

speaking up
courageous
dig deep
be kind
smile
listen
inclusive
slow down

Blue Notes

Ideas from the NCHL All-Member Conference session,
“Transforming Unconscious Bias into Conscious Inclusion”

share
pause
recognize
collaborate
learn
be curious
seek out

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What one thing will you do to **PRACTICE CONSCIOUS INCLUSION?**

During a recent presentation on Transforming Unconscious Bias into Conscious Inclusion, we handed out blue sheets of paper and asked the audience to engage in a commitment exercise around the question, “What one thing will you do to practice conscious inclusion?”

We barely got the question out before the audience exploded into collaborative conversations to brainstorm ideas. The response was overwhelmingly positive, with the audience returning more than 70 ideas on how they would practice conscious inclusion right away!

To say we were impressed is an understatement. What an inspiration to see a room full of leaders so energized and excited to make a real impact!

We have compiled their responses into eight categories and shared them in this *Blue Notes* report. As a music term in the Jazz or Blues genre, a Blue Note is a note that—for expressive purposes—is sung or played at a different pitch than the standard.

The ideas and concepts in this *Blue Notes* report represent a similar idea—moving away from an archaic, historically marginalizing pitch into a different sound. A new era of emotional intelligence where we lead from empathy and acceptance to build stronger, more diverse teams and organizational cultures that value curiosity and authenticity.

Together we can write a new melody, a beautiful symphony of voices and action that enables us to minimize our biases and drowns out systemic racism. A crescendo that carves a better path forward and reverberates into the future.

Thank you to everyone who participated in this commitment exercise and to all who read this report. Your commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion is energizing, and we are excited to continue the conversation. Please share any additional thoughts or ideas by connecting with us in one of the following ways:



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Clarissa Peterson, Senior Consultant with NuBrick Partners, is an author, speaker, and former Chief Human Resources and Ethics Officer who has led diversity, equity, and inclusion in three different organizations, nationally and globally. She is inspired to transform the lives of individuals, teams, and organizations through leadership coaching and consulting. [Read full bio.](#)



Dave Appino, Principal of Furst Group and COO of NuBrick Partners, applies his breadth of executive search, business development, research, strategy, and product development experience to support the NuBrick Partners community of consultants in the design and delivery of the most effective leadership solutions for clients. [Read full bio.](#)

Be Curious & **DIG DEEPER**

When leading and building diverse teams, it's imperative to be present and mindful. By practicing conscious inclusion, we can activate our prefrontal cortex and system two thinking¹ to have a more intentional approach.

¹ Daniel Kahneman book citation Thinking, Fast and Slow

Art, literature,
reading novels

Commitment to
be more curious

listen

Curiosity – look for
someone different; up
learning

Ask better questions

Learn, empathize,
and approach
from a place of
understanding

Be curious
about those
different
from you

Ask, “What is going
on with me?” (As
leaders, we have a
greater challenge to
be aware of our biases
and figure out whether
it is our bias or if this
person is not meeting
expectations.)

Seek to
understand/
be curious

Listen with both
ears open

White savior complex – putting a band-aid on the problem rather than digging into the deeper barriers that still may exist. Consider what systems are in place that might be impeding a culture of inclusion.

Practice being
aware/systems
inclusion

Learn one new
thing about
your coworkers

Ask questions

STAY OPEN

Being open to new ideas and experiences helps you remain present in the current moment versus trying to predict what may happen or why. Give people space to show up as their authentic selves, and you will be pleasantly surprised.

**Try to hold off
on judgment**

**Don't make
assumptions**

**Keep an open
mind**

**Question my
judgment**

**Having
courageous
conversations**
(e.g., wanting to learn
about others without
hidden agendas)

**Do not be
judgmental**

Avoid assumptions

**Cultural
competency**

**Having a
peer group to
help validate
assumptions or
bias**

Allyship in **ACTION**

Building relationships from a place of trust, consistency, and accountability with marginalized individuals or groups. Allyship is an opportunity to grow and learn about ourselves while creating space, access, and opportunities for others.

How can I demonstrate Allyship?

- 1** Make connections with people different from you based on trust, honesty, and learning.
- 2** Share what you've learned from their story. Look at the world through someone else's eyes.
- 3** Use your privilege for good. We all have a privilege—financial, educational, health, etc.
- 4** Be mindful. Intentionally help underrepresented groups with your privilege and access.
- 5** Hold yourself and others accountable by calling out inappropriate behavior.
- 6** Be curious and dig deeper. Get uncomfortable, make mistakes, and apologize when you misstep. Learn by asking questions.

Engage and **COLLABORATE**

Leaders who practice conscious inclusion make room for others, cultivating collaboration and team engagement.

Keep conversations going (build on one another, “Yes, and ...”)

(Include) Invite others to speak up

Practice using, “Yes, and ...” in meetings to be inclusive of all opinions

I can focus on making sure everyone is heard during meetings

Include/invite a person who may not be talkative into the conversation at the table

Actively seeking out others; different voices

Consider the **WHOLE PERSON**

People are more dynamic and complex than just a single interaction or moment. Be sure to give yourself time to think beyond and gain understanding before creating your own story about a person or situation.

Look at whole picture, and don't ignore symptoms

**Recognize the individual without
preconceived notions**

I smile and greet everyone I see

**Meet people halfway in their journey
to success**

**There is always a "person" behind
candidates being interviewed. Be kind.**

**Recognize others' cultures and
what they celebrate or recognize**

SLOW DOWN

Take time to stop, breathe, and activate system two thinking¹ before you react. In our fast-paced world, we are inundated with information. Being present and mindful in your interactions makes a big difference.

¹ Daniel Kahneman book citation Thinking, Fast and Slow

I will pause and really listen to new people I meet

Take a few seconds of pause when you hear...

Change what work looks like

EQ – stop before I talk/pause to control anxiety and push to get things done

Slow down/ address confirmation bias (pause)

MODEL IT

As Gandhi would say, “Be the change you want to see in the world.” Others will follow your lead and take cues from your behavior and actions. Be sure to reinforce this by calling out behaviors (the good, the bad, and the ugly) in the appropriate setting (group or one-to-one).

Practicing awareness
with our biases

If you don't want to be on the
receiving end of an action or
comment, then don't do it/say it.

Choosing to be
transparent about
child status in my
career

I would really try
to do my best for
others to make sure
they give me their
best

Ask questions

Practice of being aware/
systems inclusion

Active greeting

Before you ask a “personal”
curiosity question, ask
yourself why do you want to
know, and what will you do
with that information

Seek to understand/
be curious

Any person deserves
a chance, so I will
give someone that
chance as I had it
before

Learn one new thing about
your coworkers

Change what work
looks like

Don't rush meetings
if the big talker is in
the meeting

It's *not* what not to do;
but what *to* do

Use the term, “Let's
take a minute,” before
asking the group to
offer their point of view

Reach a hand out to
help is always better
than using that hand
to push someone
down/away

Discuss biases out loud

EQ in **ACTION**

When we think of intelligence, many of us think of IQ. However, EQ (Emotional Intelligence) can actually be a better predictor of success than IQ.

The core idea behind EQ is the ability to identify and manage your emotions and to identify, understand, and manage yourself while building more effective relationships. As leaders and professionals, we may focus too much on technical skills and knowledge and shy away from key EQ competencies like empathy.

Why Should You Care About Emotional Intelligence?

- 90% of top performers have high Emotional Intelligence.
- Emotional Intelligence is responsible for 58% of all job performance.
- Additional income made by high EQ individuals over their counterparts: \$29,000/year.

	SELF	OTHERS
AWARENESS	Self Awareness	Social Awareness
ACTIONS	Self Management	Relationship Management

Create a **SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

Developing more inclusive organizational cultures centered on belonging means having a strong focus on psychological safety and support for team engagement.

**Listening
& create an
environment
that's safe
for people to
voice concern**

**We each have our own
“vulnerabilities” that
make us cautious, fearful
or wary of folks.**

Be vulnerable

**Encouraging
vulnerability
and sharing**

**Feeling safe in all areas
of the company**

Mitigate bias in TALENT MANAGEMENT & CLINICAL PROCESSES

When transforming unconscious bias into conscious inclusion, talent management and clinical processes are critical areas to explore.



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Additional Resources

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Webinar | Transforming Unconscious Bias into Conscious Inclusion

NCHL

National Center for Healthcare Leadership

COFFEE CHAT

Transforming Unconscious Bias
into Conscious Inclusion



Clarissa Peterson
Senior Consultant



Dave Appino
Principal & COO

Blending research with dynamic storytelling, Clarissa Peterson and Dave Appino of NuBrick Partners will provide us with two strategies, Emotional Intelligence and Allyship, to recognize and overcome unconscious bias by shifting our mindset and behaviors. The application of these strategies enhances relationships we develop and cultivate across our organizations, which has a positive impact on the patient/consumer experience as well as employee engagement, recruitment, retention and development.

Key takeaways from this webinar include:

- Develop a stronger understanding of why we have biases and how to recognize and overcome them
- Gain tools and insights for practicing conscious inclusion
- Learn approaches to remain curious and open to new ideas
- Strengthen the ability to hold ourselves and others accountable

[Access the Webinar](#)

Above The Line

BELOW THE LINE

Never has there been a time when the Emotional Intelligence of a leader has been more important. This on-demand webinar discusses the elements of Emotional Intelligence and demonstrates a practical tool that will increase your ability to lead yourself, others, and your organization through and beyond any challenge or obstacle.

[Access the Webinar](#)

What is happening?

Open
Curious
Committed to learning

How am I responding?

Self-awareness
Understanding
Receptiveness

How am I behaving?

Holding the story loosely
Listening deeply
Speaking unarguably

ABOVE

THE
LINE

BELOW

How am I triggered?

Loss of approval
Loss of control
Loss of security

What is happening?

Defensive
Closed
Committed to being right

How am I responding?

Creating a story
Being emotional
Finding fault or blame

Women Leaders Playbook



There is no shortage of inspirational women in healthcare. The impact that gender diversity has on the industry has been evident at every *Modern Healthcare* Women Leaders in Healthcare conference and Top Women Leaders event.

For more than a decade, we have been honored to support, connect, and engage with leaders to hear examples of amazing achievements and stories of overcoming adversity, as well as gain invaluable insights and inspiration.

What comes after and beyond these events is up to each and every one of us. Our *Women Leaders Playbook* was created out of our inspiration to invoke action. How can each of us continue to close the gender gap? What actions can we take to be the next generation of courageous leaders? We don't have all the answers, but together we will find many.

[Unlock the Full eBook](#)

CEO PRIMER:

ACCELERATING EXECUTIVE TEAM PERFORMANCE



The alignment and performance of the executive leadership team (ELT) can make or break the short- and long-term success of an organization. This is why it is crucial for CEOs to focus on accelerating the effectiveness of the ELT.

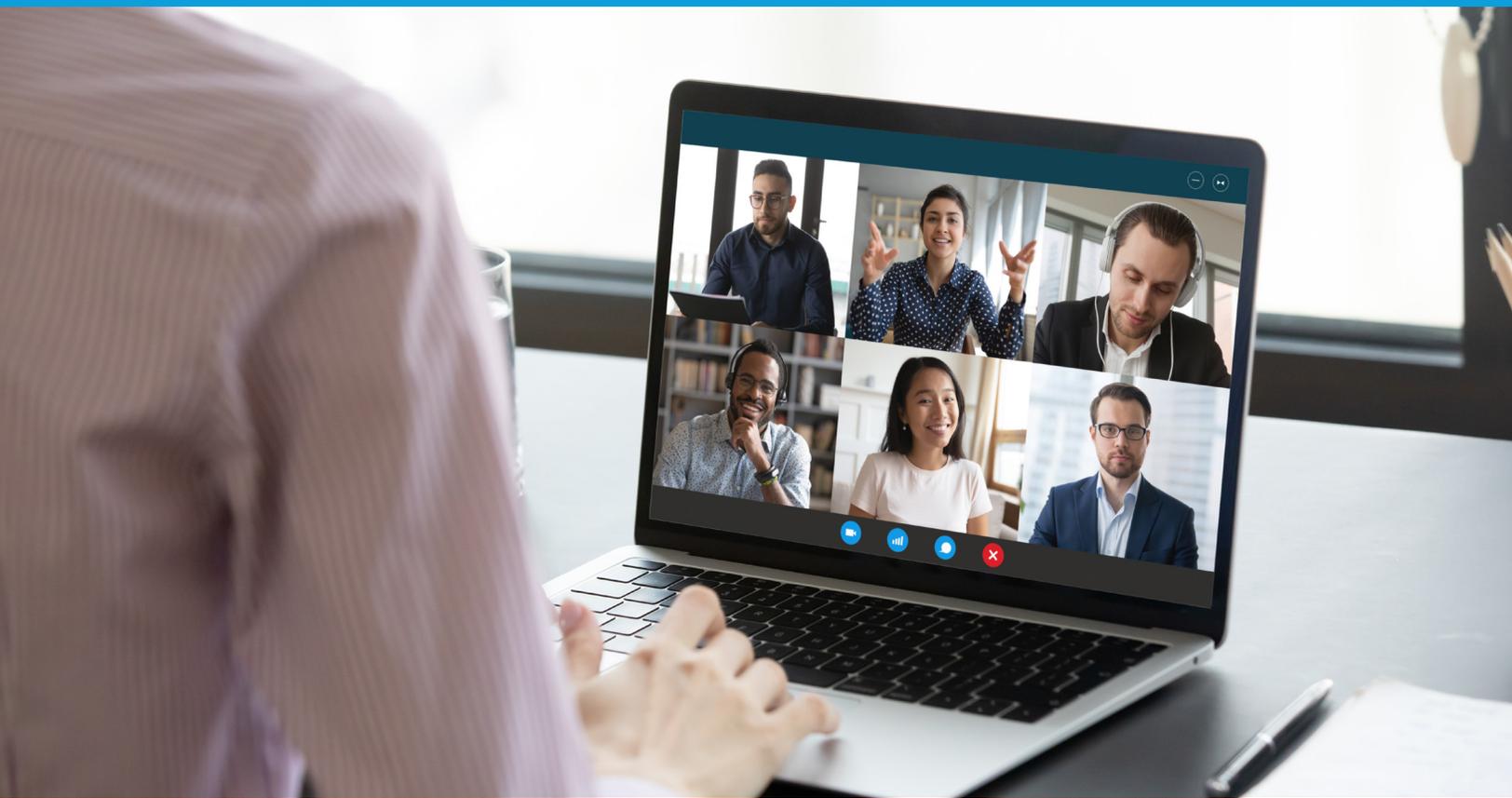
Most CEOs inherit a leadership team. And most organizations have an executive team full of bright, hardworking, experienced leaders. But, according to Patrick Lencioni, author and leadership expert, the last true competitive edge is developing a high-performing leadership team, which subsequently leads to a healthier organization overall.

So, how can a CEO, new or otherwise, tackle the daunting task of taking an existing group of leaders to the next level?

Creating an effective team is not hinged on an event or an episode. You don't go to the gym and expect to be in shape within a day or even a week – this would just leave you overworked and sore. The same thing is true of ...

[Unlock Full Article](#)

Leading Through Extraordinary Times: A webinar series



This webinar series has been created for leaders to foster and facilitate meaningful connectivity and support during this season of uncertainty. As leaders, it is important to have actionable tools to lean on and apply as you guide yourself, your team, and your organization through these challenging times.

This three-part series includes the following on-demand webinars:

- Equip Your Team to Persevere
- Leadership Agility – 5 Key Drivers
- Resilience in Action



[Access Webinars](#)

Developing Physicians to Become Organizational Leaders – A Holistic Approach



The healthcare environment has experienced continuous and tumultuous change for a number of years. There is no question that change is the one constant that can be expected for the foreseeable future. What is required during times of upheaval is leadership. Leaders provide hope. It is at such a time as this that physician leadership is especially vital.

The divide between the administration and the physicians at a healthcare organization used to create a sense of wariness between “the ‘suits’ and the ‘scrubs,’” as one Chief Medical Officer described it to us. Developing physician leaders is proving to be one avenue to minimize the mistrust, but more work needs to be done.

As healthcare organizations have acquired medical groups at an increasing pace over the past decade, physicians have told us they have been feeling like they have less of a voice in how healthcare is delivered. And, increasingly, having to adapt their work to the needs of electronic medical records has given them less time with their patients, they say. As the move to value-based care helped providers and insurers alike see the untapped potential in having physicians step up to guide the entire enterprise, physicians also see ...

[Unlock Full Article](#)



WEBINAR

Transforming Healthcare through Agile Leadership

Transforming a healthcare organization's strategy, culture, and customer experience means leading in tangibly different ways. Health First, an integrated delivery network on Florida's Space Coast, has a big vision. They believe wellness is more than the absence of illness. It is about healing well and living well — delighting consumers by creating access to services and helping them live their best lives.

Transformation requires a shift in mindset, behaviors, and desired outcomes, and it starts with senior leaders. Health First's Steve Johnson and Paula Just share what they believe make a leadership difference and the challenges and the levers that activate culture change and push the journey ahead.

Following this webinar, attendees will:

- Have greater awareness of long-held mindsets, language, behaviors, and/or rituals that largely go unnoticed, but may actually create an unsafe environment that inhibits idea generation, maintains common biases, and reinforces the status quo.
- Identify and remove unnecessary barriers to innovation.
- Learn from Health First's "From-To" journey requiring shifts in mindset, behaviors, and outcomes.
- Key areas leaders need to focus on, develop further, and learn (or unlearn) to enhance consumer and employee experience in their organizations.

[Access Webinar](#)

Diversity Resource Library

Visit the Full Library

In the Diversity Resource Library, you'll find articles, eBooks, and other resources on topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Being committed to DEI is about integrating actionable, measurable efforts into the fabric of your organization. Driving true change takes more than a line in a mission statement. Find out what you can do to further DEI in your organization and beyond.



Article:

Diverse Teams Deliver Innovation & Success

Evidence from many studies indicates organizations that are committed to diversity in their leadership ranks are more successful.



Article:

Making the Case for Gender Diversity

This article takes an in-depth look at women in healthcare leadership and the roles they have.



Article:

A Labor of Love: Everyone's Work

Empathy. Compassion. Love. These terms no longer describe the invisible work of women. They describe the work of everyone.



Article:

DEI Imperative – Moving Beyond the Status Quo

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is not just an initiative, it's an organizational imperative.



Article:

Change Happens in Moments

In a moment, you make a commitment. In a moment, you make a decision. A decision to speak up. A decision to raise your hand.

ABOUT MPI

Three interconnected companies comprise Management Partners, Inc. (MPI). Together, our organizations provide solutions and support for all aspects of talent management, including executive search, senior leadership development, and executive team performance. With a combined team of nearly 70 employees, we have conducted more than 4,000 engagements.

THE COMPANIES



NuBrick Partners is a leadership development firm with a team comprised of highly trained psychologists and organizational development experts who provide an integrated, systemic approach to talent management. Their support encompasses the board, C-Suite, and senior leadership team development, succession planning, executive selection assessment, and new leader installation across all industries as well as executive physician leadership within the healthcare industry.



Furst Group is a premier executive search firm that focuses in healthcare and life sciences. With more than 35 years of experience, we partner with leaders and organizations from all facets of healthcare—payer, provider, medical device, and other life science companies, academic medical centers, medical groups, associations, and more. Our experience in evaluating talent, leadership, and culture helps companies align their organizations to execute their strategic initiatives. Furst Group continues to be ranked among the Top 10 Healthcare Executive Search Firms by *Modern Healthcare* and ranked on *Forbes* list of Best Executive Recruiting Firms.



Salveson Stetson Group (SSG) brings more than 25 years of retained executive search experience in a multitude of industries. SSG has an outstanding track record of recruiting strong leaders with a special focus on human resources, finance, non-profit, pharmaceutical, and biotechnology. Ranked by *Forbes* as a Best Executive Recruiting Firm, SSG has conducted searches for organizations that range from privately held and not-for-profit to publicly traded and venture-backed startups in all industries.

BY THE NUMBERS

70%

Client Retention Rate

65⁺

Team Members



4k

Engagements



35⁺

Years of Experience



11

Support Locations