should you provide training?

a tool by **QUAKE LAB** & **OLIP** OTTAWA LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP

contents

Setting the stage

should you provide training?

how did we get here?

When faced with the robust intricacies of systemic inequity, a lack of inclusion, and clear issues of diversity within our organizations and places of work - **it can be easy to assume that if we had the best information possible, people would make better decisions and create more equitable outcomes**. This belief can lead to organizations asking for training. As organizations that are focused on **service provision** we want to ensure that your limited resources and are being dedicated most effectively t those that need it the most.

how to use this tool

This tool should be used to map out your organizations' responses to embedding equity work into your strategic operations and DEI planning that directly impact your service delivery. It is at Phase 3 and 4 of the service planning and delivery lifecycle.

It allows for you to pause and engage with the goals behind employing unconscious bias training, and look for the most effective solution.

service planning and delivery lifecycle

PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3	PHASE 4	PHASE 5	PHASE 6
Identify problem	Needs articulated	Program + service + offering developed	Program + service + offering made available	Feedback collected + success measured	Iteration + go back to phase I
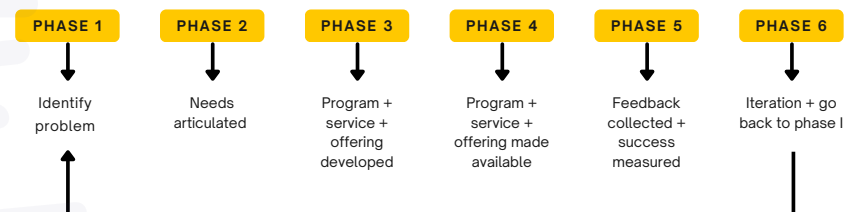
legend

Pay attention to text in boxes that look like this.
They will help you identify what types of training would be useful in responding to various scenarios.

The start of your decision journey on each page.
Follow the yes/ no prompts or arrows from these boxes.

Important first steps and best practices.

Questions that will prompt a yes or no response. Follow the yes/no boxes to the next action.

Action items.

Page directives - follow to prompt to go to the next page or a specific page for more information.

What do we mean when we say training?

"Training" has become shorthand for **unconscious bias training** or any training that is focused on **behavioral change.** The goal of this type of training is to inform the recipients of the training of the oppression that exists within the world and hopefully through awareness, individuals change how they interact with equity deserving people who have been historically/presently marginalized.

what problem

ARE YOU TRYING TO SOLVE?

DIVERSITY

I'm trying to solve issues of diversity within my organization

Pages 8 -10

HARM

I'm trying to respond to instances of hurt or harm

Pages 11- 16

COMMITMENTS

I'm trying to follow through on commitments made to the community or our clients

Pages 17-22

KNOWLEDGE

I'm not solving a problem. But, I'm trying to ensure that my staff are more culturally conscious

Page 23-27

I'M TRYING TO SOLVE ISSUES OF

diversity

I'M TRYING TO SOLVE ISSUES OF DIVERSITY WITHIN MY ORGANIZATION

If you are hoping to shift the demographics of your organization, then you need to know:

- **Whether or not your organization's current practices create an unsafe and/or unsupported environment for racialized employees.**
- **What method of data collection you will use to track your organization's demographics over time**
- **What barriers exist for racialized people that have led to a lack of diversity within your organization**
- **What the demographic makeup of your organization is across leadership, organizational positions, service delivery and service use**

None of this information is best gathered through unconscious bias training

NEXT PAGE

I'M TRYING TO SOLVE ISSUES OF DIVERSITY WITHIN MY ORGANIZATION

What is the demographic makeup of your organization is across leadership, organizational positions, service delivery and service use
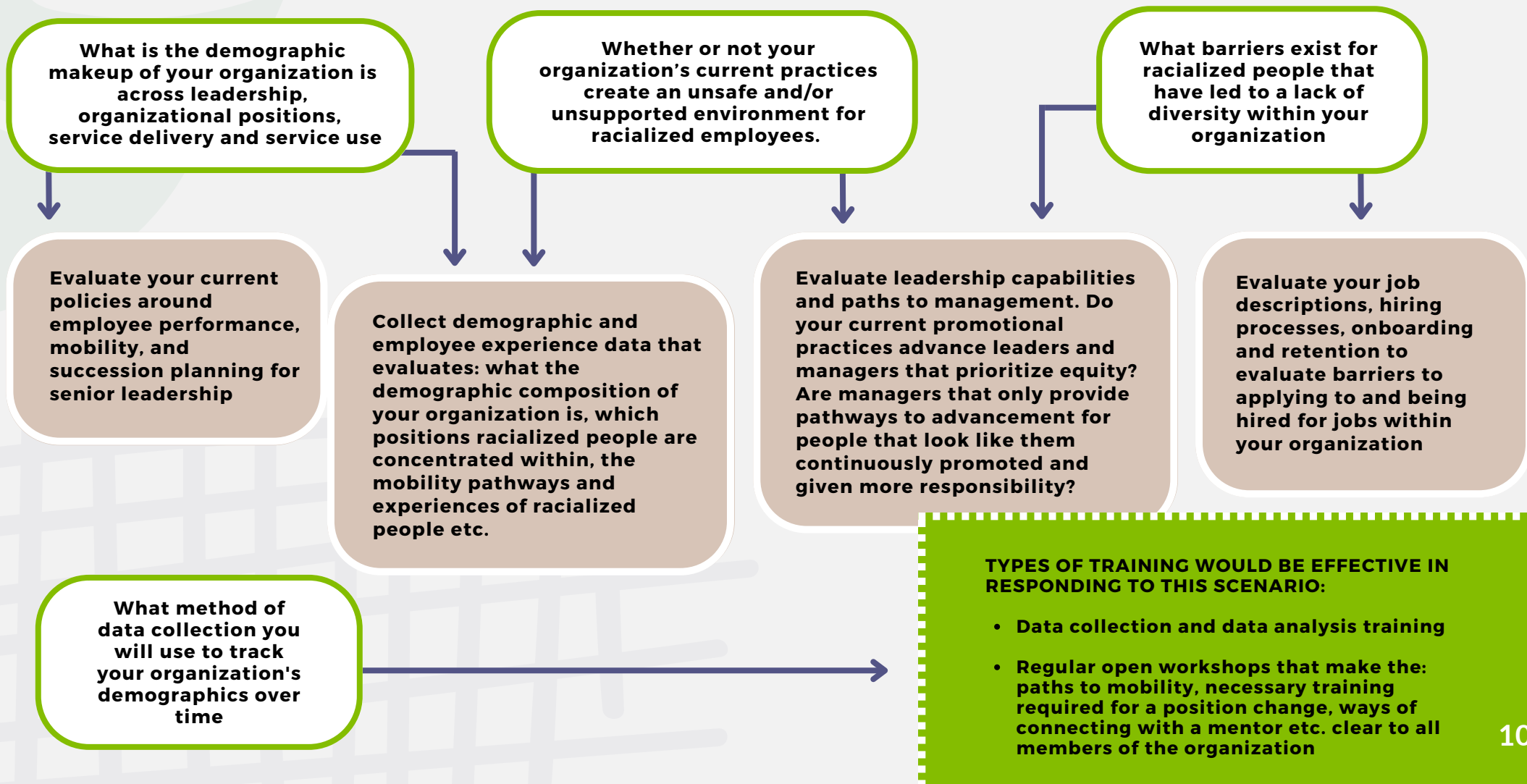
Whether or not your organization's current practices create an unsafe and/or unsupported environment for racialized employees.

What barriers exist for racialized people that have led to a lack of diversity within your organization

Evaluate your current policies around employee performance, mobility, and succession planning for senior leadership

Collect demographic and employee experience data that evaluates: what the demographic composition of your organization is, which positions racialized people are concentrated within, the mobility pathways and experiences of racialized people etc.

Evaluate leadership capabilities and paths to management. Do your current promotional practices advance leaders and managers that prioritize equity? Are managers that only provide pathways to advancement for people that look like them continuously promoted and given more responsibility?

Evaluate your job descriptions, hiring processes, onboarding and retention to evaluate barriers to applying to and being hired for jobs within your organization

What method of data collection you will use to track your organization's demographics over time

TYPES OF TRAINING WOULD BE EFFECTIVE IN RESPONDING TO THIS SCENARIO:

- **Data collection and data analysis training**

- **Regular open workshops that make the: paths to mobility, necessary training required for a position change, ways of connecting with a mentor etc. clear to all members of the organization**

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I'M TRYING TO RESPOND TO INSTANCES OF HURT OR

harm

I'M TRYING TO RESPOND TO INSTANCES OF HURT OR HARM

The harm was experienced by an individual staff member

OR

The harm was experienced by multiple members of the staff

Have the members of the staff been given the resources they need to feel safe, secure, and supported in the organization following this instance?
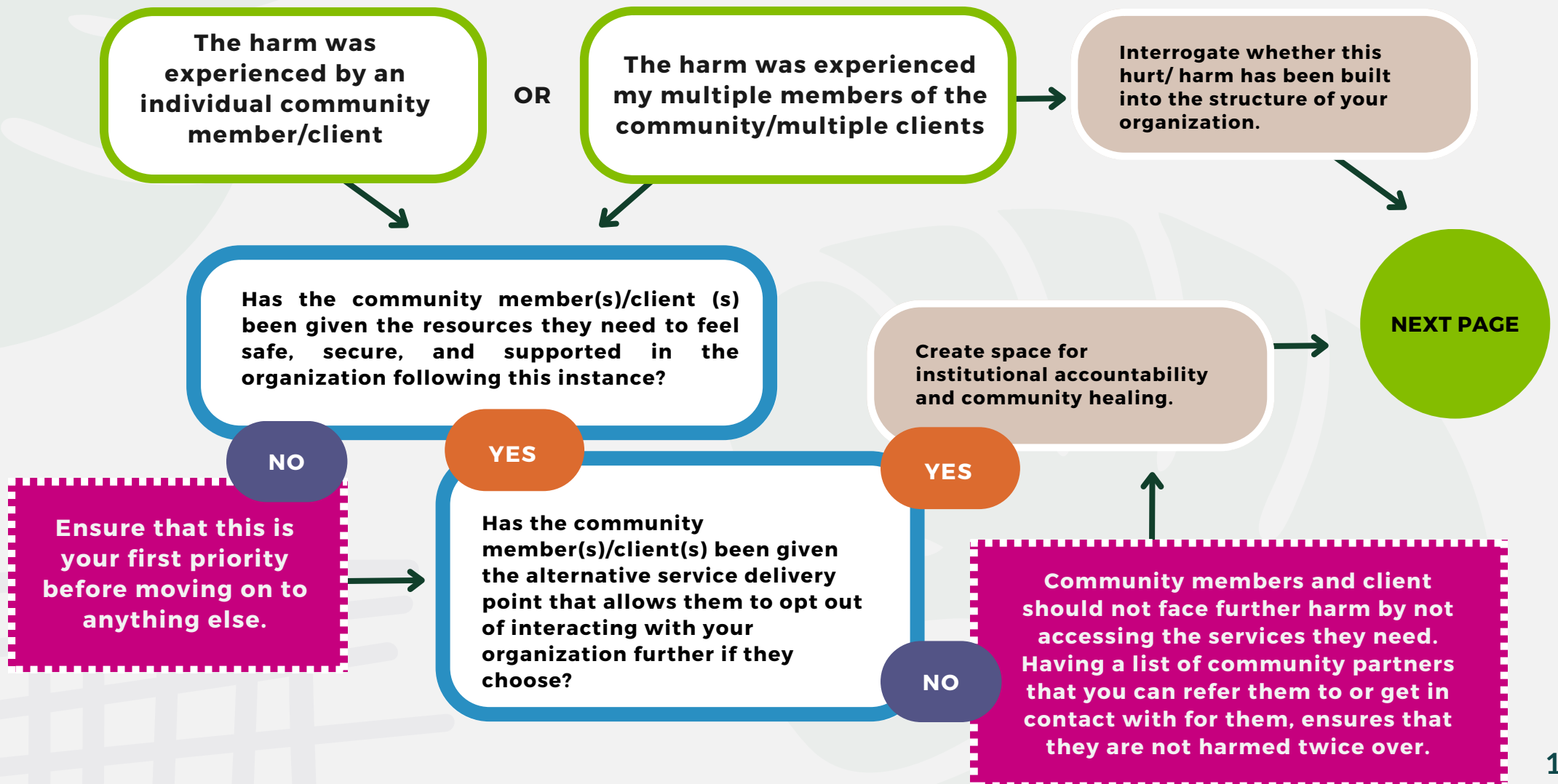
NO

YES

Ensure that this is your first priority before moving on to anything else.

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I'M TRYING TO RESPOND TO INSTANCES OF HURT OR HARM

The harm was experienced by an individual community member/client

OR

The harm was experienced my multiple members of the community/multiple clients

Interrogate whether this hurt/ harm has been built into the structure of your organization.

Has the community member(s)/client (s) been given the resources they need to feel safe, secure, and supported in the organization following this instance?

NO

Ensure that this is your first priority before moving on to anything else.

YES

Has the community member(s)/client(s) been given the alternative service delivery point that allows them to opt out of interacting with your organization further if they choose?

YES

Create space for institutional accountability and community healing.

NO

Community members and client should not face further harm by not accessing the services they need. Having a list of community partners that you can refer them to or get in contact with for them, ensures that they are not harmed twice over.

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I'M TRYING TO RESPOND TO INSTANCES OF HURT OR HARM

Interrogate whether this hurt/ harm has been built into the structure of your organization.

Knowing the history of your organization, your industry, and the way it interacts with the community it serves can help you with this inquiry. Repeated instances of the SAME type of hurt and harm occurring within an organization indicates a structure that either supports or directly benefits from harm occurring.

Create space for institutional accountability and community healing WITHOUT using a lack of feedback or consultation as a reason to halt action

Draw on secondary research, existing first hand accounts of similar harm, and literature from the impacted group to create a space for learning that does not depend on over consulting the community that has already voiced their concerns

What practices or policies enabled the harm to occur? Are they still in place? Not sure what we mean by that? Go to page the...

NEXT PAGE

WHAT PRACTICES OR POLICIES ENABLED THE HARM TO OCCUR? ARE THEY STILL IN PLACE?

This question is important to ask because it allows for us to remember that harm and hurt that are informed by large systems of oppression (ie. racism, anti-Blackness, ableism, Islamophobia, fatphobia, colorism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia etc.) do not require anyone in the room to be deliberately acting with harmful intentions to thrive. They have been built into the structures of our industries and organizations long before many of us took our positions and are often assumed to be helpful or at the very least - neutral.

WHEN HURT OR HARM OCCURS WITHIN YOUR ORGANIZATIONS' ASK:

- What supports should have been available that weren't in place when the incident occurred
  → Then make a targeted effort to put them in place before a similar incident occurs again
- What changes need to be made to organizational policies to ensure that this incident isn't repeated?
- Who benefits most from inaction in response to this incident? Who is likely to be harmed by it occurring again?

I'M TRYING TO RESPOND TO INSTANCES OF HURT OR HARM THROUGH EDUCATION

REMEMBER: Focusing an organization's finite resources on "educating" an individual invests the most amount of energy and support into the person that holds the most power within the dynamic and assumes that the instance of hurt/harm occurred because the person didn't know better.

By responding to these instances with organizational accountability instead of individual self improvement, we ensure that the same harms and hurts are not occur repeatedly and we ensure that the person who needs support is prioritized

IF: The harm or hurt occurred specifically because a lack of knowledge, the information necessary to not replicate the action should be given to all members of the organization along with the organization's understanding of the changes it needs to make

This information should not be delivered through group training sessions that singles out, spotlights, retraumatizes, or mines trauma from equity deserving members of your organization.
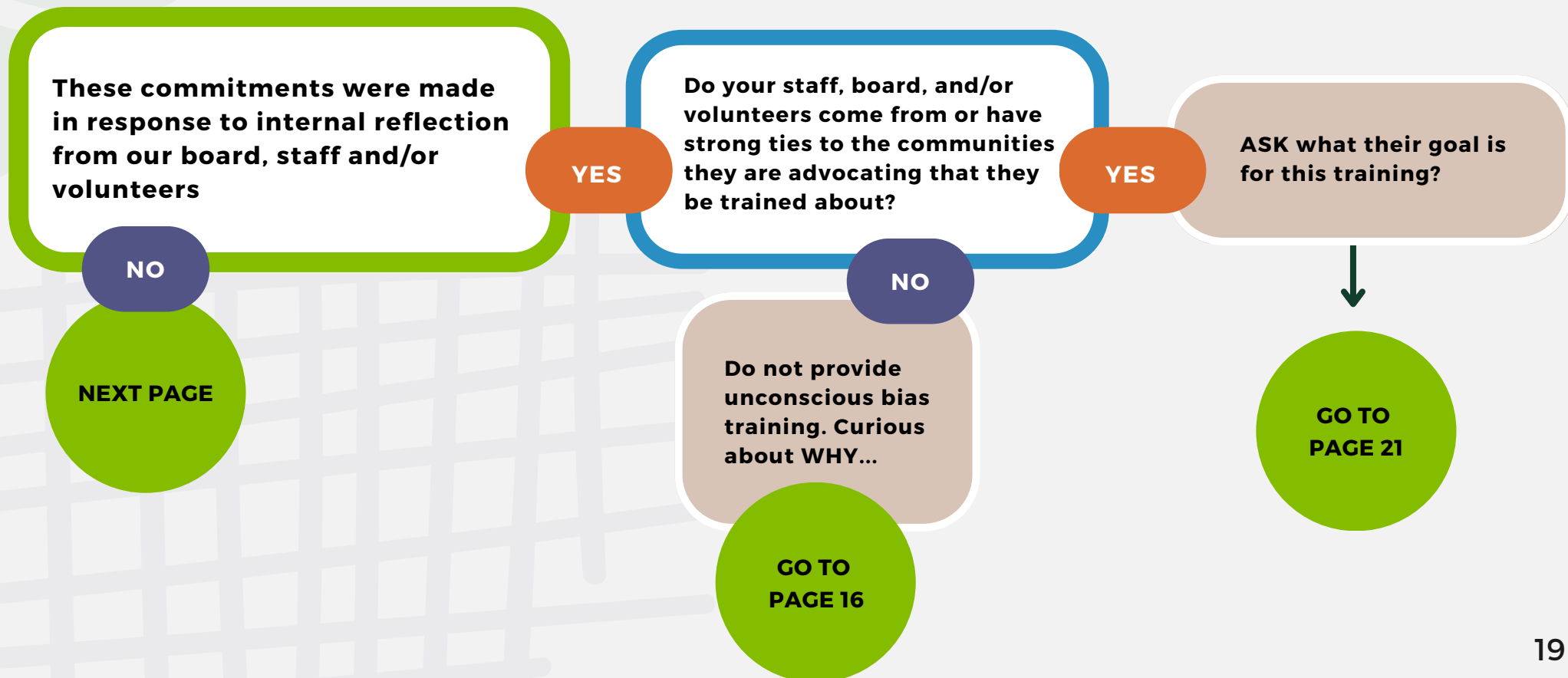
I'M TRYING TO FOLLOW THROUGH ON

commitments

I'M TRYING TO FOLLOW THROUGH ON COMMITMENTS MADE TO THE COMMUNITY OR OUR CLIENTS

These commitments were made during the Summer of 2020 or directly in response to uprisings and calls for justice by Black and other racialized communities during this time period

YES

When these commitments were made, was it directly responding to a call from community members or those advocating for structural and systemic change to deliver this training?

YES

CONSIDER, what issues are endemic to your organizational culture that have led community members to believe that you are in need of education around racial issues and bias?

NO

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NO

CONSIDER, why then, was the response to large scale overhauls of a system met by unconscious bias training. How can you as an organization refocus your resources and efforts to better meet the calls for justice and accountability?

GO TO PG

I'M TRYING TO FOLLOW THROUGH ON COMMITMENTS MADE TO THE COMMUNITY OR OUR CLIENTS

These commitments were made in response to internal reflection from our board, staff and/or volunteers

YES

NO

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Do your staff, board, and/or volunteers come from or have strong ties to the communities they are advocating that they be trained about?

YES

NO

Do not provide unconscious bias training. Curious about WHY...

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ASK what their goal is for this training?

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I'M TRYING TO FOLLOW THROUGH ON COMMITMENTS MADE TO THE COMMUNITY OR OUR CLIENTS

These commitments were made in response to a community consultation process

NO

YES

Did community members specifically ask for staff to do unconscious bias training?

NO

YES

CONSIDER, what issues are endemic to your organizational culture that have led community members to believe that you are in need of education around racial issues and bias?

CONSIDER what they actually asked for and why training was assumed to be the best solution?

Invest resources into a structural audit of your organization to see where inequity and harm lives within your organizational practices and procedures

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OUR ORGANISATION NEEDS A SHIFT IN BEHAVIORAL CHANGE

If you need behavioral change because clients/community members/staff/volunteers or board members have witnessed your organizational culture being one that is actively harmful to equity deserving people. Consider that single sessions of unconscious bias training or even yearly sessions, do not actually result in behavioral change.

Think about how the resources being put towards these trainings can be better allocated towards: serving the members of the community, building partnerships with and the capacity of organizations that racialized communities trust or providing access to a database of information for your staff that focuses on continual and ongoing learning.

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HOW TO FOCUS YOUR LEARNING

Research the historical and present day instances of harm and policies designed to exclude Black, Indigenous and racialized people from the industry or service you provide. Get specific and get uncomfortable. Instead of focusing on isms and checking your biases at a surface level - investigate how you're industry, institution, and training have embedded bias and harm into your service delivery

TYPES OF TRAINING WOULD BE EFFECTIVE IN RESPONDING TO THIS SCENARIO:

- **Intensive historical investigation of your industry's anti-Black, anti-Indigenous and racist practices that have created distrust from these communities**
- **This learning should be asynchronous with optional spaces for discussion that don't force racialized members of your staff to witness their coworkers discovering racial injustices for the first time**
- **Workshops with your service delivery teams and decision makers (one a baseline of historical institutional understanding has been built) that are focused on dismantling and counteracting the historical and present systems that have created harm and distrust**

I'M TRYING TO ENSURE THAT MY STAFF IS

culturally conscious

YOU MIGHT HAVE A PROBLEM

We have a very diverse team, however sometimes it doesn't appear to be diverse because our senior leadership is very homogenous

NO, WE DON'T SEE THIS AT OUR ORGANIZATION

NEXT PAGE

This is an issue of representation and diversity. Having all of the Black, Indigenous or racialized people at your organization concentrated in junior or frontline positions means that they are facing the brunt of the institutional decisions with little or no organizational decision making power.

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YOU MIGHT HAVE A PROBLEM

There have been no formal complaints, but sometimes members of our team make racially insensitive jokes or comments that everyone laughs at. However, I notice that in these moments certain members of our team get particularly quiet or withdrawn. However, they bounce right back!

NO, WE DON'T SEE THIS AT OUR ORGANIZATION

NEXT PAGE

This is an issue of company culture and a prioritization of certain people's safety and comfort over others. It's important to recognize that people from equity deserving groups are often accustomed to wading through a lot of microaggressions before they say something because their concerns are met with responses that further hurt or harm them - like minimizing their experiences, fragility from those that harmed them, or retraumatizing and uncomfortable unconscious bias training sessions.

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YOU MIGHT HAVE A PROBLEM

Some of our clients can make our staff with marginalized identities uncomfortable because they will say or do things that are harmful or insensitive.

However, whenever it happens we make sure to let our staff know that this is a safe space for them and that we do not condone the remarks or behavior. But, we are in a difficult position because they require our services.

NO, WE DON'T SEE THIS AT OUR ORGANIZATION

NEXT PAGE

This is a problem, and the solution is one that requires a lot of nuance.

- We never advocate for barring people from necessary services. BUT there should be other members of your team that can relieve a person if they are receiving pointed attacks at their place of work.

- If this is an ongoing issue, there should be institutional responses that prioritize the emotional and mental wellbeing of your staff. IE. Additional funding for therapy and healing practices, longer gaps between shifts

- If the problem is pervasive there should be efforts made to allow for service delivery without the person causing harm coming in direct contact with staff

MOVING FORWARD

CONSIDER whether your staff need to be more culturally conscious or if it's time to do the difficult work of dismantling systemic injustice from your organization. If your staff isn't being harmful, then unconscious bias training will do little more than make your organization feel good about itself for how much you already know

- Invest in modes of open communication and ongoing feedback from community members so that they can tell you what they need as they need it - not just when you are going through a consultation process

- invest in modes of open communication and ongoing feedback from community members so that they can tell you what they need as they need it - not just when you are going through a consultation process

- Put resources towards structural audit of your organization to see where inequity lives within your organizational practices and procedures

- Consider that the resources being put towards these trainings can be better allocated towards: serving the members of the community, building partnerships with and the capacity of organizations that racialized communities trust or providing access to a database of information for your staff that focuses on continual and ongoing learning