

L//P

Diversity & Inclusion: Why and How?

Lukas Kahwe Smith

–
Davos, March 9th, 2019

"Too black" for the racist soap dispenser that only works with light skin.

<https://youtu.be/TDyVLxdXK64>



Do you think the creators of this soap dispenser are racist?

Probably not.

We can probably assume this is a case of an action that results in “accidental” racism.

The engineers simply didn't think about different skin colors when they created this racist soap dispenser.

So what should these engineers do when they are told that their soap dispenser is racist?

Become defensive because they are of course not racist?

They should listen, fix the issue and make sure the issue will not happen again.

If you think that you will not “accidentally” do something to marginalize someone here is an example from the Symfony community.



Before



After

The harsh truth is that such “accidents” happen in large part because **people choose to not educate themselves** and actively work against getting educated by getting overly defensive attitudes.

If someone points out an offensive statement, make an effort to not become defensive.

Listen, learn, move on.

I always thought that because I am a nice person, I am not part of the problem.

My wife also works as an engineer.

Hearing her horrific experiences made me realize, the world needs to change.

So I became active!

My goal with this talk is to **shine a light on the topic of diversity & inclusion** and to convince each of you to also **become active.**

Definition: Diversity

“Presence of difference within a given setting” on dimensions such as “ethnicities, genders, ages, religions, disabilities, and sexual orientations with differences in education, personalities, skill sets, experiences, and knowledge bases”.

<https://generalassemb.ly/blog/diversity-inclusion-equity-differences-in-meaning/>
<https://ideal.com/diversity-and-inclusion/>

"It's a new, **intimate** way to communicate from your wrist, and a **comprehensive health** and **fitness** device."

Apple CEO Tim Cook

<https://www.theverge.com/2014/9/9/6127839/apple-watch-healthkit-digital-health-fitness>



<https://www.theverge.com/2014/9/9/6127839/apple-watch-healthkit-digital-health-fitness>



Jessica Pixel

@liftedpixel

Follow



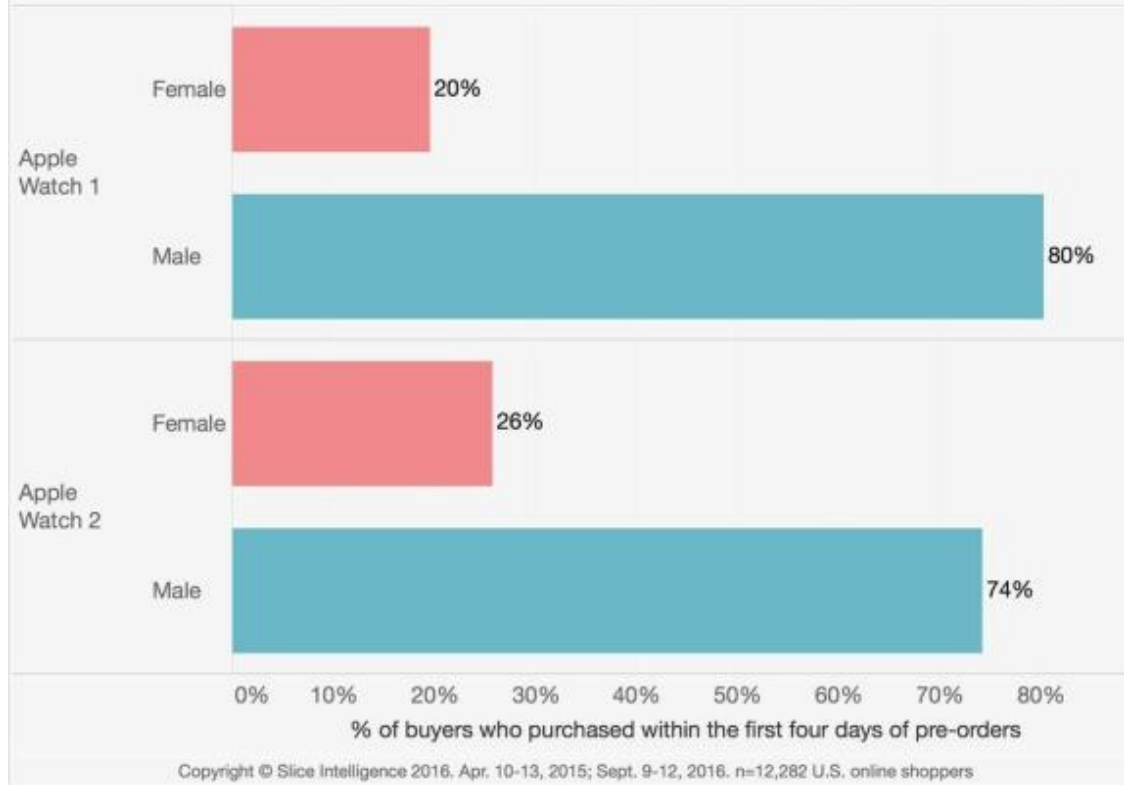
Am I missing it, or does the new iOS 8 Health app not include a period tracker? Seems like a no-brainer addition to me...

1:31 PM - 18 Sep 2014

<https://twitter.com/liftedpixel/status/512700420351750144>

Alongside the Apple Watch Series 2, Apple released iOS 9 which included tracking of menstrual cycles in Healthkit ..

the Apple Watch 2 has been purchased by a higher proportion of females than the original



Definition: Inclusion

“Organisational effort and practices in which different groups or individuals having different backgrounds are culturally and socially accepted and welcomed, and equally treated.”

“Diversity without inclusion is useless”

“Diversity Is Being Invited to the Party;
Inclusion Is Being Asked to Dance”

Definition: (Social) Privilege

“Privilege is to have an advantage that is completely out of your control.”

Without a doubt the visibility and network I build through **open source** has been the **most critical aspect of pushing my career.**

I got into open source by starting my own company where we relied on Linux, Apache, PHP, MySQL as our development stack.

The initial capital I earned working for my uncle over the summer.

My parents helped me by subsidizing my cost of living and were my fallback plan.

Definition: Equity

“The fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups.”

In Switzerland roughly ? % of programmers are female.

In Switzerland roughly 15 % of programmers are female.

<https://www.netzwoche.ch/storys/2019-01-09/so-begeistert-die-schweiz-mehr-frauen-fuer-die-i>

In Switzerland roughly 15 % of programmers are female.

In the US it is roughly ? %

In Switzerland roughly 15 % of programmers are female.

In the US it is roughly 20 %

<https://www.netzwoche.ch/storys/2019-01-09/so-begeistert-die-schweiz-mehr-frauen-fuer-die-i>

<https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat11.htm>

Roughly ? % open source contributors are female.

Roughly 2-10 % open source contributors are female.

“Surprisingly, our results show that women's contributions tend to be accepted more often than men's. However, **women's acceptance rates are higher only when they are not identifiable as women.**”

Programming boot camp for women or speaker trainings for underrepresented groups aim to build equity.

Definition: (Unconscious) Cognitive Bias

“Cases in which human cognition reliably produces representations that are systematically distorted compared to some aspect of objective reality.”

“Cognitive biases are mental shortcuts (known as heuristics) and they actually make a lot of sense: they’re designed to help us survive in the hunter-gatherer sense.”

“Biases rely on our past experiences and ways of applying prior knowledge, particularly in decision making. The more previous success you’ve had in applying that knowledge, the harder it is to imagine alternatives.”

“A mix of people from different backgrounds with unique perspectives **can help** challenge organizational assumptions, **uncover new ways of thinking**, and prevent team members from reaching the same conclusion.”

How to improve?

Educate yourself on the topic.

Consider following specifically people from marginalized communities in your chosen field.

Challenge your cognitive biases.

Believe when members of marginalized communities point out issues with bias even if you have never encountered them.

Ask yourself what a new skills and ideas a new hire brings to the team.

Leave out optional items in job ads.

Consider to review language in job ads.

Work on using inclusive language.

Add your preferred pronouns into your slack and twitter profiles, email signature.

Throttle yourself in discussions.

If someone points out an offensive statement, make an effort to not become defensive.

Listen, learn, move on.

Make sure that contributions are accurately recognized.

Live by the mantra “safe enough to try”
when someone does things differently.

Key takeaways

- Diversity helps understanding customers
- Cognitive biases hurt innovation
- Diversity helps overcome cognitive biases
- Listen, learn, move on
- There are many things we can do
- But it does require effort!

What is your next step to improve Diversity?

Feel free to reach out at
smith@pooeteewet.org or @lsmith on Twitter

For more information about Diversity in Drupal
<https://www.drupaldiversity.com/>