to actually talk to your Representative or Senator at a district event. Please contact Katie Maddocks in the National Office if you'd like to attend an event in your district. Please remember to remind your Representative or Senator that you are a member of FMA and you and your fellow members vote in their district. Don't hesitate to share personal examples of how Congressional decisions have impacted you or your employees. This type of information really makes an impact.

I want to assure you that your National Executive Board and your National Office Staff are here for you and that we will continue to work to be your voice. Please don't hesitate to contact any of us. If you haven't already done so, please send your non-government email address to Katie Maddocks. We don't send any Hatch Act information to government emails so you may be missing out on something important if we don't have that email. Also, when Katie sends out Action Letters, please take a moment to personalize it and use our website to forward the letter to your Representative and/or Senators.

One last thing; if you have colleagues who should be a member of FMA but are not, please ask them to join. Everyone's voice becomes stronger as we grow. Thanks! ■

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pat".

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#### Article Submission

All materials submitted to *The Federal Manager* should pertain to public service managers. Copy should be double-spaced, no longer than 10 pages.

High resolution color images, charts, or illustrations should be included if possible. Text should be submitted by email or on compact disc. Include a biography of the author.

# The New IQ:

## A New Kind of Intelligence for a New Kind of World

By Bruce Stewart

A few years back some photographs of the iceberg believed to have sunk the Titanic were discovered. Of particular interest to experts viewing the photos were the unique dimensions of the iceberg; experts estimate it measured between 50-100 feet high and 200-400 feet long. But more interestingly, it was noticed that the iceberg had several flat surfaces large enough to reliably hold many people for long periods of time. When taken into account that the Titanic was navigable for a while after it hit the iceberg, it is surmised that many of the Titanic passengers and crew could have climbed aboard the iceberg and found flat places to wait the four hours until the first of the rescue ships arrived. By overlooking the size and shape of the iceberg and fixating on the fact that icebergs sank ships, one expert on creativity noted that the Titanic crew missed the opportunity to save many lives that day.

The question, then, is why the captain and crew led most of the passengers to their deaths instead of placing the ropes and ladders onto the iceberg. The captain and the crew suffered from what most of us still suffer from today: a bias in our brain called *Functional Fixedness*.

*Functional Fixedness* is a bias that predisposes our brains to fixate on the common use of an object and thus fail to see other possible uses. Many of us, like the crew of the Titanic, have the wrong mental map when it comes to diversity and inclusion. Diversity is commonly seen

as something primarily focused around underrepresented groups to the exclusion of the majority, and inclusion is interpreted as a touchy feely concept where everyone exchanges pleasantries and engages in some mindless pabulum about improving organizational effectiveness. The reality of these two concepts diverges greatly from their conventional understandings. The true value of diversity is the potential to increase group intelligence through the use of different ideas, identities, and information; the real benefit of inclusion as a management strategy is to successfully bring together diverse groups of ideas, identities, and information to improve employee engagement and solve difficult problems.

The cost of not recognizing the impact of functional fixedness is that it promotes the use of inaccurate mental maps, encouraging us to find solutions to problems that either don't exist or are the wrong problems to undertake.

To understand the cost of an inaccurate mental map, think of it this way: you are sight-seeing in New York City but you bought a map of Los Angeles by mistake. No matter how fast or how hard you work to successfully move around NYC, you will never have it easy because you have the wrong map. In fact, the harder and faster you try the more frustrated you become because you don't feel as if you are making progress. The solutions you implement don't work because you are working with an inaccurate map.

Similarly, most mental maps concerning diversity and inclusion encounter this obstacle. If we continue to view diversity

primarily through a demographic lens, we miss the true benefit of mixing people together who are different and bring various strengths to the table. As a result, the hard and difficult problems that face our government today will continue to be inefficiently solved.

### Brains and Biases

Our brains are problem-solving machines with the primary purpose to ensure our survival so that we may pass on our genes. Our brains want to move us toward reward and away from fear. It is this fear and reward system that is the primary source of our unconscious biases. Because our brain takes in 11 million bits of information per second, but can only process 40 bits of that 11 million, it stores the rest of the information in our unconscious. As a result, our unconscious brain is estimated to influence up to 90 percent of our decisions and behavior. This structure of our brain leads to a series of cognitive biases that impact the effectiveness of teams and organizations. There are three cognitive biases in particular that can inhibit effective teamwork within the federal workplace: **confirmation, like-me, and broken windows biases**.

**Confirmation bias** is when you place more value on what you want to believe and place less on what you don't want to believe. The confirmation bias leads you to be subjective when you're making decisions and removes any impartiality that you may have. When you use the

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confirmation bias, you confirm what you want to believe, often disregarding the reality of the situation. The confirmation bias creates an unconscious habit of only seeing evidence that supports your decisions. You may have seen a manager who looks for concrete evidence that the correct decision was made instead of looking for ways in which the decision could've been improved.

The **like-me bias** is one of a set of biases known as *in-group biases*. Essentially, like-me bias is exhibited whenever you give preferential treatment to members of a group to which you belong. One of the

may be very leery of working together and make false presumptions about the individual. Subsequently, the like-me bias creates a habit of working with people we already know or people we feel comfortable with. The connection can be as arbitrary as eye color or driving the same kind of car.

Lastly, we have the **Broken Windows bias**. This bias originates from a crime-fighting theory that says that stopping major crimes begins with stopping small ones. Under this theory, minor crimes like vandalism, public drinking, and littering create an environment in which social disorder increases, making it more likely that more major crimes will be committed. Put simply, our environment plays a large

## The New Inclusion Quotient and the Power of Inclusive Teams

The world of tomorrow will not rely on your individual intelligence, but rather, the collective intelligence of your team.

Recently, the NBA Finals pitched the two best teams in the NBA against one another to battle it out for the NBA Championship trophy. The Miami Heat

### We are smarter like this...

A stable, robust, high-performance system

An interactive networked organization

Results in a **positive sum game**



interesting aspects of this bias is that it has been demonstrated in randomly assigned groups as well as more organized ones. You can see like-me bias by members of groups who have been created through a coin toss or a random draw, even though they had no connection before. You'll also see like-me bias by fans of the same sports team or people of the same religion. When we believe that someone else is in a group to which we also belong, we usually have positive views of them and tend to give them preferential treatment. If an individual is seen as different from us, we

role in our behavior towards others, whether it's in your neighborhood or the workplace. However, we don't usually attribute our behavior to our environment, but falsely attribute this behavior to our core characteristics. The broken windows bias encourages others to falsely attribute most behavior to core characteristics, instead of the impact the environment may play in behavior. For example, an office that permits off-color humor may create an environment in which people feel less inclined to keep hurtful statements and stereotypes to themselves.

was led by LeBron James, arguably one of the greatest players ever to play the game, and also included two other superstars: Dwayne Wade and Chris Bosh. Although led by a great player in their own right – Tim Duncan – the San Antonio Spurs were nonetheless deemed the underdogs due to their lack of individual superstars. While the Heat were heavily favored by most experts, to most everyone's surprise the Spurs beat the Heat four games to one, winning the championship with relative ease. When asked why the Spurs won so easily, James noted that everyone on the Spurs was "live," meaning that everyone

on the Spurs was a threat to score. The ball did not stick in the hands of any player. All of the Spurs players were engaged and included in all facets of the offensive and defensive game plan. No one player on the Spurs dominated a majority of possession; contrastingly, the Heat ran most of their offense through James.

The strategy the Spurs implemented to win the championship is the new recipe for winning – not just for NBA championships, but also within federal agencies and organizations. The Spurs utilized what we call **inclusive intelligence** or a **New IQ** to defeat the Heat. No one player dominated the Spurs offense; everyone was focused on how they make the team better, not on how well they did individually. This same dynamic is true of organizational teams: it is no longer about how smart you are as an individual, but instead how smart you make your team. What is *your* inclusive intelligence?

Professors at MIT have identified that teams and groups do have an intelligence that can be developed, measured, and improved. According to experts, it is this type of intelligence that will constantly be required in the future. This new insight is a part of a growing body of research that

focuses on understanding the nature of collective intelligence and behavior. This concept of inclusive intelligence is manifesting itself in everything from the success of Broadway shows to the path a soccer ball travels between players. The common factor is the desire to find out what makes groups and teams more creative and successful. We believe this New IQ is the source of of an inclusive environment. These behaviors can be learned, practiced, and developed into habits of inclusiveness and subsequently improve the inclusive intelligence of organizational members.

At the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) and the Veteran's Administration's Diversity and Inclusion Office, we evaluated data from the OPM Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey, often called the EVS. We found that inclusion practices are positively correlated with employee satisfaction. In other words, the more inclusive employees feel in the workplace, the more satisfied the whole team is. Being a part of a team and being included in team activities makes a stronger and more productive workplace.

In our survey analysis, we identified

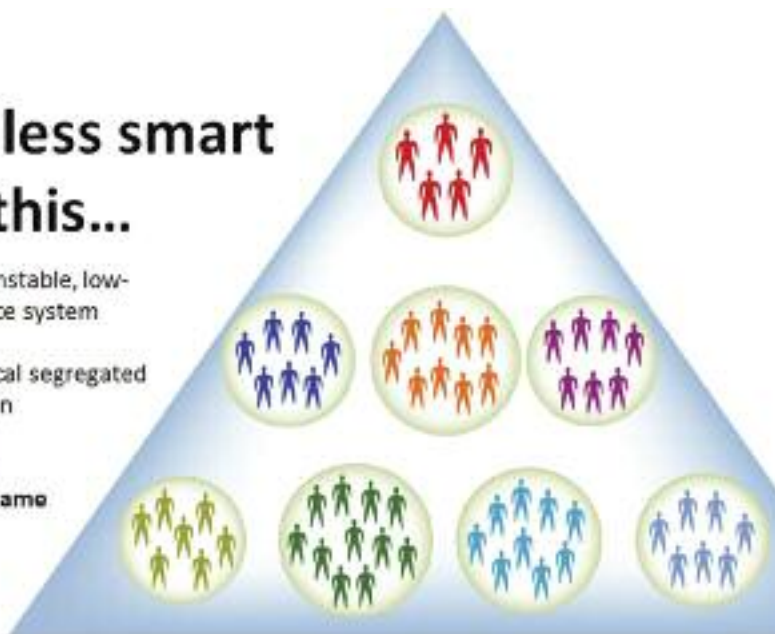
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## And less smart like this...

A fragile, unstable, low-performance system

A hierarchical segregated organization

Results in a zero-sum game



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### Having trouble?

Call 703.683.8700 and ask for Katie Redmond.

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five inclusive habits that encourage diversity and inclusion in the workplace: Fair, Open, Cooperative, Supportive, and Empowering. Think FOCSE (pronounced "focus").

## The 5 Inclusive Habits

### Fairness

Fairness in the workplace means that arbitrary action, personal favoritism, coercion for partisan political purposes, and prohibited personnel practices are not tolerated. While it seems a no-brainer, fairness dictates that appropriate steps are taken to deal with poor performers who cannot or will not improve, and that differences in performance are recognized in a meaningful way. In addition, rewards are provided in a fair manner and are awarded for how well employees perform their jobs, not only for longevity or non-job-related activities.

### Openness

Diversity and inclusion are also fostered by having openness as a way of doing business. In an open work environment, creativity and innovation are rewarded, policies and programs promote diversity in the workplace, and supervisors and team leaders are committed to a workforce representative of all segments of society as they work well with employees of different backgrounds.

### Cooperative

In a cooperative work environment, managers promote communication among different work units and support collaboration across work units to accomplish work objectives.

### Supportive

When supervisors are supportive, it means that they understand the need to balance work and other life issues. Supervisors and team leaders have to provide employees with constructive

suggestions to improve their job performance and talk with employees about their performance every six months. Successful supervisors and team leaders take time to listen to what employees have to say and treat employees with respect.

### Empowerment

In an inclusive workplace, employees have enough information to do their job well and will feel encouraged to come up with a new and better way of doing things. In an empowered work setting, employees' talents are used well and employees have a feeling of personal empowerment with respect to their work processes.

## What is Inclusion and Why is It Important?

Inclusion is our ability to include differences in a friendly, flexible, and fair way, making our colleagues feel welcome and important. Below are some key quotes employees mentioned when asked to describe inclusion:

- "Being at home."
- "Belonging."
- "Able to bring my whole self to work."
- "Feeling that my unique contribution was valued."
- "My perspective is always considered."
- "I have a say in what happens."

Ultimately, when employees feel valued and have a sense of belonging, they are more motivated and engaged in the workplace.

To describe the benefits of diversity and inclusion we use an acronym we call T.R.I.P.:

- Teamwork and Talent

## The 5 Inclusive Habits



- Retention and Recruiting
- Innovation and Ideas
- Performance and Productivity

We have found that if managed in an inclusive way, the harnessing of diverse ideas, identities, and information through the use of inclusive behaviors positively impacts the T.R.I.P. components.

Various scientists and researchers have begun to unravel why this happens. University of Michigan Professor Scott Page currently leads the field in one key area of this research. Professor Page, along with his colleagues, have discovered through statistical analysis and agent-based modeling that groups comprised of a wide array of backgrounds, experiences, and knowledge solved hard, complex problems more quickly and accurately than rival groups of homogenous experts. To understand how this can occur, a simple analogy of a toolbox will do: a toolbox of only hammers will be great if the primary job is just to hammer nails, but if the job requires more than just hammering nails, a toolbox full of various tools will be much more useful. Diversity is similar to the assortment of tools in a toolbox, and inclusion or inclusive intelligence is understanding how to best use combinations of the different tools in

the most effective and smart way.

Unfortunately, we all occasionally fall victim to our unconscious biases. These unconscious biases can affect our behavior negatively and impact how well we can implement the FOCSE habits.

It's our belief that unconscious biases are the major challenge facing diversity and inclusion in the federal workplace.

## How to Improve Your Inclusive Intelligence

To improve your inclusive intelligence you must learn, practice, and incorporate the Five Inclusive Habits into your daily routine. By being fair, open, cooperative, supportive, and empowering to your employees and peers you will foster the creation of an inclusive culture that will inevitably make your teams smarter and more creative.

A quick way to start being more inclusive is to use the habit formation process created by Professor B.J. Fogg of

Stanford University. Professor Fogg created a 3-Step process to improve the success rates of adopting new habits. According to Fogg, the first step is to break the action down to its smallest component. In other words: make it tiny. For example, one small act of inclusion I could do to be more supportive may be to send a brief appreciative email to a peer or employee. The second step Fogg suggests is to place the new act of inclusion before or after a keystone habit or something I already do every day as part of a normal routine. For instance, I drink coffee every morning when I get to work. Using Fogg's method, I should send my email either before or after I get my first cup of coffee. By sequencing my new habit before or after a keystone habit my brain will, over time, conflate the two and will process both actions as one singular action, thereby limiting the additional cognitive energy required by initiating new habits. The last step in Fogg's process is called "training the cycle." In other words, depending on the complexity of the new

habit, it must be done faithfully every day until the brain pattern becomes solidified in your brain.

The New IQ is a new way of working that focuses on how to make the entire team smarter and more creative, rather than the individual components. It views inclusive intelligence as the most important intelligence of the future. Only by using the insights of the New IQ can we hope to harness the diversity of ideas, identities, and information in such a way that every member feels accepted and acknowledged for their contributions. By utilizing these new tactics, we have the ability to create and sustain a highly engaged federal workforce. ■

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*Bruce Stewart serves as the Deputy Director of Training, Compliance, and Strategic Initiatives in the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Office of Personnel Management and is responsible for the coordinated implementation of the President's Executive Order on Diversity and Inclusion.*

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