

Cultural Competency in the Law

Resource 41

The Committee on Diversity in the Legal Profession commends our State Bar's mentors and new lawyers for taking the time to address this very important issue. When lawyers keep diversity as one of the foremost considerations, our legal system benefits persons of all backgrounds and public trust in the legal system is enhanced.

To aid your conversations related to cultural competency, the Committee has compiled the resources listed below. While these resources may be employed in a one mentor-one new lawyer pairing, we believe group discussions which include experienced and diverse attorneys will be more satisfying and beneficial. Contact BTG program staff for a list of mentors and new lawyers who may be available for group discussions and/or attend the Committee on Diversity in the Legal Profession's annual CLE program together.

The Committee strongly recommends that mentors and new lawyers independently take the Implicit Association Test (#3). When both individuals have completed the test, schedule a session to discuss your experience taking the test, what you learned from the test, and how the test and its results relate to the practice of law.

1. ABA Section of Litigation VIDEO about the Neuroscience of Implicit Bias:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kzz5Ae-Jq0s,,h>
2. ABA Section of Litigation Implicit Bias toolbox:
<http://www.americanbar.org/groups/litigation/initiatives/task-force-implicit-bias/implicit-bias-toolbox.html>
3. Implicit Association Test: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/education.html>
4. Negowetti, Nicole. Navigating the Pitfalls of Implicit Bias: A Cognitive Science Primer for Civil Litigators, 4 St. Mary's Journal on Legal & Malpractice Ethics. 278 (2014).
5. Miller, Nelson P. Beyond Bias: Cultural Competence as a Lawyer Skill. Michigan Bar Journal, June 2008.
6. Vraa, Mike. How to Represent a Diverse Clientele, Lawyerist.com (2016)
<https://lawyerist.com/79648/represent-diverse-clients/>