

Webinar 2

Skills for Community-Centered Libraries:

Implicit Bias and Effective Communication

Take and Turn

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# On the Iceberg

Above the waterline of visibility, we find physical characteristics—such as race, age, gender expression, etc. These items above the waterline are what we can observe through looking or listening. They are sometimes but not always, accurately interpreted. People make assumptions based on what they see, but these assumptions are not necessarily true.

Below the waterline of visibility are the things we usually can’t see in others, like education, skills, housing status, wealth, religion etc.

Complete your personal iceberg below, and reflect on the ways you may have experienced misinterpretations or assumptions about who you are, based on visible characteristics only. How might your awareness of your own iceberg help you better serve your library community?

# Your Personal Iceberg



# Take and Turn

## Workshop 2: Effective Communication

First, complete your personal iceberg on page 2. Next, you will need to reflect on one conversation you had in your library. It can be with a library customer or a staff member. It would be best to pick a conversation that is engaging rather than transactional (i.e., not someone asking where the restroom is). This could be small-talk conversation or exchanges during a meeting or program, etc. Reflect on your conversation with this individual. Use the template to guide your reflection.

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| Date of conversation: Who was the conversation with? (Do not need a name, but a few details would be useful):What was the main topic of this conversation?Use the checklist to reflect on best practices for effective speaking and listening. If you used a strategy well and intentionally (that is, you were aware of using the strategy), place a checkmark next to it. Did I consciously….\_\_\_\_\_\_remember to reflect on the notion that we all have individual icebergs and what is below the surface impacts the conversation?\_\_\_\_\_\_use a calm, patient tone?\_\_\_\_\_\_speak in clear, short sentences?\_\_\_\_\_\_make eye contact (when appropriate)? \_\_\_\_\_\_avoid sarcastic comments?\_\_\_\_\_\_ask varied types of questions (open, closed)?\_\_\_\_\_\_present and ready to serve?\_\_\_\_\_\_listen sympathetically?\_\_\_\_\_\_backchannel (nodding, eye contact, facial expressions of reaction)?\_\_\_\_\_\_conclude with a summary statement?\_\_\_\_\_\_demonstrate open body language?Look back at your iceberg on page 2 and the items you placed above and below the surface. Reflect on how your lens and iceberg may have impacted the conversation. What did you notice? Were there any life experiences or personal identifiers that you listed that you think created a lens that was beneficial to this conversation? Why or why not?**Optional**: Share with a trusted coworker or friend/loved one something that you learned about yourself and your communication skills from this activity. That’s it—simply share what you learned and see if you can inspire another person to consider their own communication styles and how their life experiences may impact their interactions. |