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# UNCOVERING TALENT: A NEW MODEL OF INCLUSION

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## RECOVERING THE IDEAL OF INCLUSION

Nearly every **Fortune 500** company has a **Diversity and Inclusion Officer** and programs focused on the needs of a diverse workforce. Despite this, only:



0.8% of Fortune 500 CEOs are Black



4.8% of Fortune 500 CEOs are women



0.4% of Fortune 500 CEOs are openly gay

**Hypothesis:** We may be forcing people to choose between diversity OR inclusion rather than diversity AND inclusion

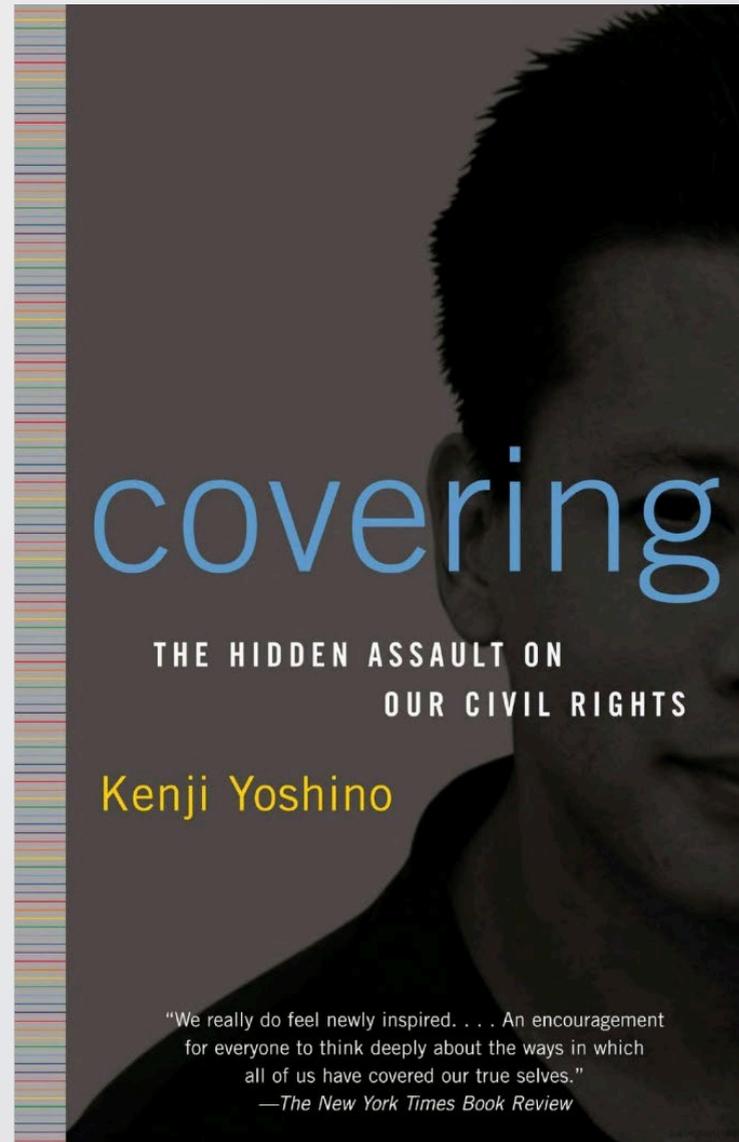


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# THE CONCEPT OF COVERING



# COVERING



Covering is a strategy through which an individual downplays a *known* stigmatized identity to blend into the mainstream.



# THE CONCEPT OF COVERING

## APPEARANCE



**Appearance-based** covering concerns how individuals alter their self-presentation (grooming, attire, and mannerisms) to blend into the mainstream. *A person might use a cane rather than a wheelchair to decrease the visibility of his motor-function disability.*

## ADVOCACY



**Advocacy-based** covering concerns how much individuals avoid “sticking up for” their group. *A veteran might refrain from challenging a joke about the military lest he be seen as overly strident.*

## AFFILIATION



**Affiliation-based** covering concerns how individuals avoid behaviors widely associated with their identity, often to negate stereotypes about that identity. *A woman might avoid talking about being a mother because she does not want her colleagues to think she is less committed to work.*

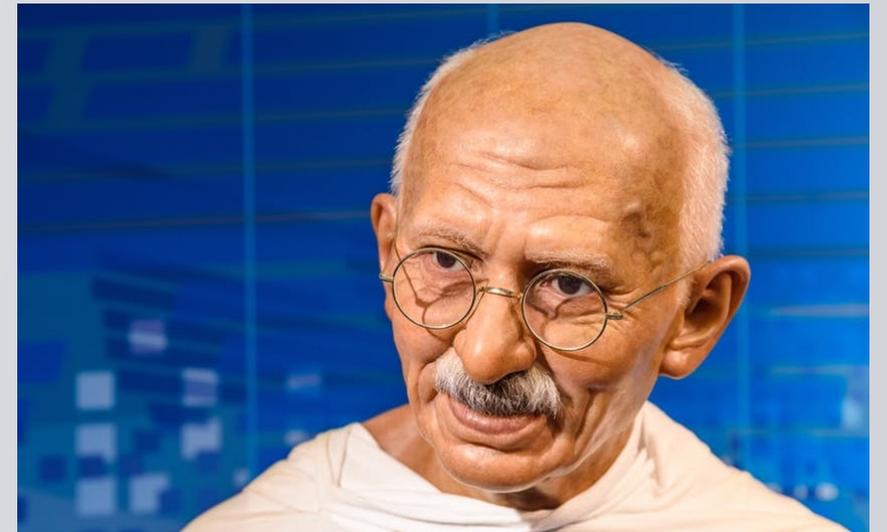
## ASSOCIATION



**Association-based** covering concerns how individuals avoid contact with other group members. *A gay person might refrain from bringing his same-sex partner to a work function so as not to be seen as “too gay.”*

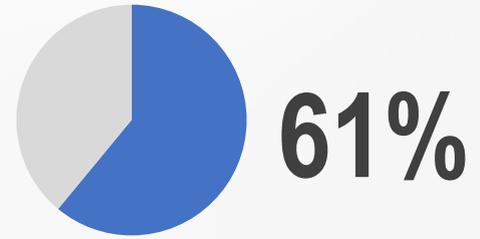


# COVERING EXAMPLES

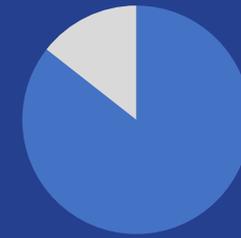




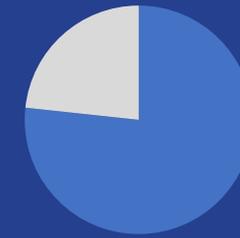
# COVERING AT WORK: INCIDENCE



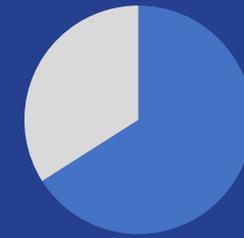
report covering  
**ON AT LEAST**  
one axis



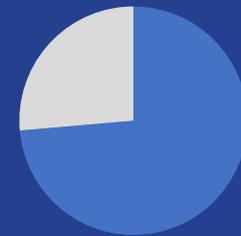
LGBT  
individuals



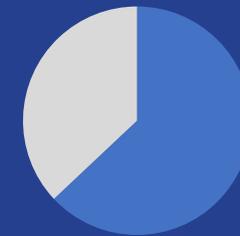
Blacks



women



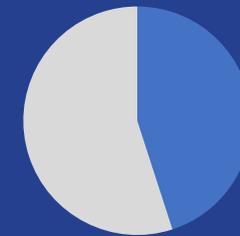
multicultural  
women



Hispanics/  
Women



Asians



straight, White  
men



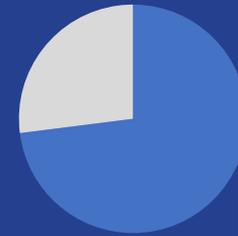
# COVERING AT WORK: IMPACT

## IMPACT ON INDIVIDUALS



**61%**

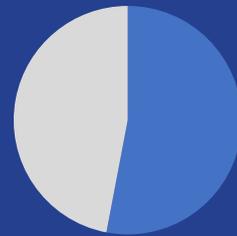
% of employees who report covering



**60-73%**

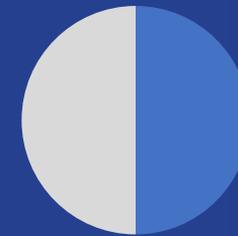
% who say covering is somewhat to extremely detrimental to their sense of self

## IMPACT ON ORGANIZATIONS



**53%**

% who state that their leaders expect employees to cover



**50%**

Of those, % who said this expectation by leaders somewhat to extremely diminished their sense of commitment to the organization

Covering demands

Culture of conformity

Diminished commitment

Weaker performance





# REVERSING THE SPIN

## PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

A “shared belief held by members of a team that the team is safe for interpersonal risk-taking” and “a team climate characterized by interpersonal trust and mutual respect in which people are comfortable being themselves.”



In a Google study, teams with high psychological safety outperformed peers<sup>1</sup>



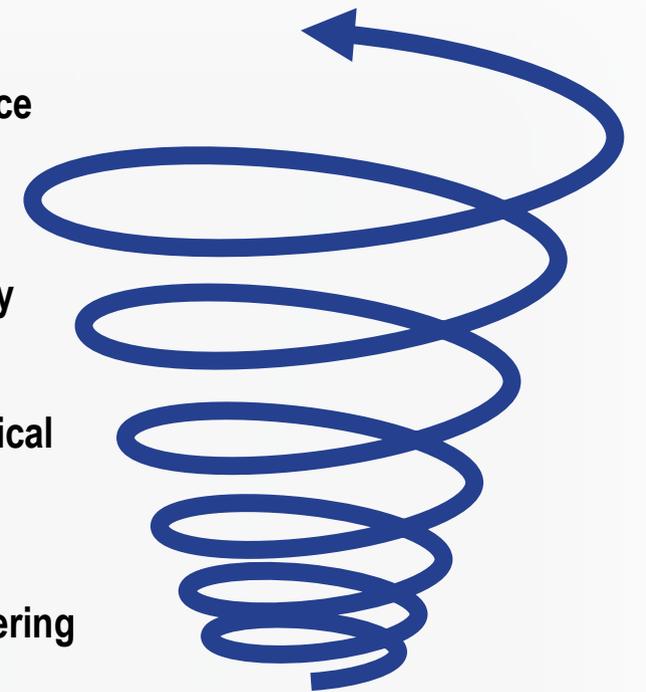
According to MIT research, social sensitivity is correlated with team performance<sup>2</sup>

Better Performance

Greater authenticity

Psychological safety

Fewer covering demands



<sup>1</sup> What Google Learned From Its Quest to Build the Perfect Team; New York Times, CHARLES DUHIGG, FEB. 25, 2016

<sup>2</sup> Evidence for a Collective Intelligence Factor in the Performance of Human Groups; ANITA WILLIAMS WOOLLEY, CHRISTOPHER F. CHABRIS, ALEX PENTLAND, NADA HASHMI, THOMAS W. MALONE; SCIENCE; 29 OCT 2010 : 686-688



## SOME CHALLENGES



Are all forms of covering bad?



If not, how do we distinguish between the good and bad forms?



Can you give me an example?

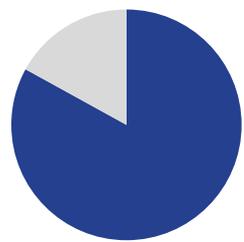


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# SEXUAL ORIENTATION



## COVERING AT WORK



**83%**  
OF LGBT  
INDIVIDUALS cover  
on at least one axis

| AXIS                                                                                             | COVERING EXAMPLES (LGBT Individuals)                                                                                                              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  APPEARANCE    | “I don’t wear clothes that would appear <b>TOO GAY.</b> ”                                                                                         |
|  AFFILIATION   | “[I have] <b>NO PICTURES OF MY PARTNER</b> in the office, [and leave] off <b>PERSONAL PRONOUNS</b> in discussion.”                                |
|  ADVOCACY    | “ <b>I DIDN’T FEEL I COULD PROTEST</b> when the person put in charge of diversity for our group was in fact an <b>EXTREMELY VOCAL HOMOPHOB.</b> ” |
|  ASSOCIATION | “I never bring a <b>+1 TO WORK EVENTS.</b> I also try to avoid mentoring or <b>SPONSORING ONLY PEOPLE OF COLOR OR LGBT.</b> ”                     |

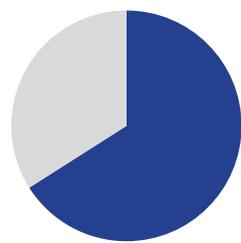


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# GENDER



## COVERING AT WORK



**66%**  
OF WOMEN  
cover on at  
least one axis

| AXIS                                                                                             | COVERING EXAMPLES (Women)                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  APPEARANCE    | "I wear clothes to <b>APPEAR MORE MASCULINE, MODEL MALE BEHAVIOR</b> to break down barriers to success, go to places that <b>MEN LIKE TO GO</b> to be part of my group at work, [and] <b>DOWNPLAY MY INTEREST IN FEMININE THINGS.</b> " |
|  AFFILIATION   | "As a woman and working mother I have gone overboard to show my commitment to my job. I <b>PRETEND THAT BEING A MOTHER IS NO BIG DEAL</b> and does not take up much of my time to <b>PROVE THAT I HAVE MORE TIME TO WORK.</b> "         |
|  ADVOCACY    | "I <b>NEVER SUGGEST GENDER IS AN ISSUE</b> and do not bring up <b>GENDER BIAS AS A FACTOR</b> when considering applicants, even when it might be present."                                                                              |
|  ASSOCIATION | "I <b>HAVEN'T JOINED THE WOMEN'S NETWORK</b> because I perceive that is it is a better idea to make it without <b>UNDUE EMPHASIS ON GENDER.</b> "                                                                                       |

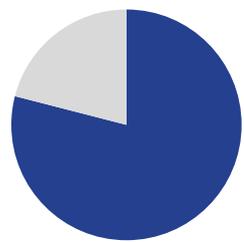


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# RACE/ETHNICITY



## COVERING AT WORK

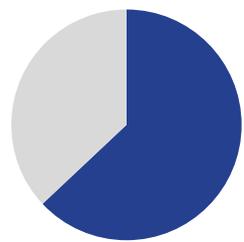


**79%**  
OF BLACKS  
cover on at  
least one axis

| AXIS                                                                                             | COVERING EXAMPLES (Blacks)                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  APPEARANCE    | “It was so <b>UNCOMFORTABLE WEARING MY NATURAL HAIR</b> to work that I resorted to wearing weaves which were very costly and did more damage to my hair.”                                                                                       |
|  AFFILIATION   | “There is a <b>PERCEPTION HERE THAT ‘BLACKS CANNOT CUT IT IN</b> [my department] . . . we go overboard to disprove this notion. We work very long hours, take less time off and give <b>200% JUST TO PROVE THAT WE ARE MORE THAN CAPABLE.</b> ” |
|  ADVOCACY    | “Too often when we speak up we are seen as ‘having an attitude’ or <b>HAVING A CHIP ON OUR SHOULDERS.</b> ”                                                                                                                                     |
|  ASSOCIATION | “I make a concerted effort <b>NOT TO BE SEEN AROUND OTHER AFRICAN AMERICAN</b> professionals in order to avoid some of the labels I’ve seen placed on other individuals.”                                                                       |



## COVERING AT WORK

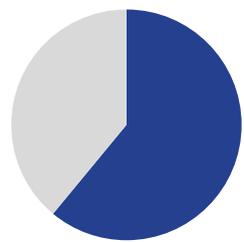


**63%**  
OF LATINOS  
cover on at  
least one axis

| AXIS                                                                                             | COVERING EXAMPLES (Latinos)                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  APPEARANCE    | "I avoid <b>'ETHNIC WEAR.'</b> "                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|  AFFILIATION   | "Hispanics are known for big families... I don't go about <b>TALKING OPENLY ABOUT MY 6 BROTHERS AND SISTERS.</b> I feel there is an assumption of my parents not being educated . . . Or that my parents were poor." |
|  ADVOCACY    | "There are times where people crack jokes about being on <b>'HISPANIC' TIME</b> and I go with it so I don't seem like a drag."                                                                                       |
|  ASSOCIATION | "I don't want to be <b>ASSOCIATED ONLY WITH PEOPLE WHO HAVE MY SAME ETHNICITY</b> because it is restrictive to generating relationships with people who don't share it."                                             |



## COVERING AT WORK

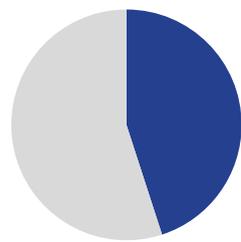


**61%**  
OF ASIANS  
cover on at  
least one axis

| AXIS                                                                                             | COVERING EXAMPLES (Asians)                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  APPEARANCE    | “To <b>OVERCOME THE ASIAN STEREOTYPE</b> , I do my best to speak up, speak clearly, and carry myself in a <b>CONFIDENT MANNER</b> .”                          |
|  AFFILIATION   | “I try to <b>STAY AWAY</b> from work that is stereotypical of Asian[s] (e.g., math).”                                                                         |
|  ADVOCACY    | “I believe that organizations <b>CAN DO MORE TO PUT MINORITIES IN POSITIONS</b> of power but I would <b>NOT BE AN ACTIVE MEMBER</b> of such advocacy groups.” |
|  ASSOCIATION | “I try to <b>SOCIALIZE WITH NON-ASIANS</b> or I get self-conscious that others will think I <b>ONLY SOCIALIZE WITH ASIANS</b> ”                               |



## COVERING AT WORK



**45%**  
OF STRAIGHT  
WHITE MEN cover  
on at least one axis

| AXIS                                                                                             | COVERING EXAMPLES (Straight White Men)                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  APPEARANCE    | "I color my hair <b>TO HIDE GRAY HAIR AND LOOK YOUNGER.</b> "                                                                                                                                                          |
|  AFFILIATION   | "I <b>AVOID ANY REFERENCES OR HINTS TO [MY MENTAL ILLNESS]</b> , and carefully cover any consequences of it in my work interactions... [E]veryone immediately attributes behaviors to the illness, not to the person." |
|  ADVOCACY    | "I'm a <b>CONSERVATIVE CHRISTIAN</b> and feel strongly that... it would be <b>DETRIMENTAL TO MY CAREER TO MAKE MY OPINIONS KNOWN.</b> "                                                                                |
|  ASSOCIATION | [ <b>NO QUALITATIVE RESPONSES</b> pertaining to association-based covering.]                                                                                                                                           |



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# TAKEAWAYS



# STRATEGIES FOR UNCOVERING TALENT

Rather than attempting to de-bias individuals one by one, the next build in diversity and inclusion will center on these three strategies:

