



Asset-Based Communications

Making the Shift to Anti-Racist Language

March 25, 2021, 2:00 p.m. ET

The program will be starting shortly



grantmakers ^{for} education

Trish Millines Dziko
Cofounder & Executive
Director
*Technology Access
Foundation*



Cindi Williams
Principal
HCM Strategists
Cofounder
Learning Heroes



Melia LaCour
Founder & Executive
Director
Becoming Justice



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We have an ambitious goal for today

We're going to tackle four components of taxonomy as it relates to being asset-based in our communications.

- Adjectives/Labels
- Tone & Frame
- Associations
- Identifying Race & Ethnicity

What does it mean to be asset-based?



Trabian Shorters, BMe Community

What is hegemony?



Elites not only rule through informal consent, incentives, or even the use of force but rather often through taken-for-granted accepted social conventions or practices that define and constitute what is “natural”, “normal,” and the “way things are” or “should be.” Hegemony, then preconditions a social discourse that allows the powerful and those who use the discourse to blame outsiders and subordinates for their own oppressions and “failings.” It can also lead to those groups blaming themselves for their fates.

Changing the Discourse in Schools
Eugene Eubanks, Ralph Parish, and Dianne Smith



Important Definitions

White Supremacy

“White supremacy is an historically based, institutionally perpetuated ideology in which the ideas, thoughts, and actions of white people are superior to those of Black, Indigenous and People of Color for the purpose of maintaining and defending a system of wealth, power and privilege.” (adapted from racialequitytools.org)



White Savior Complex

The White Savior Complex is rooted in white supremacy and describes the beliefs, mindsets and actions of White people who believe Black, Indigenous and People of Color are inherently flawed and need to be rescued from a world that is set up for them to fail. As a result, White people with such a complex believe they are best suited to “fix” or “save” BIPOC when essentially, their actions are both self-serving and harmful.

Bootstrap Mentality

Based on the myth that success is achieved through self-reliance and self-determination - “pull yourself up by your bootstraps.” This mentality is used to blame BIPOC for the disproportionate rates of poverty and unemployment they experience in the United States when, in reality, these disparities are a direct result of generational and current racist systems, policies and practices intentionally designed to prevent BIPOC from achieving success, regardless of how hard they work.

Deficit vs Asset

Deficit-based Taxonomy



We see a partnership as a way of working together to create the opportunity for individuals to *rely on their power and resources rather than those of others to earn success.*



Asset-based Taxonomy



Yet due to *historical policies* and *structural racism*, far too many children, particularly in low-income *communities of color*, do not get an education that puts them on the path to success.



Deficit vs Asset

Deficit-based Taxonomy

“ Yet among our children, staggering *income-based achievement gaps* persist — especially in urban neighborhoods and rural communities. ”

Asset-based Taxonomy

“ We must confront the sobering fact that, nationally, our *K-12 system* still tolerates a significant *opportunity gap*, which exacerbates downward mobility for too many children, rather than propelling them upwards. ”

Deficit vs Asset

Deficit-based Taxonomy

Working together to level the playing field for our *disadvantaged youth* and children.

Asset-based Taxonomy

The legacy of the systems that [we've inherited] is one of the greatest challenges of our time. All of these -isms that have been calcified in our system—racism, sexism, colonialism—represent the American design dilemma. If we're faced with this American design dilemma where all of that is baked into our system, then the work of equity ... is that we have to re-design the system to liberate us from the aspects of those systems and crack them open so that new energy, new ideas, and new power can flow into the system and be re-designed and re-assembled in our current moment.

What are the words we want to transition away from?

subgroup

at-risk

disadvantaged

achievement gap

minority

cycle of poverty

under or low performing

school to prison pipeline

“those people”

Four Questions to Ask Yourself

- 1 Where is the blame? Underperforming vs historically under-served or the result of a systemic racism embedded in education policy
- 2 Who is the subject of the sentence, the student or the system? Who is the microscope on? Active versus passive voice
- 3 What is this really communicating to parents and students of color? What we say is not what they hear.
- 4 Is this an asset frame? Are we celebrating, elevating vs marginalizing.

Intentions vs Impact:

Communicating Disaggregated Data

Discrimination

“ It talks about homeless students, and the military parents, foster care, ethnic groups, the English language learners, and those with disabilities. That's just discriminating against people and that should have no place in there. ”

Shaming

“ It kind of makes you feel like if your child falls into a 'less group' maybe they're not going to get the education they need. ”

Categorizing

“ When it just says 'Experienced 78%,' I don't understand what that's saying. ”

Stereotyping

“ When I first looked at this I didn't understand what the percent was and if that was good or bad so that statement kind of helped you understand what the whole goal of this page is. ”

Learning Heroes, Annual Parent Survey 2018

Grantmakers for Education's Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

“Diversity, equity and inclusion are key values for Grantmakers for Education. These values allow our board, staff and members to be their best selves and experience the richness of our collective strength. It is through this strength that we increase our individual and organizational capacity to achieve our vision for an inclusive society by supporting an equitable education system.”

“...we hold ourselves accountable in the areas of racial justice and equity through the following actions:

- **Engaging in continual learning.**
- **Challenging our own assumptions about what justice is.**
- **Using our platform to uplift diverse voices and perspectives.**
- **Building a diverse and inclusive GFE team.**
- **Challenging systems of oppression with collective action.”**



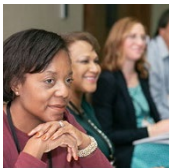
Coming up next...



For video of this webinar (available ~1 week):
bit.ly/GFEpastprograms



April 5 – 8, 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. ET
Grantmakers for Education Annual Conference
Learning Sessions



April 14 – May 19
2021 Education Grantmakers Institute



April 15, 22 and 29, 2:00 p.m. ET
Going Deeper: Big Vision for Racial Justice

bit.ly/GFEprograms