

Fair? Equity and Implicit Bias in Hiring and Promotion

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MFORUM
MARCH 2018



Welcome!

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Your facilitator for today is:

- Tynan Jarrett – Employment Equity Advisor (OPVPA)

Traditional Territory

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We would like to acknowledge that McGill University and Montreal are on the traditional territory of the Kanien'keha:ka (Ga-ni-yen-gé-haa-ga), a place which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst nations. McGill recognizes and respects the Kanien'keha:ka (Ga-ni-yen-gé-haa-ga) as the traditional custodians of the lands and waters on which we meet today.

Outline

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- I. Employment Equity at McGill
- II. Common misperceptions about Employment Equity
- III. Recruiting an excellent pool of applicants
- IV. Implicit Bias and evaluation of candidates
- V. Creating Change

Employment Equity at McGill

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What do you know about Employment Equity?

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Ideas?



What do you know about Employment Equity?

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- Fairness
- Hiring
- Promotion
- Awards
- Barriers
- Discrimination
- Bias
- Representation
- Labour Market Availability
- Race, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Indigeneity
- Policy, legislation,
- McGill priority

Employment Equity at McGill

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*“It is not that individuals in the designated groups are inherently unable to achieve equality on their own, it’s that **obstacles in their way are so formidable and self-perpetuating that they cannot be overcome without intervention.** It is both intolerable and insensitive if we simply wait and hope that the barriers will disappear with time. **Equality in employment will not happen unless we make it happen.**”*

**- Judge Rosalie Silberman Abella
Royal Commission on Equality in
Employment, 1985**

Legislative and Policy Framework

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- Canadian and Provincial law – duty to report
- McGill policy – see full text [here](#).

Frameworks and Commitments

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- [McGill University Strategic Academic Plan 2017-2022](#)
- [Provost's Task Force on Indigenous Studies and Indigenous Education](#)
- Tri-Council initiatives (CRC and CERC) – [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan for the CRC Program at McGill University](#)

Designated Groups

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Groups	Federal	Provincial	McGill
Women	✓	✓	✓
Racialized Person/Visible Minorities	✓	✓	✓
Persons with Disabilities	✓	✓	✓
Indigenous People	✓	✓	✓
Ethnic Minorities		✓	✓
LGBTQ People			✓

New Survey for Better Data

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- Direct Link to Survey: [here](#)
- Employment Equity website: [here](#)
- Disaggregated data
- LGBTQ question
- Language that better reflects that used by designated group members

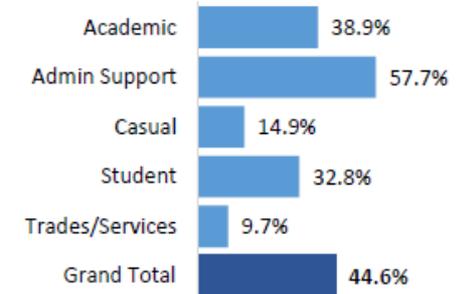
New Survey Response Rates

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2018-03-21

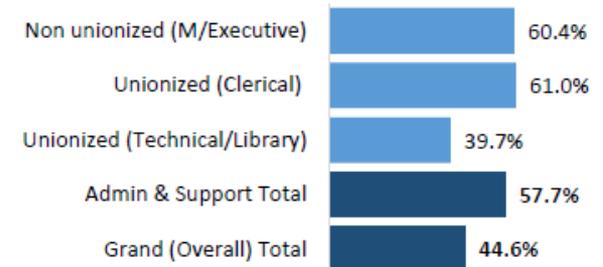
POSITION CLASS	Eligible	Answered Survey	Response Rate
Academic	3943	1534	38.9%
Admin Support	3455	1994	57.7%
Casual	74	11	14.9%
Student	466	153	32.8%
Trades/Services	434	42	9.7%
Grand Total	8372	3734	44.6%

Response Rate by Position Class



ADMIN & SUPPORT POSITION TYPE	Eligible	Answered Survey	Response Rate
Non unionized (M/Executive)	2117	1279	60.4%
Unionized (Clerical)	860	525	61.0%
Unionized (Technical/Library)	478	190	39.7%
Admin & Support Total	3455	1994	57.7%
Grand (Overall) Total	8372	3734	44.6%

Response Rate by Admin & Support Position Type



McGill Data Profile June 2016

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	Total	Women	Aboriginal People	Visible Minorities	People with Disabilities
Managers at McGill	1736	65.2%	0.3%	11.3%	1%
Managers in Montreal Workforce	100%	38.9%	0.6%	13.9%	
Professionals in Montreal Workforce	100%	53.6%	0.5%	16.8%	
Canada Population	32,852,325	50.5%	4.3%	19.1%	5.0%

Employment Equity

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COMMON MISPERCEPTIONS

Conversations about employment equity

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Best practice: **have regular conversations** about employment equity regularly; if you are in a search, make sure to discuss with all involved

- Allow all to voice opinions
- Search committee members consider themselves as representatives not just of the department they are in, but also of the faculty and the university as a whole
- Be prepared to respond to common concerns

Equity Issues: Responding to Common Concerns

Responding to Common Concerns:

1. “I am fully in favour of diversity, but I don’t want to sacrifice quality for diversity.”
2. “McGill is so focused on diversifying its staff that heterosexual able-bodied white people have no chance.”
3. “No qualified Indigenous people or people with disabilities applied.”

Exercise 1: Common Concerns

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Common Concerns	Responses
Sacrificing quality for diversity. We must hire the best	EE does not mean sacrificing quality True, we must hire the best; what are criteria for the “best”? Best for whom?
No opportunities for white able-bodied heterosexual people at McGill.	No evidence that there is discrimination against white people in the job market or at McGill.
No Indigenous people or People with disabilities in the applicant pool.	Active recruitment, not passive recruitment. Overcoming implicit bias. Developing networks that take us outside of the social groups that replicate themselves at McGill.

Recruit a diverse and excellent pool of candidates

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- Best practice: **active** recruitment not passive recruitment
- Commitment to creating a diverse applicant pool built in to McGill's Employment Equity policy
- Thoughtful strategy informed by data – what do you know about underrepresentation in your area? How can you identify barriers and reduce gaps in a sustained way?

- Guiding principle: effort to diversify staff needs to be front-loaded

Exercise 2: Brainstorm

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- What steps can you take to help ensure that underrepresented groups are recruited, retained and rewarded at McGill?

Exercise 2: Debrief

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- Include diversity competencies in job description
- Identify gaps in representation in your area
- Develop an active recruitment plan based on good data
- Consider recruitment to be an ongoing process
- Consider non-traditional career paths and those with no post secondary/McGill work experience
- Discuss employment equity with those conducting searches in your area
- Consider implicit bias in review (including performance dialogue)
- Strive to increase cultural competence of entire team
- Work actively towards creating a welcoming and inclusive environment
- Make sure to champion good workers, including members of underrepresented groups

Implicit bias

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- Prejudice and stereotypes held on an unconscious level
- May be in stark contrast to our consciously held beliefs and ideas

Implicit Bias

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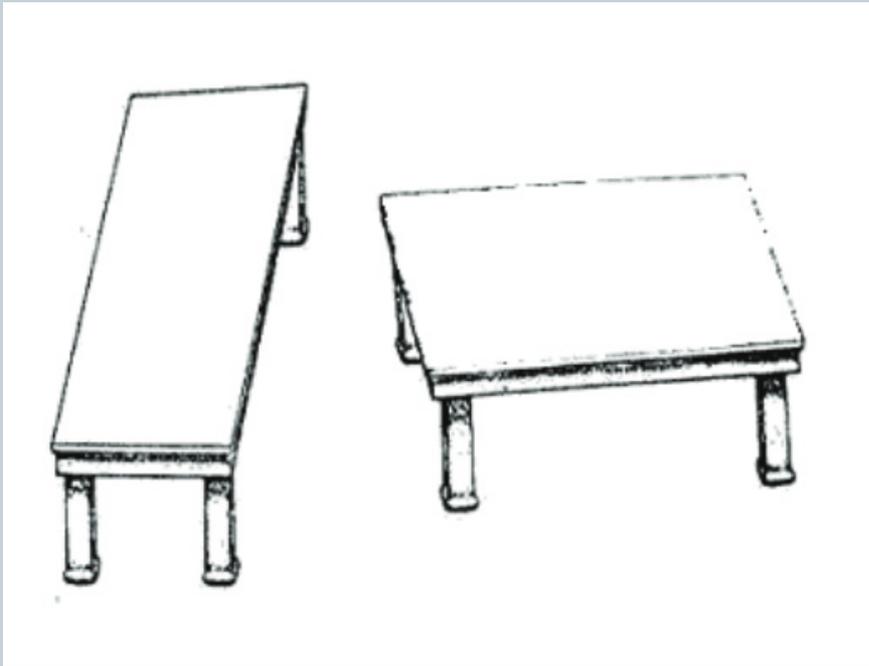
- **Implicit biases are consequential:**
 - May have significant influence on our perception and behaviour
 - Important contributor to the reproduction of social inequality
 - Small amounts of bias can have a big impact:

Computer simulation of gender bias:

<http://doesgenderbiasmatter.com/>

Article: http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~lane/papers/male_female.pdf

Implicit Bias

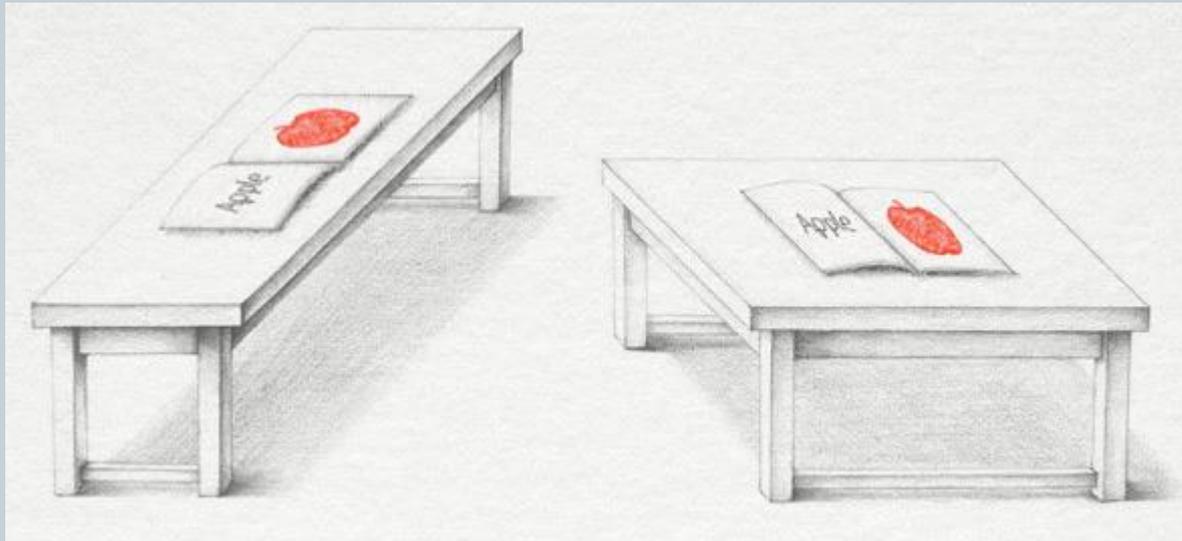


Challenge:

To become aware of unconscious bias, how it operates, and how we can take steps to minimize its impact

Implicit Bias

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Implicit Bias and the IAT

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- Developed in 1995 by researchers out of Harvard and University of Washington
- Implicit Association Test:
<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/canada/selectatest.jsp>
- Measures the strength of associations between social groups (e.g., gay people, Black people) and people's stereotypes about those groups

Implicit Bias and the IAT

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- Implicit Association Test:
<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/canada/selectatest.jsp>
- Measures the strength of associations between social groups (e.g., gay people, Black people) and stereotypes (e.g., athletic, clumsy).

Implicit Bias

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- Even if you consciously equate family and career as not being gender specific, it is possible that you have an unconscious bias
- Over 75% of men and 80% of women who take this test have the career-men bias
- An increasing body of research on implicit bias, how it works, how to disrupt it
- Many studies that look at implicit bias as it relates to evaluation, hiring and promotion; many studies that are specific to the academic context

Bias in Academia

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- Graduate student inquiries; [Milkman et al.](#)
- Academic hiring decisions; [Steinpris et al.](#)
- Reference letters; [Schmader et al.](#)

- A regularly updated resource: [WISELI](#)

Implicit bias

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- What can be done?

Bias as a remediable habit

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From [Devine et al.](#):

- Unconscious bias is learned, habitual behavior
- Learn and practice strategies in order to overcome it
- People who are motivated to change and put in time and energy can learn to self-regulate and eventually increase their ability to act in ways that align with their consciously held egalitarian values and beliefs
- Study that led to increased hiring of female faculty in STEMM departments



Journal of Experimental Social Psychology
Volume 73, November 2017, Pages 211-215

FlashReport
A gender bias habit-breaking intervention led to increased hiring of female faculty in STEMM departments ☆ ☆☆

Patricia G. Devine ^a, Patrick S. Forscher ^b, William T.L. Cox ^a, Anna Kaatz ^c, Jennifer Sheridan ^d, Molly Carnes ^e

[Show more](#)

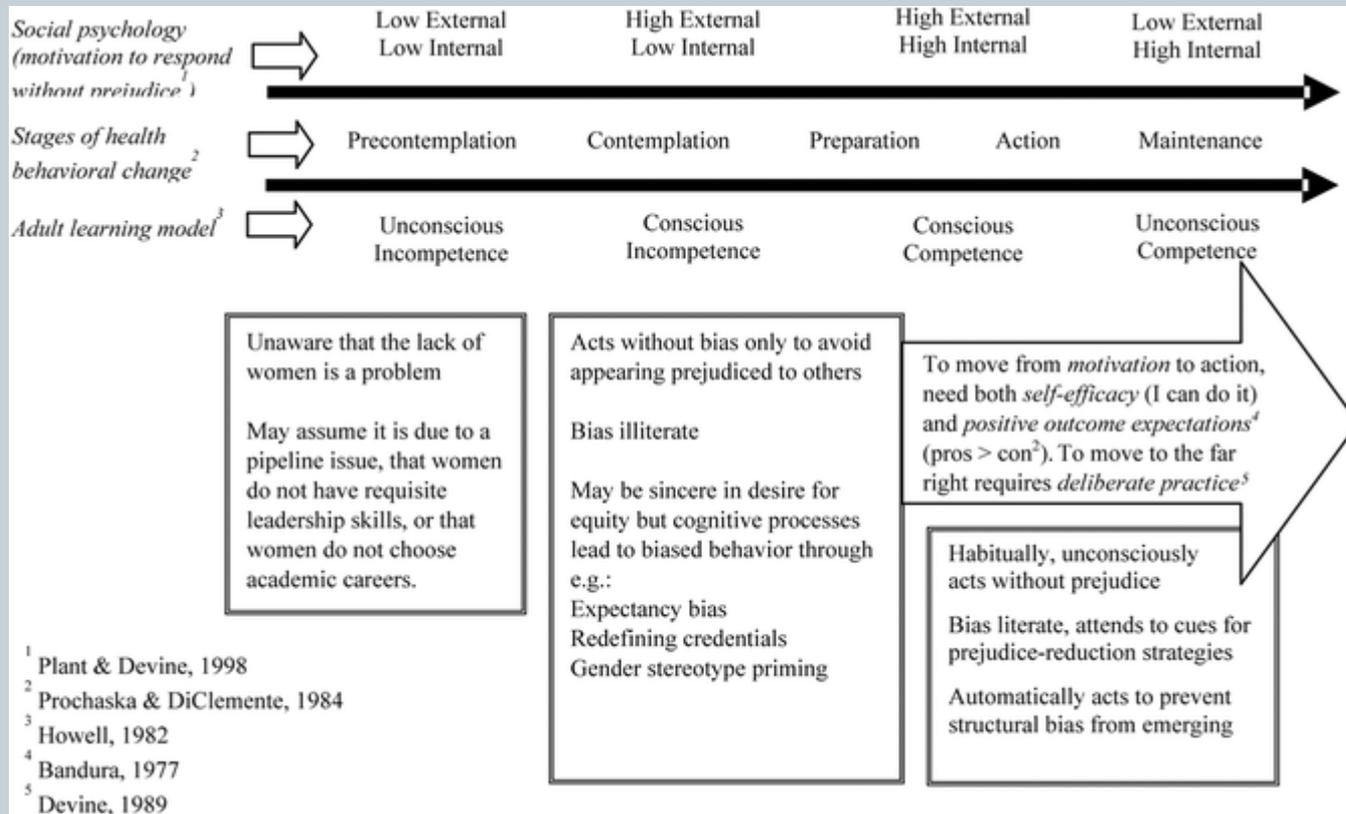
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2017.07.002> [Get rights and content](#)

Abstract

Addressing the underrepresentation of women in science is a top priority for many institutions, but the majority of efforts to increase representation of women are neither evidence-based nor rigorously assessed. One exception is the gender bias habit-breaking intervention (Carnes et al., 2015), which, in a cluster-randomized trial involving all but two departmental clusters ($N = 92$) in the 6 STEMM focused schools/colleges at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, led to increases in gender bias awareness and [self-efficacy](#) to promote gender equity in academic science departments and [perceptions](#) of a more positive

Bias as a remediable habit

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Carnes, M., Devine, P. G., Isaac, C., Manwell, L. B., Ford, C. E., Byars-Winston, A., . . . Sheridan, J. (2012). Promoting institutional change through bias literacy. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 5(2), 63-77. doi:10.1037/a0028128

Strategies for Minimizing Bias

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Accept that implicit bias impacts your perceptions

- A heightened sense of one's own objectivity can lead to a decreased ability to detect and adjust for implicit bias; rather than trying to eliminate bias, focus on detecting it and self-regulating



Strategies for Minimizing Bias

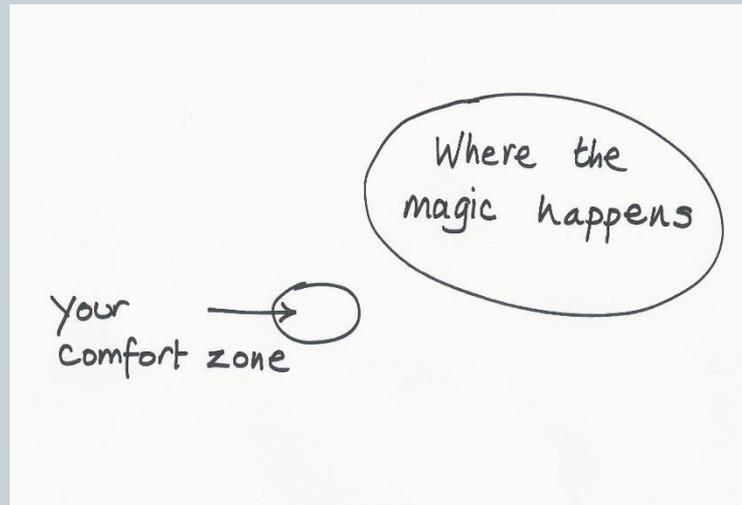
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- **Stereotype replacement:** every time you recognize that you have a stereotypic thought, replace it with an egalitarian one

Strategies for Minimizing Bias



Increase opportunities for intergroup contact; seek out connections beyond the social groups that you belong to. Consider the ways in which our society is structured to promote segregation along racial and socio-economic lines.



Strategies Minimizing Bias

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Counter stereotypic imaging – imagine people that you know personally or by reputation who do not fit stereotypes about a group or groups that they belong to

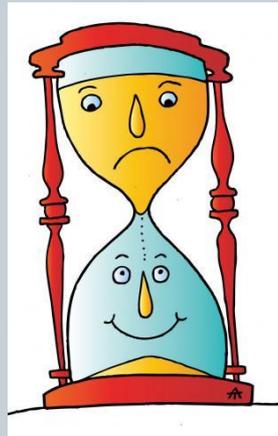


A diverse search or review committee can naturally act as counter stereotypic imaging for dominant group members

Strategies for Minimizing Bias

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- Improve conditions of decision-making: Take special care to engage in thoughtful decision-making



Kang, J., Bennett, M. W., Carbado, D. W., Casey, P., Dasgupta, N., Faigman, D. L., . . .
Mnookin, J. (2012). Implicit bias in the courtroom. *UCLA Law Review*, 59(5), 1124-1186.

Strategies for Minimizing Bias

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- Individuate – when you detect that you have had a stereotypical idea about someone, consciously embark on a process of individuation by considering all the details

Making the final decision

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- Ideally once you have shortlisted, you will be choosing from a number of excellent candidates
- If your pool has been well-populated, then these may be your “A” candidates unless red-flags are raised during process
- Employment Equity legislation and McGill policy state that, where two candidates are of high caliber and meet all the requirements, a candidate belonging to the designated group that is most underrepresented within a given sector in the University should be given precedence

Creating Change

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Exercise:

- Identify 1 concrete step you can take, and 1 concrete step that the University might take, to improve equitable hiring, promotion and awards at McGill.
- Identify the major benefit and challenge associated with each step you propose

New Survey: Who should respond?



Direct Link to Survey: [here](#)

Employment Equity website: [here](#)

Thank you!

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McGill