Community Cultural Wealth Theory

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“Stop worry about the numbers!!!

-Goodwill should not be defined by metrics”
“We would like to have a more diverse pipeline of candidates…”
What is Community Cultural Wealth?

• Coined by Dr. Tara Yosso in 2005
• Is an asset-based critical race theory of human and cultural resources, that challenges the pathological views of poor and other marginalized communities.
  – What does it mean to come from a low-income community?
  – But, what does it mean to have a “wealth of knowledge”?

Figure 2. A model of community cultural wealth. Adapted from: Oliver & Staipro, 1993
Let’s talk about ‘culture fit’ for a quick second.

- Hiring for skill set vs. hiring for cultural fit.
- **Cultural fit** - the likelihood that someone will reflect and be able to adapt to the core beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that make up your organization.
- ***It is an weaponized phrase that is used as a blanket term to reject candidates that don’t match the hiring manager/team’s view of the ideal candidate...**
  - It’s the embodiment of **unconscious bias**.
What about ‘Culture Add?'

- The likelihood that someone will not only reflect the company’s values and professional ethics, but also bring an aspect of diverse opinions, experiences, and specialized skill which enhances not just the team, but the overall company culture.
Let’s focus on the six forms of community cultural wealth
Aspirational

• The ability to maintain hopes & dreams for the future in the face of real and perceived barriers
  o Student opts to participate in cultural student clubs; seeking familial capital as a means of aspiration through engaging with those of similar experiences.
  o Versus participating in nationally-recognized programs.
Linguistic

• The ability for students to develop communication skills through various experiences.
  – Storytelling
  – Translation (multi-lingual)
  – “Code-Switching”
Linguistic

• As an Employer, how are you evaluating your candidates during their interviews (intentionally or implicitly...)? Are you aware of the following....?
Linguistic

• Candidates that alter their identities?
  – Shortening or changing name (i.e. DeShawn Johnson to Sean Johnson or cultural-specific name to a European-sounding name)
    • If we can learn to say ‘Arnold Schwarzenegger’, we can learn others names....
  – Changing vocal tone, pattern and enunciation, as a means of “Talking White”
  – Minimizing cultural experiences as a means of assimilation.

• Linguistic capital is the intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in MORE THAN ONE language and/or style.
• “Code-Switching” is an extremely valuable asset due to one’s ability to effectively translate a message across different audiences.
• How many time have we seen companies make poor marketing decisions...?
  – H&M (coolest money in the jungle shirt), GUCCI (blackface turtleneck), PRADA, etc.
Familial

• Reflects a commitment to community well-being and an understanding of kinship (or extended family unit, not defined by blood relation, but by shared social experiences)

• This impacts a student’s ability to work collaboratively. Through collaborating, students gain skills to identify resources and energies that may need to be diverted to a particular focus to meet the goal.
Navigational

• The ability for a student to navigate ‘social institutions’ within unsupportive or hostile environments.

• The ability of students to maintain their course of high achievement despite their ongoing presence of discrimination and hostility directed toward their minority status.
Image being a black male job applicant…

The perception of Mass Incarceration… historically, being told there are more black men in prison than in college… {Which, is statically incorrect].

The “redacted” versions of black history in modern society.

- The Martin Luther King-Rosa Parks Black History “chapter”

The association of black males and criminality.

- Hyper-masculinity
- “Hip-hop” and “thug” culture
- Relationship with law enforcement and authority figures

The continual link between media and public attitudes.
Urban League

• Can you share any examples of working with young black men or women that in the face of discrimination and hostility, was still able to achieve success?

• How was supporting that person in the process.
  – What were their feelings/or emotions?
Resistant Capital

• **Resistant capital**: Refers to those knowledge and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality.
How bad do you want it…?
Social Wealth

• Social and personal human resources students have in their precollege environment.
As an organization, how can I help build social capital?

Bridging & Bonding

- **Bridging** – having unprecedented conversations, sharing experiences and building connections between otherwise connected individuals and groups.

- **Bonding** – strengthen relationships within groups, showing up in other’s community rather than inviting to one’s own community.

How does that look?

- Company X is invested in creating a more diverse candidate pipeline. Simply, sharing position across more diverse job board will NOT significantly increase pipeline.
  - Sponsoring a community or town-wide even could be seen as an investment in bonding social capital for residents.
    - Free workshops, social events, etc.
  - Results in increased educational, health and professional outcomes; also builds trust and helps create influence.
  - CONSISTENCY IS VITAL! Be there more than once!
Conclusion

• “Unless you know someone’s history, you do not have the right to judge their present”
• If you are really seeking to engage in diversity & inclusion work, ignorance will never be an excuse.
• Any time you pass up on a candidate, be aware that “deficit” that you are perpetually enforcing, will turn into asset for that individual.

I’ve seen too many organization pass up on future leaders. Don’t be that organization on the wrong side of history. ..
Thank you!!!
QUESTIONS?