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Do you really want it? Implicit bias toward sugar-sweetened beverages

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The goal of this project is to use the work our team has done over the past two quarters to synthesize our results from data collection and create a poster of our findings to present at the Western Psychological Association Conference (WPA). We have agreed to do this through mutual alliance and adherence to the timeline specified in our team calendar. Additionally, our goal is to use the poster we create to introduce the topic of our research, address our hypotheses, discuss our results, and synthesize them into a collaborative discussion during our poster presentation. Finally, our aim is to use the collaboration between the viewers of our poster and ourselves to discuss the implications of our findings and ways to combat these issues. My team and I will know when this project is completed and successful if at the conclusion of our poster session, we feel that we adequately presented our research and were engaged in thoughtful discussion with attendees throughout the poster session.

This project began at the start of fall quarter 2016 when our team continued previous research that investigated participants’ implicit associations when presented with images of sugar-sweetened beverages. For the next 10 weeks, data was collected while each team member ran participants in the lab for a few hours every week. In mid-November, with the hope of presenting this research at a national conference, we submitted our abstract to WPA. At the beginning of winter quarter we began to run data analysis and synthesize our results. Once we were accepted to present at WPA, we began our poster at the beginning of spring quarter.

Our team consists of three undergraduate students, myself included, and a Psychology based faculty mentor. We realized early in fall quarter that we would most likely have a strong research project by the end of the academic year, so we decided to present at WPA. Therefore, a lot of hard work and preparation has been needed to create a poster that is an accurate and appropriate representation of our research. First off, we needed undergraduate students from University of Washington, Tacoma to participate in our study. We recruited these participants through the use of Sona Systems and extra credit was offered in some psychology classes to those who participated. Once sufficient data was collected, our team and I needed access to Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software to analyze our data. Finally, once our poster was created with the use of PowerPoint, we utilized each other to look over and edit the sections that we completed for the poster. Now, as we prepare for the presentation of our research at WPA, we have been practicing our speech with each other. My team has been a huge resource while helping me prepare for my project. My project will take place at the Western Psychological Convention in Sacramento, California on Saturday April 29th, while my team and I present our research during the morning poster session.

My role in this project will consist of assisting my project members while presenting our poster at WPA. Leading up to our presentation, I was responsible for writing up the abstract in November to be reviewed, I ran participants on specific days for three-six hours a week, and for the creation of our poster, I was responsible for writing up our methods and results section. Now as we prepare for our presentation, we will practice our speeches on one another and assure that each one of us prepared. I am responsible for transporting and keeping track of our poster. Finally, I am responsible for presenting an equal amount of information as my team members.

I plan to use the themes and ideas that were brought up by my mentor during our meetings in order to help me prepare for my project. When discussing the leadership 101 session with my mentor, we discussed how leaders are not necessarily the “top dog” of the project. Instead, leaders can come from all different levels on a team. My mentor discussed the importance of leadership within every level in order to move the team forward and hold each other accountable. I plan to use this discussion to help me with my project because I am not the primary author of our research. This is my first year of research experience whereas my team members have had more experience and have a better understanding of how research works. Therefore, I will use the advice from my mentor and from the leadership 101 workshop to remind myself to be a leader in my own, unique way because I can still contribute to the overall success of our team. In another session we discussed how an individual’s passion about a specific subject can be a driving factor for leadership. Using the passion that one derives from doing research is one way to make your presence known and be able to emphasize why a particular research field is important to them. Leaders can use this passion to inform others of the subject they are researching and why society should know about it.

I also plan to use leadership in response to the workshops I attended because of the leadership that I witnessed by each of the three different presenters. In one workshop, the presenter was focusing on the sexualization of black women in the porn industry. My mentor and I discussed how she used her leadership to address an issue that is highly stigmatized in our society but had very real consequences. Additionally, this presenter was not afraid to be blunt about her findings and present the problems facing the population of porn stars and viewers today. I hope to channel her courage when researching something that is stigmatized but has tremendous negative impacts on black women and the people that view this porn. Another workshop that I attended included a professor discussing the myths around accurate eyewitness identification. My mentor described how he seemed to use leadership to challenge incorrect statements that are circulating in media today. In his research, the presenter decided to test each of these myths, such as “the high percentage of wrongful convictions”, and determine which of these were true and which were false. In my project, we discuss people’s implicit and explicit bias toward sugar-sweetened beverages. Previously, a lot of people that I have talked with about this subject have regarded it as something that does not exist. People claim to say that we simply eat what we eat and that’s it. I hope to use this presenter’s blunt approach to reject these claims professionally with the evidence we have collected.

Finally, using the discussion my mentor and I had regarding my attendance to a conference in Seattle, I plan to use my appreciation of the diverse fields of psychology when presenting my project. I think that acknowledging the differences in interest within Psychology is important when presenting at a poster session because there will be many different topics covered. Therefore, I will use my leadership to inform others of our interesting field of research, appreciate people that come from other fields of research, and answer any questions that they have.

From here on out, my team and I will prepare our speeches and have them ready to practice by Monday, April 24th. From then until Saturday, April 29th, we will continue to practice our 5 minute elevator speech, memorize the details of our hypotheses, and be able to interpret our results without relying on looking our poster. Each person will be responsible for doing this and it is mutually understood that we all need to equally participate and talk during this session.

In conclusion, my definition of leadership is expression through passion, values, and authenticity to lead yourself and others to a far reaching goal. Leadership can be done by a variety of individuals and their degree of leadership will change over time. I will demonstrate this leadership during my project to push myself and my teammates to create the best presentation that we can. I will also encourage them to appreciate difficult questions and concerns raised by the viewers of our poster. These will force us to grow and think outside of the box. I am not the primary person of this group but I will work hard to be a fundamental leader of our team.