Identifying Choice Points: The “Bias Check”

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| About This Resource This template can help you reflect on common equity and inclusion [choice points](http://www.managementcenter.org/article/using-choice-points-to-advance-racial-equity-and-inclusion/) in your interactions with team members.  Choice points are decision-making opportunities. You can think of them like forks in the road where some paths replicate the status quo and other paths open opportunities for racial equity, inclusion, and belonging. With choice points, leaders consciously pause to reflect, generate options, and enact changes that advance equity and inclusion.  Use this tool to spot [common choice points](https://www.managementcenter.org/resources/tools-for-identifying-choice-points-common-choice-points/) in your approach to:   * [Relationship-Building](#z2gsrptwjp7m) * [Staff Development and Check-ins](#87s9cmn7xzvb) * [Performance Problems](#lvqkzpqy4vbb)   It may help to use the tool with an eye toward your whole team (direct reports, colleagues, partners) in order to spot disparities, patterns, and uneven outcomes. However, you can also reflect on your interactions with an individual. Use the prompts as a starting point, or identify choice points that are relevant to your context. |

## Reflection Questions

Once you’ve completed one of the charts, reflect on the following questions:

1. Which of your staff or teammates had the highest **ratings**? What about the lowest? Why do you think that is?
2. What **patterns** (if any) do you notice, particularly with regard to race or other identities like gender, age, educational background, and positional power? Where could your bias be showing up? Examples:
   1. *It’s harder to provide feedback to X staff member than to Y staff member because I feel like we don’t communicate as well.*
   2. *When I’m having a busy or stressful week, my check-ins with X feel so much easier because we are able to connect over the many things we have in common.*
3. What **impact** might these choices have on equity, inclusion, and belonging? For example, is one person getting overlooked for promotions because they’re not getting enough stretch assignments?
4. What might **change** if I made a different choice with regard to [choice point] with [team member]?

# Relationship-Building

Consider these [choice points](http://www.managementcenter.org/?post_type=article&p=5997&preview=true) in your interactions with team members (direct reports, colleagues, partners). You may want to do this with an eye toward your whole team to spot disparities and check for bias. However, the same reflection points will help with individuals as well. *Supporting resources:* [The Three Dimensions of Effective Management](https://www.managementcenter.org/resources/three-dimensions-effective-management/) and [The Four Elements of Strong Relationships](https://www.managementcenter.org/resources/four-elements-strong-relationships-managers-guide-relationship-building/).

On a scale of 1-3, please assess your actions on the grid below:

3 = I definitely/regularly did this 2 = I somewhat did this 1 = I did not do this N/A = Not applicable

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| **Choice Points | *During the last quarter, I have done the following to deepen trust and authentic connection:*** | | | | | |
| **Name / Initials** | Practiced genuine curiosity and sought their perspective or feedback | Created space for authenticity (the ability to be ourselves)—and modeled it | Acknowledged a mistake or misstep I made—and fixed it | Used my power for good to advocate for them or address power or inequity | Celebrated their accomplishments, skills, or role in joint efforts |
| **AS** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **DD** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **TY** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **EP** |  |  |  |  |  |
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# Staff Development and Check-ins

Consider these [choice points](http://www.managementcenter.org/?post_type=article&p=5997&preview=true) in your interactions with team members (direct reports, colleagues, partners). You may want to do this with an eye toward your whole team to spot disparities and check for bias. However, the same reflection points will help with individuals, as well. *Supporting resources:* [Give More (and Better) Feedback with CSAW](https://www.managementcenter.org/article/give-more-and-better-feedback-with-csaw/) and [7 Tips for Making the Most of Your Check-ins](https://www.managementcenter.org/resources/7-tips-making-most-your-check-ins/).

On a scale of 1-3, please assess your actions on the grid below:

3 = I definitely/regularly did this 2 = I somewhat did this 1 = I did not do this N/A = Not applicable

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| **Choice Points | *In the last month, I’ve done the following to help my staff succeed:*** | | | | | | |
| **Name / Initials** | Prioritized check-ins during busy weeks | Gave regular, clear & honest feedback (constructive & positive) in check-ins & reviews | Made time to see them in action or work side-by-side | Gave them stretch assignments to grow their skills | Sought their perspective on big decisions I need to make | Asked them about skills & experience they want to gain (or their career trajectory) |
| **MH** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **EB** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **DV** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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# Performance Problems

Consider these [choice points](http://www.managementcenter.org/?post_type=article&p=5997&preview=true) in your interactions with team members (direct reports, colleagues, partners). You may want to do this with an eye toward your whole team to spot disparities and check for bias. However, the same reflection points will help with individuals, as well. *Supporting resources:* [Four Steps for Addressing Performance Problems](https://www.managementcenter.org/resources/four-steps-addressing-performance-problems/) and [Four Ways to Mitigate Bias in Performance Evaluations](https://www.managementcenter.org/article/four-ways-to-mitigate-bias-in-performance-evaluations/).

On a scale of 1-3, please assess your actions on the grid below:

3 = I definitely/regularly did this 2 = I somewhat did this 1 = I did not do this N/A = Not applicable

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| **Choice Points | *When faced with a performance problem, I have:*** | | | | | | |
| **Name / Initials** | Addressed the problem promptly and reset or clarify expectations | Made time to connect, ask questions, and seek understanding | Examined where I could improve my management practices to better support them | Shared feedback compassionately and clearly | Invested time and resources to support them to improve | Ensured no surprises in annual performance reviews or performance warnings |
| **ER** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **XG** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **LH** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **FG** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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