

ETC – DEI WORKSHOP

**Sophia Hyder-Hock
Destinations International**

SPONSORED BY TRAVEL MANITOBA

June 23, 2022



Manitoba
CANADA'S HEART  BEATS



A Deeper Dive To Understand Unconscious Bias + Microaggressions In Travel Planning

Sophia Hyder Hock, Chief Diversity Officer
Destinations International



DESTINATIONS INTERNATIONAL

Together with our members and partners, Destinations International represents a powerful forward-thinking, collaborative association; exchanging bold ideas, connecting innovative people, and elevating tourism to its highest potential.



DESTINATIONS INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

The Destinations International Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering destination marketers globally by providing education, research, advocacy and leadership development.

FOUR PILLARS



COMMUNITY



ADVOCACY



RESEARCH



EDUCATION

Community Agreements

1. Confidentiality is paramount
2. Speak your truth
3. Emotions are welcomed
4. Take risks
5. It's okay to experience discomfort
6. Radical listening without judgement
7. Appreciation of perspective
8. Blameless yet responsible
9. Commit to expand your horizons, to be curious, and to learn more

Session Objectives

Understand the meaning and impact of microaggressions

Learn how to address microaggressions when they occur

Apply your learnings in daily life and to your audience

Microaggressions are like mosquitos...



Understanding Microaggressions



How does an unconscious bias relate to a microaggression?

An unconscious bias is are social stereotypes about people that individuals form outside their own conscious awareness.

They begin at a young age through environmental surroundings, family settings, social settings, media exposure.

When unaddressed, unconscious biases can lead to microaggressions.

How do you define a microaggression?

Microaggressions are defined as **the everyday, subtle, intentional — and oftentimes unintentional — interactions or behaviors that communicate some sort of bias toward historically marginalized groups**

~Kevin Nadal, Professor of Psychology at John Jay College of Criminal Justice

About microaggressions...

- They can occur in the workplace, in family settings, in transit, with friends, during travel, ANYWHERE
- We may not realize that we are doing it
- In some cases, a microaggression can be disguised as a compliment

The origin of the term 'microaggression'

The term was coined by Harvard University psychiatrist Chester M. Pierce in 1970 to describe insults and dismissals which he regularly witnessed non-black Americans inflicting on African Americans.

Microaggressions spring from unconsciously held prejudices and beliefs which may be demonstrated consciously or unconsciously through daily verbal or non-verbal interactions.



Types of Microaggressions

Verbal: A verbal microaggression is a comment or question that is hurtful or stigmatizing to a marginalized group or person. For example, saying, “You’re so smart for a woman.”

Behavioral: This involves behaving in a way that is discriminatory or otherwise hurtful to a marginalized person or group. For example, when a waiter or bartender ignores a transgender person and instead serves a cisgender person, someone whose biological sex matches their gender identity.

Environmental: An environmental microaggression is when a subtle discrimination occurs within society, for example, when a college campus only has buildings named after white people.

When microaggressions are experienced...

They are like papercuts – small and slight but they can hurt

--

They put people into a box and limits a person full identity

--

They lower a person's self esteem, can alienate, and cause anxiety and depression

-Did he just say what I think he said?

-Am I interpreting this correctly?

-What did he mean by that?

-I don't want them to feel like I'm angry or perceived in a negative way.

-I don't want to seem like I'm unapproachable

Words and expressions can act as triggers...

A **trigger** is the accumulation of certain events or situations that activate and evoke an emotional response.

--

When we **are less aware** of microaggressions that trigger us, we can be overstimulated and unsure about how to act/react.

“Fitting the culture”

“Aggressive”

“Articulate”

“Ghetto”

“You’re overreacting”

“That’s exotic”

Examples



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND](#)

Presumption that an Asian American doesn't speak English - *"You speak very good English"*

Examples



Presumption that a person of color is stealing something, is dangerous, or violent, and is being followed in a store.

Examples



Presumption that a person looks different than what is 'normal.' "She looks so exotic!"

Examples



Presumption that someone is not 'American.' "Where are you really from?"

Trip Planning Cycle: When Microaggressions Take Place



Pre-Trip



Trip Experience



Post-Trip

Pre-Trip Experience

Sourcing Vendors

How are you finding and sourcing your vendors?

What vendors are considered reliable?

How are you supporting local or underrepresented businesses?

Pre-Trip Experience

Marketing +
Communications

What language are you using to attract clients?

What images are you using to attract clients?

Does the messaging evoke perceptions of bias?

Fiji: A Recent Example of Microaggressions in Marketing



Pre-Trip Experience

Education and Awareness

How are you preparing your clients to respect the cultures they visit?

Are you asking local vendors their perspectives on messages they wish visitors would be aware of about their culture? (What are things you wish visitors wouldn't do? How do you wish to be treated by visitors?)

What is the tone and/or mannerism of the education that is provided?

During the Trip

Interactions + Reactions

How are visitors briefed when they are in the destination? Is there a cultural sensitivity and safety briefing in place?

How can visitors be made aware of the variety of encounters and perspectives on their trip that range from their immediate group, interactions with tour operators, and other local experiences?

How can tour operators be empowered to educate visitors?

The Post Trip Experience

Sharing Perspectives

How are visitors sharing their experiences?

How are you capturing feedback from local vendors after the trip? Did they feel respected?

Are you incorporating vendor feedback and traveler feedback to reduce bias?

Strategies: How to Process + Handle Microaggressions



The Use of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence (otherwise known as emotional quotient or EQ) is the **ability to understand, use, and manage your own emotions in positive ways** to relieve stress, communicate effectively, **empathize** with others, **overcome challenges** and **defuse conflict**.

The Use of Emotional Intelligence

Self-awareness

- You recognize your own emotions and how they affect your thoughts and behaviors. You know your strengths and weaknesses.

Self-management

- You're able to express and manage your emotions in healthy ways while adapt to changing circumstances.

Social awareness

- You have empathy. You can understand the emotions, needs, and concerns of other people, pick up on emotional cues, feel comfortable socially, and recognize the power dynamics in a group or organization.

Relationship management

- You know how to develop and maintain good relationships, communicate clearly, inspire and influence others, and to reduce situational conflict.

Varying Viewpoints

Microaggressor

- Person who is commits the microaggression

Victim

- Person who is on the receiving end of the microaggression

Witness

- Person who sees the microaggression take place, but doesn't act

Ally

- Person who witnesses the microaggression take place and acts on behalf of the victim

The Use of EQ + Varying Viewpoints

Microaggressor

- Acknowledge
- Apologize
- Validate
- Reconnect

Victim

- Acknowledge
- Validate your feelings
- Process your feelings
- Engage your support system
- Assess your action

Witness

- Be clear on your WHY; should you speak up? Why or why not?

Ally

- Be clear on your WHY; why are you speaking up?

How to Process Microaggressions

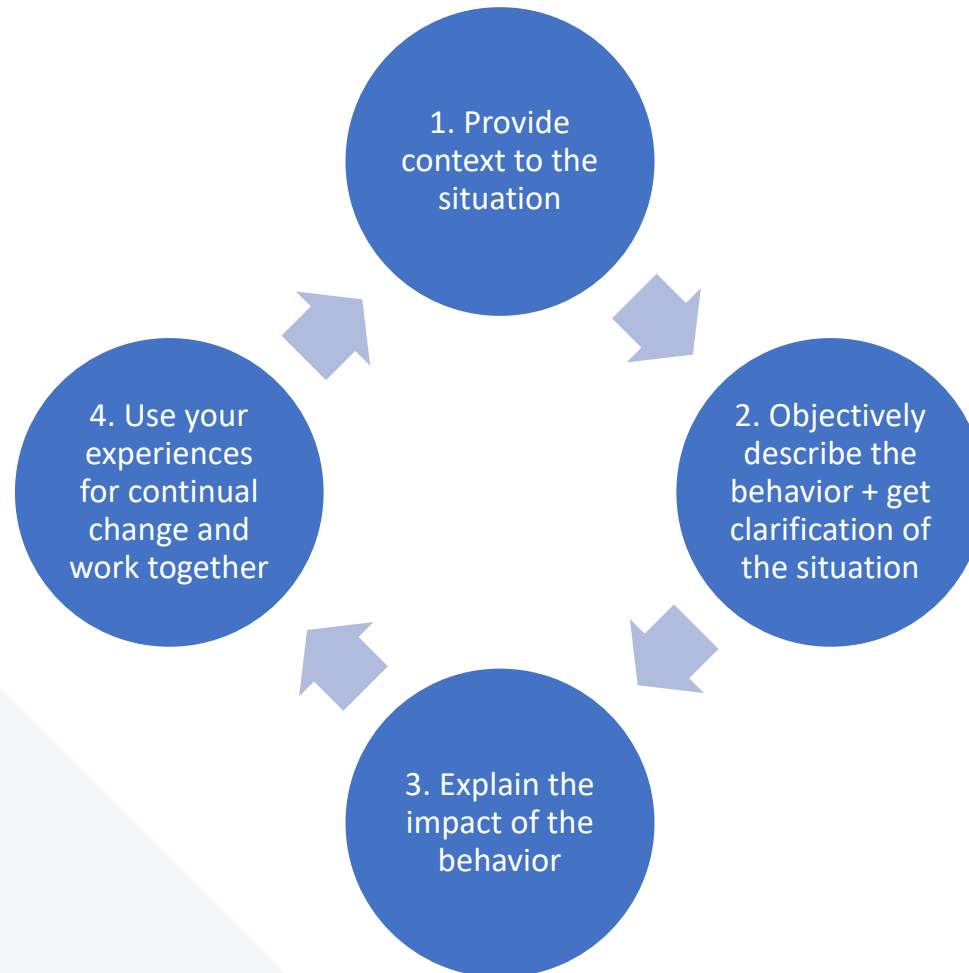
Be realistic. Assess if this conversation will be useful. Will it be reflective? What is the purpose?

Set your priorities and expectations when having these conversations.

Establish a timeline –
“I only have 10 minutes, but I’d like to talk with you about xyz.”

If the conversation feels toxic – pause and ask yourself if the conversation necessary for your mental health.

How Handle Microaggressions



Scenario Discussions



Instructions on group work

1. Read your group scenario
2. You will have 20 minutes to discuss the scenario and discussion questions
3. Select a designated note taker and/or speaker from each group
4. We will have a group share-out to learn about each scenario

Large Group Share Outs

Each group will have approximately 5 minutes to share their scenario and thought process.

What are some interesting highlights and takeaways?

Reminders + Tips: How to Process Microaggressions



Education for Clients

Provide info sessions on how to maximize the trip experience through cultural awareness

Provide information on cultural do's and don'ts

Provide psychological safety information (think about the varying audiences)

Offer information on how to take proper images

Use representative imagery in your marketing materials

Make Conscious Improvements

Collect feedback from vendors and visitors about the experience (Did they feel respected, welcomed and safe?)

Use that information to make process improvements (itinerary planning, education, partnership development, etc.)

Final Reminders and Tips

Do your own work + understand the lived experiences of people in historically marginalized groups

Set realistic expectations for your conversations. Change takes time.

Always be aware of yourself and your mental health when having these conversations.

Think about your role and the context of your privilege.

Practice emotional intelligence and be intentional with your approach

Be open to learning from your mistakes.



Connect With Me



LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/sophiahyder](https://www.linkedin.com/in/sophiahyder)

Email: shyderhock@destinationsinternational.org

@destintl
#destintl

