

# How to make your radiation oncology team more inclusive to junior physicists

SAM Professional Symposium:  
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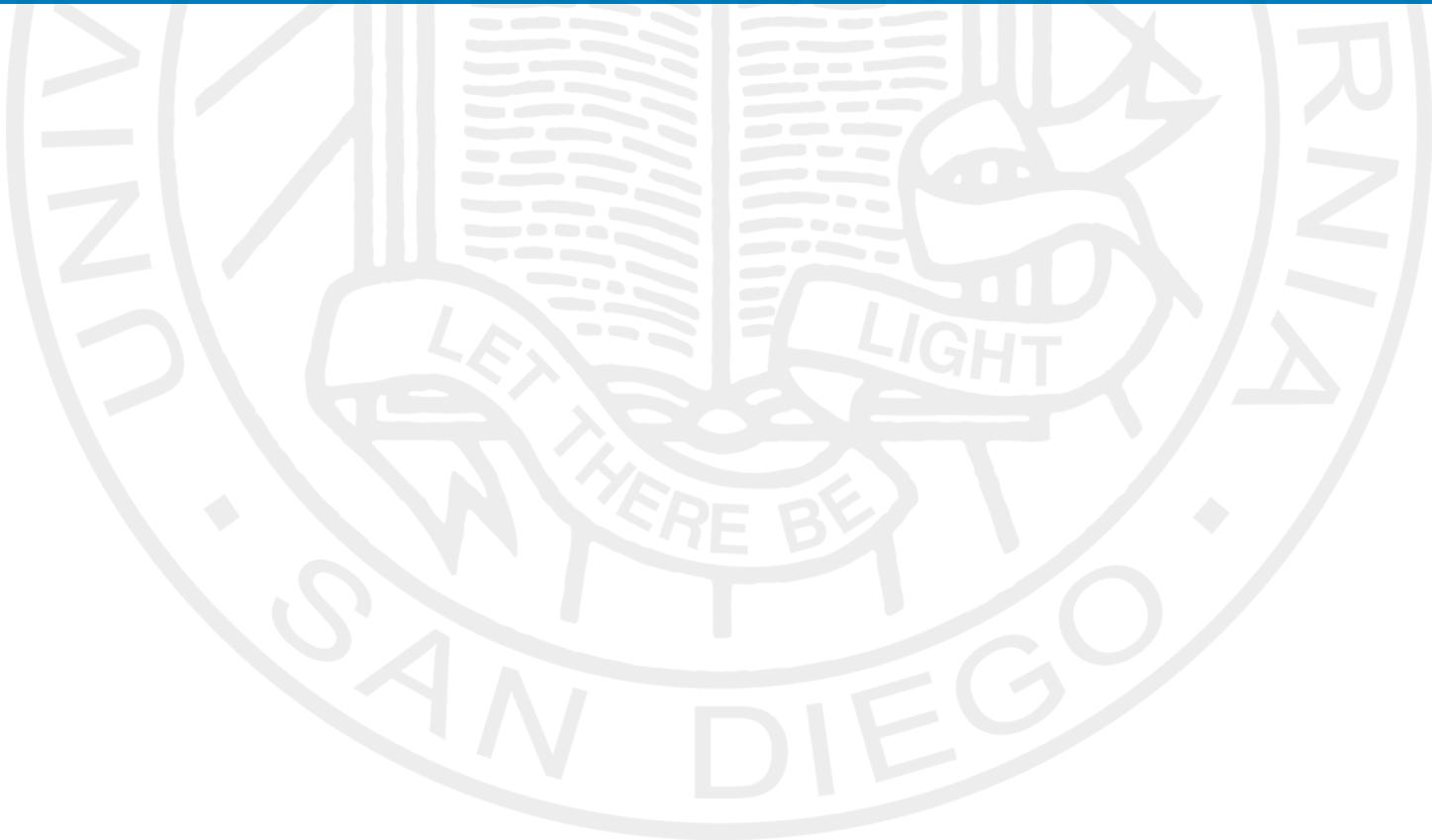
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RETHINKING MEDICAL PHYSICS



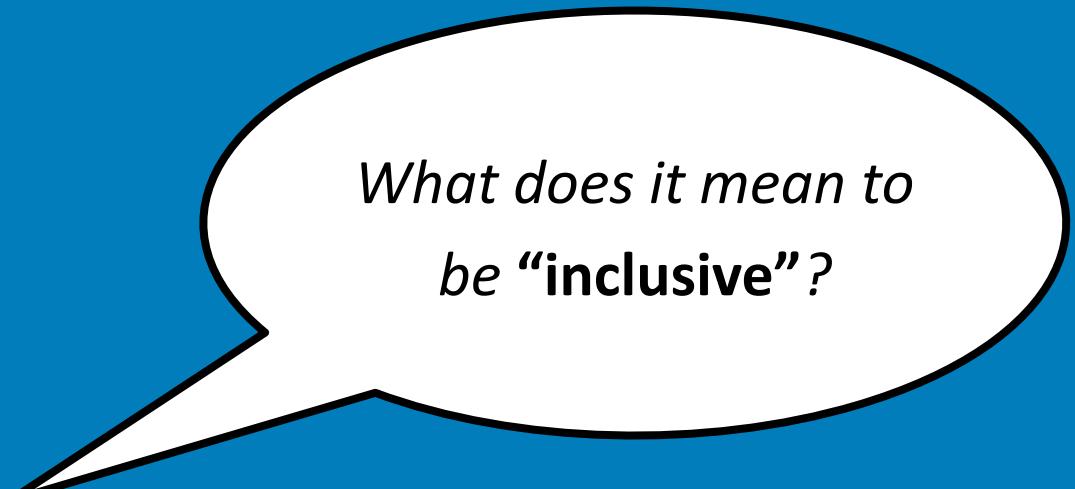
# How to make your radiation oncology team more inclusive to junior physicists

*What does it mean to  
be “inclusive”?*

*What is different for or about  
junior physicists?*

(Vs more senior team members)

# How to make your radiation oncology team more inclusive to junior physicists

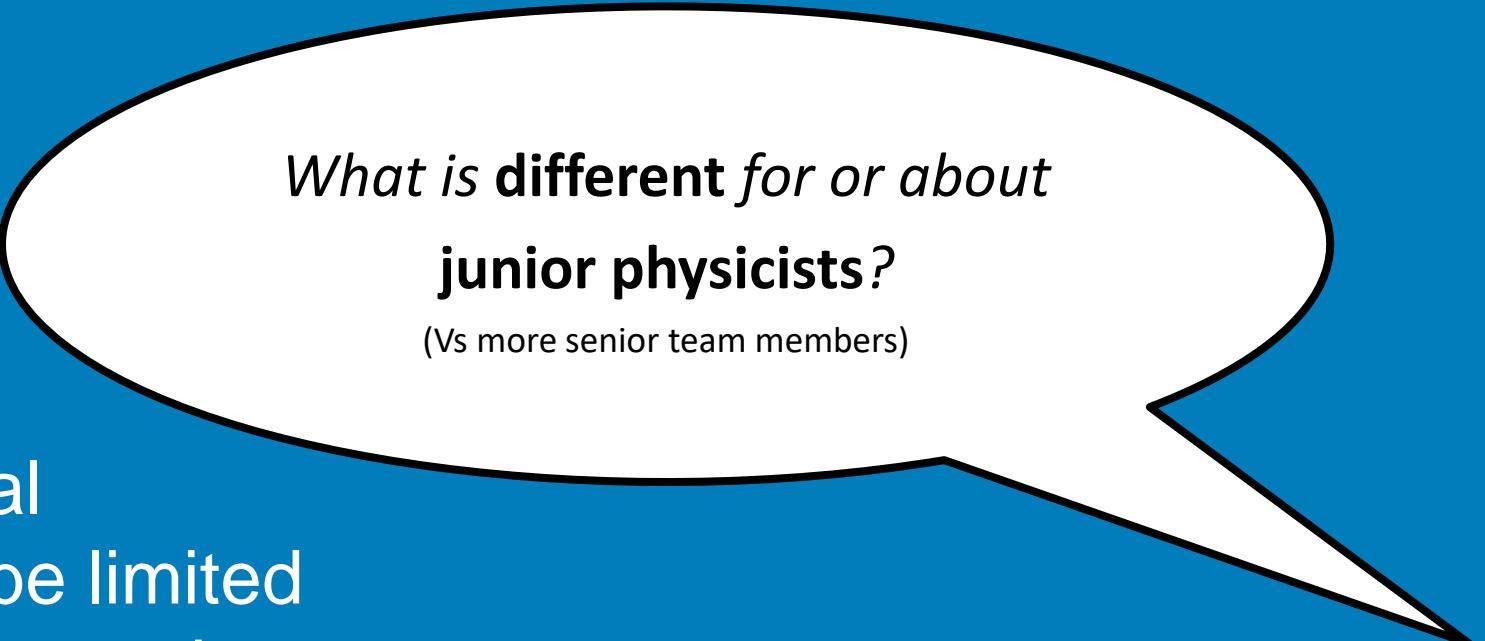


*What does it mean to be “inclusive”?*

Describes an environment where all team members...

- Have equitable access to opportunities and resources
- Are included in discussions and decisions
- Are able to speak up freely
- Have their contributions appreciated and acknowledged

# How to make your radiation oncology team more inclusive to junior physicists



*What is different for or about  
junior physicists?*

(Vs more senior team members)

- Prior experience in a clinical working environment may be limited
- Differences in prior clinical experience
- Inherent power imbalance between junior physicists & supervising physicists at peak differential

# How to make your radiation oncology team more inclusive to junior physicists

- Inherent power imbalance between junior physicists & supervising physicists at peak differential

# How to make your radiation oncology team more inclusive to junior physicists

- Inherent power imbalance between junior physicists & supervising physicists at peak differential
  - *Psychological safety*: whether team members can speak up freely and contribute **without fear of negative repercussions**
  - Can factor into **pre-existing cultural expectations** that impact how and when team members contribute



*The “Modesty Mandate”*

# Cultural Expectations: the “Modesty Mandate”



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MANAGING PEOPLE

### How the Best Bosses Interrupt Bias on Their Teams

by Joan C. Williams and Sky Mihaylo  
From the November–December 2019 Issue

**Joan Williams**  
Distinguished Professor of Law and UC Hastings Foundation Chair and Director of the Center for WorkLife Law

FAST COMPANY

## I've spent 20 years studying bias at work. Here's how to design an effective diversity training

The key is to arm bystanders to interrupt bias, so that the people experiencing bias don't have to carry that load alone.

BY JOAN C. WILLIAMS

# Cultural Expectations: the “Modesty Mandate”

Harvard

45 The Best-Performing  
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Another example: People of Asian descent and women encounter a “modesty mandate,” or the cultural expectation they will be modest. In both groups it’s often internalized—since women and Asian people are often raised this way—and both groups also often encounter backlash if they are perceived to be immodest. That means that the same bias interrupters that help women tackle the modesty mandate can help people of Asian descent, too.

First-generation professionals will benefit, too, because people from blue-collar families are typically taught that “boasting and self-promotion and credit hogging are wrong and unseemly,” to quote one “class migrant”—a professional whose father was a bricklayer. One study found that white men from elite backgrounds were 12 times more likely than white men from non-elite backgrounds to get a callback for a professional job.

The modesty mandate means that women, people of Asian descent, and first-generation professionals will often be unduly modest in the self-evaluations that are a standard of many performance appraisal processes.

## Bias at Work

It's important for Asian Americans. It's important for women.

And it's important for first-generation professionals. All of those groups were brought up with what's often called the modesty mandate. So, for example, if you have a first-generation Asian American, they have most likely been brought up in a family where kind of braggadocio is a sign of somebody, it's like a character defect. And so, it's, they have been brought up often in a context where there's a lot of expectation that you don't toot your own horn, and you're deferential to those above you.

We spent 20 years studying bias at work. Here's how to design an effective diversity training

They is to arm bystanders to interrupt bias, so that the people experiencing bias don't have to carry that load alone.

# Strategies to create a more inclusive environment

*Inform your viewpoint with knowledge of cultural factors, but don't forget that behaviors and beliefs are NOT universal among any given group!*

## ① Develop awareness

- What factors influence how your junior team members react and communicate?
- Examine your own biases and behavior.
- Consider whether you're providing opportunities and resources to all your junior physicists – intentionally or not

*How are you meeting with or making decisions with your junior colleagues? Who do you see in casual work settings (e.g., coffee breaks, lunch) or outside of work?*

Remember:

- Power imbalance and culture affect whether team members can/will speak up or self-promote without facing backlash.
- Regularly revisit and reassess your views on your individual team members.

# Strategies to create a more inclusive environment

## ② Set clear expectations

- Discuss in person *and* provide in writing.
- If expectations are not met, first consider that expectations were unclear and revisit.
- Set your own expectations: review and confirm your junior physicists' experience.

*No moving targets!*

*As needed, work with them to come up with a plan to get up to speed.*

### Including:

- Professional conduct
- Clinical and technical knowledge/skills
- Responsibilities
- Communication within the team
- Short-term and long-term goals
- Performance evaluations

# Strategies to create a more inclusive environment

## ③ Provide opportunities for contribution and feedback

- In group settings, ask junior team members to weigh in on discussions and decisions.
- Hold regular 1-on-1 meetings with the team members you manage.

### Remember:

- Your junior physicists were brought on for the **value they add** to the team.
- Actively **invite participation**.
- Provide **avenues** to **communicate** with you, both **informal and formal**.

# Strategies to create a more inclusive environment

## ④ Give your people credit

- Acknowledge and express appreciation for the contributions of your junior team members.
- Make this standard practice, whether or not your junior physicists are present.

*Make sure you're doing this accurately and fairly!*

*See Strategy ① Develop awareness*

*Both 1-on-1 and in group settings!*

### Recognize:

- This reduces the pressures and **stigma** of self-promotion.
- This is a form of both **providing feedback to and advocating for** your junior physicists!

# Strategies to create a more inclusive environment

## 5 Examine your workplace culture

- Do your stated values match what is practiced?
- Collaborative or hierarchical?
- Are there any unspoken or implied “rules” that need to be addressed?

Consider:

- Are senior members of the team **modeling** the behavior & skills asked of junior members?
- Does **perception** of the workplace and team culture match your **intentions**?

# In summary

- Inherent power imbalances, cultural factors, and differing levels of experience contribute to the challenge of maintaining an inclusive team for junior physicists.
- Counter this by employing strategies to educate yourself and create an inclusive environment for your junior team members:
  - ① Develop awareness
  - ② Set clear expectations
  - ③ Provide opportunities for contribution and feedback
  - ④ Give your people credit
  - ⑤ Examine your workplace culture
- Be excellent to each other.



# UC San Diego Health

RETHINKING MEDICAL PHYSICS



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## Resources

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