Negotiating Workplace Equality: A Systemic Approach

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Abstract

Negotiations can operate as powerful engines of inequality, often because of the institutional and social context placing women and people of color at a systemic disadvantage. Yet, negotiation literature and practice has paid little attention to the question of how to reshape the context within which negotiations proceed. This article provides an approach for connecting individual level negotiations with institutional interventions that reshape the context for those negotiations, so that women and people of color can fully and fairly participate in the interactions and decisions so crucial to their advancement. It first lays out the systemic underpinnings of negotiated inequality, identifying structural disparities in information, networks, cognitive frames, and ground rules. It then identifies the role of organizational catalysts in reshaping the contours within which negotiations occur, and learning from the successes and failures of negotiations aggregated over time and place. Finally, it identifies a set of strategies for tackling the systemic underpinnings of inequality in the negotiation process, including (1) critical reframing through root cause analysis, (2) generating and mobilizing information, (3) developing social capital needed for effective negotiation, (4) creating and connecting opportunity networks, and (5) developing constituencies of accountability.

It is now well understood that negotiations can operate as powerful engines of inequality at work. Recent work shows that women and people of color frequently operate at a disadvantage in the negotiation process and fare worse in the results (Ayres, 1991; Kolb & Williams, 2000; Wilkins & Gulati, 1996). Negotiations play a role in determining the outcome of many decisions pivotal to career advancement. These decisions occur at critical employment junctures: salary negotiations, work assignments, resource allocations,

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performance evaluations, resolution of conflicts, and accommodations for family and health demands. Micro-level disadvantages at these critical junctures, often difficult to detect at the level of the individual negotiation, accumulate over time to produce large inequalities in status and participation (Cole & Singer, 1991; Valian, 1999).

Much of the literature on gender, race, and negotiation focuses on the individual interaction—the dynamics, perceptions, judgments, and actions contributing to gender or racial disparities (Cohen, 2008). Differences in information, skills, and access to opportunity networks combine with stereotypes about women and people of color to reproduce inequality. The recommended remedy for these individual-level dynamics involves increasing the skills and knowledge of the less powerful party and the awareness of the more powerful one.

Improving participants' effectiveness in navigating within a negotiated order certainly helps increase their equality and status. However, developing individuals' negotiating skills and sensitivities will only go so far to change the capacity for women and people of color to participate fully and advance in the workplace. The outcome of any negotiation is determined by more than the negotiating skills and power each individual brings to the table. These individual-level negotiations take place in an institutional and social context, which profoundly shapes what happens in the individual negotiation. Negotiations are the product, expression, and reconstitution of information, incentives, and networks, shaped by preconceptions about the participants inflected by race and gender.

Thus, institutional context matters, and it matters greatly. It determines the quality of information the parties bring to the negotiation. It determines how the issues in a particular negotiation will be framed. It determines the incentives of the participants to meet the concerns of the other parties. It determines the capacity to hold people accountable for following through, and for continuing to work on problems that could not be sufficiently addressed within a single negotiation.

Yet, this dynamic relationship between the individual negotiation and the organizational context often escapes attention. Patterns are difficult to spot in the moment, particularly if only examined at the time and by those involved in the interaction. People often overestimate the significance of individual factors and underestimate the importance of systemic factors as contributors to their problems, contexts, and concerns (Sturm & Gadlin, 2007). These contextual variables are also difficult to alter within the confines of a particular negotiation or conflict resolution process. They frequently inhere in patterns and practices that are set in place before any particular negotiation and remain once the negotiation ends. Even when the participants understand the institutional factors creating predictable patterns of negotiated inequality, they frequently lack the frameworks, roles, and mechanisms to change those patterns.

A systemic understanding of negotiations in context can provide a rich source of information and a trigger for exposing and addressing barriers to advancement and innovation. This article seeks to develop the capacity to connect individual level negotiations with institutional interventions that reshape the context within which negotiations occur. Often, the capacity to address recurring imbalances in the dynamics of individual negotiations requires systemic analysis and intervention (Sturm & Gadlin, 2007). This linkage of the individual and the systemic can be achieved through the development of

roles and practices that enable both analysis and intervention to proceed simultaneously on individual and systemic levels, and to calibrate the level of intervention to match the circumstances of a particular situation. If these linkages are built into the system, a particular negotiation or conflict presents a powerful opportunity for learning that can trigger improvement of the larger social context. Negotiations present occasions when the prevailing institutional order is called into question (Meyerson, 2001). They can operate as artifacts, revealing how the many and varied patterns of relationship come together at the level of practice. Negotiations also provide opportunities to identify and surface patterns of interaction and norms. Within the microcosm of a negotiation, it is possible to unpack the manifestation of interacting systems. This article explains how to increase the likelihood that negotiation and conflict resolution trigger these opportunities for institutional reflection and revision.

The article begins by identifying how institutional context shapes the contours and outcomes of negotiations from the perspective of participants, as well as those not directly participating in but affected by the negotiations. It summarizes the dynamics that produce barriers to advancement for women and people of color, and how those dynamics structure the terms and dynamics of negotiation. The second section identifies an institutional role with the potential to link individual level negotiations with institutional transformation aimed at constructing environments in which women and men of all races experience full institutional citizenship. Finally, the article identifies frameworks and strategies for transforming the context in which negotiations take place, so that women and people of color can fully and fairly participate in the everyday negotiations so crucial to their advancement. In the process, negotiation is linked to a problem solving process that has the capacity to identify and address systemic issues relevant to the advancement of women and people of color.

Recent faculty diversity and inclusion initiatives illustrate how institutional transformation initiatives can change the social context for negotiations. The most successful of these initiatives have, in essence, created opportunities for strategic rethinking about the framework for negotiations at critical junctures in academic life. They have undertaken a process of reflection and learning about the patterns of bias. This process of institutional reflection has increased access to knowledge crucial to advancement, and created relationships and networks that equip previously marginalized faculty to navigate the dynamics of negotiation so crucial to professional development.

The Systemic Underpinnings of Negotiated Inequality

Negotiations operate within an environmental field that shapes participants' strategic position, as well as how they understand the issues under discussion. Negotiations also have the capacity to solidify or disrupt established understandings and practices, depending on whether they engage the systemic issues at play. However, these institutional dynamics are often difficult to see and address at the level of the individual. For these dynamics to be the focus of sustained attention, they first have to be made explicit. This section briefly catalogues some of the institutionally rooted dynamics predisposing the reproduction of inequality through negotiations.

Access to knowledge is one area of systemic inequality that influences the dynamics of negotiation. Information is crucial to effective negotiation of transitions through the professional continuum (Granovetter, 1973; Hitchcock, Bland, Hekelman, & Blumenthal, 1995). Yet, many workplace environments do not systematically communicate the most important information needed to obtain resources, gain access to professional opportunities, obtain recognition, and advance. Much of this information takes the form of tacit knowledge—informal and unstated rules and practices that are understood rather than communicated, but that govern what is valued and how it is evaluated (Rankin, Nielson, & Stanley, 2007). The academic context offers a powerful illustration of the role of tacit knowledge in shaping negotiations at the critical junctures affecting advancement. For example, in the context of negotiating salary and resource issues, it is quite important to know the difference between "soft" and "hard" money. Also, if a faculty member does not understand the difference between power and authority in a bureaucracy, he or she may end up negotiating with the wrong person—someone who does not have the actual power to deliver on issues such as space or administrative support, even if they look like they do on paper (Rankin et al., 2007). Although many newcomers to the academy lack access to information needed for successful negotiation of transitions, women and people of color are particularly vulnerable to exclusion from the informal knowledge networks. If they know who and what to ask, individuals can seek out this information. However, if they lack connections to the corridors of influence, they may not know what they do not know. They may also find it more difficult to get access to those best situated to provide insider knowledge (Lin, 2001). These disparities may be difficult to identify and correct in the context of a particular negotiation.

Unequal participation in professional collaborations and networks operates to produce a second area of structural inequality. Research has demonstrated the crucial role of relationships and networks in generating opportunities to negotiate about resources and conditions and professional opportunities. One's embedded position within resource networks in turn affects her presence, visibility, and influence when important decisions are made (Kalev, Dobbins, & Kelley, 2006; Realff, Colatrella, & Fox, 2007; Thomas, 2001). Relationships and professional networks influence negotiating positions; how parties form their views about the possible, how much weight their views merit, and who else in the environment cares about how the negotiation turns out (Kolb & Williams, 2000; Lin, 2001). Credibility and influence depend, to some degree, on one's position in professional networks and access to relationships with people who matter. Strategic allies and intermediaries provide incentives and pressure to respond to the concerns of faculty who otherwise lack sufficient leverage to insist that their issues are taken seriously. Research and surveys have documented that, in many institutions, women and people of color are more likely to be disconnected from these crucial networks and collaborative relationships (Rankin et al., 2007; Thomas, 2001; Wilkins & Gulati, 1996). As a result, they negotiate at a serious disadvantage.

The cognitive frameworks for evaluating women and people of color operate as a third dimension of structural inequality, which can be reinforced or disrupted by institutional practices. Much research has documented the operation of implicit cognitive frameworks, which influence how women and people of color are perceived,

how their letters of recommendation are written and interpreted, how their successes and failures are explained (Goldin & Rouse, 2000; Steinpreis, Anders, & Ritzke, 1999; Trix & Psenska, 2003; Valian, 1999). This research also shows that organizational practices influence the operation of these stereotypes in decision making (Bauer & Baltes, 2002; Bielby, 2000). These dynamics are only visible and correctable when patterns are observed over time, and this pattern analysis requires reflection about the dynamics of decision making and systems of accountability built into those decision making processes. The capacity for this kind of institutional mindfulness has not yet been developed in many workplaces.

Finally, women and people of color face disadvantages built into the ground rules that determine who participates in decision making and what is valued within a particular workplace. Ground rules can be both procedural and substantive. Procedurally, implicit and uninterrogated norms determine who participates in important decisions and how leaders are chosen, work assigned, and opportunities allocated. These informal practices often yield decision makers who lack knowledge about and sensitivity to gender and race. Decision making often proceeds without much self-consciousness about the criteria being used, whether they are being applied consistently, or whether they are producing disparities in outcome. In addition, substantive ground rules often reflect the priorities and values put in place at a time when women and people of color were not part of the conversation. These ground rules involve important issues of value and merit, such as the value of time, the relative importance of different fields of work, and the attributes or qualities that signal success. These substantive ground rules frequently operate beyond public deliberation; they also emerge from the accumulation of decisions made at an earlier time, and structures that reflect those accumulated decisions. They frequently have embedded within them assumptions that devalue work that women and people of color are more likely to do (Fletcher, 2001; Scheibinger, 2007).

Systemically rooted disparities operate within each of these contextual dimensions—information, networks, cognitive frames, and ground rules. These "second generation" dynamics are challenging to address because they are hard to see at the level of the individual transaction (Sturm, 2001). They occur in many different locations and involve many different actors spread across the span of careers. In the academic arena, for example, these differences arise in a wide range of decisions that shape the trajectory of a faculty member's advancement: defining the applicant pool, evaluating candidates, providing mentorship, building research teams, constructing informal professional networks, inviting speakers, assigning teaching and committee responsibilities, negotiating salaries, allocating resources, and selecting departmental and university leadership. Only by looking at patterns across multiple interactions in different settings is it possible to locate systemic inequality embedded within institutional environments and reproduced within individual negotiations.

The challenge is to connect this information to actual decisions, at a time when that knowledge can influence practice. This requires a practice of institutional mindfulness necessary to spot and address these dynamics and to create conditions needed for full advancement and flourishing (Sturm, 2006). This means enabling careful attention to decisions that ultimately determine whether women and men of all races

will have the opportunity to thrive, succeed, and advance. Institutional analysis asks: where are the barriers to participation? Why do they exist? Are they signals of broader problems or issues? How can they be addressed? Where are the openings or pivot points that could increase participation and improve academic quality? Research shows that self-consciousness about the processes, criteria, and justifications for employment decision making minimizes the expression of cognitive bias (Bielby, 2000; Kalev et al., 2006). Institutional mindfulness also requires the capacity for ongoing learning—about problems revealed by examining patterns of decision making over time, as well as about creative ways of addressing those problems, advancing participation, and improving academic quality. Finally, it entails introducing incentives for improving inclusiveness and excellence into ongoing governance systems and into the culture of the institution.

The question of how to connect the institutional level analysis to the individual negotiation or decision has not received much attention in negotiation literature or practice. The linkage is not often made between the individual negotiation and the systemic patterns playing out in and revealed by those negotiations. The two levels tend to remain separate. Negotiations and conflict resolution proceed at the individual level without connecting to more general patterns structuring outcomes. Institutional change initiatives undertake to identify systemic or institutional problems without connecting to individual decision making (Cohen, 2008). What is needed is a mechanism for generating negotiations about the negotiation context, as well as occasions for decision makers to reflect about the patterns revealed within those routine negotiations, to identify problems that are undermining the quality and inclusiveness, and to address them. The next sections sketch out an emerging role that does just that.

Organizational Catalysts: Linking Individual Negotiations and Systemic Transformation

A new role has emerged with the capacity to link individual negotiations with systemic transformation. This role, which I call the organizational catalyst, involves individuals with knowledge, influence, and credibility in positions where they can mobilize change within complex structures such as modern research universities. Organizational catalysts occupy a position at the convergence of different domains and levels of activity. They have the mandate to connect information, ideas, and individuals and thereby solve problems and enable change. These are individuals in institutional roles, which enable them to enlist people with social capital and knowledge to act as change agents. These individuals are situated at the nodal points of the institution. They cut across silos that usually don't interact. They also have legitimacy and power within the various communities of practice that determine the background rules and make the many decisions accumulating to define professional growth. They can speak the language in the currency of the community. Their multi-level interactions create a learning loop between individual and systemic negotiations by accumulating data from individuals, which enables identification of patterns, which then enables systemic intervention, which they feed back to improve the capacity of individual negotiators.

Organizational catalysts occupy different formal roles within organizations: they could be diversity provosts, faculty development provosts, organizational ombudsman, directors of research initiatives, or leaders of curricular innovation. Indeed, formal position as a diversity provost does not guarantee that the individual will operate as an effective organizational catalyst. Rather, the capacity to link individual and systemic problem solving results from a combination of factors: (a) the legitimacy, skill, and systems orientation of individual change agents, (b) a strategic position providing those individuals with access to negotiations in many venues and with opportunities to mobilize change at multiple levels, and (c) a larger initiative that links bottom-up and top-down change.

An example of the organizational catalyst role has emerged in the subset of recent diversity initiatives that have empowered respected faculty change agents to mobilize top-down and bottom-up change aimed at increasing the participation of women and people of color in the academy. Some of the initiatives have created intermediary roles for influential faculty who use their considerable social capital and legitimacy within key professional networks to bring information about gender and racial bias to the points where it influences practice, such as search committees, department chairs, allocating responsibilities, strategic planning, and accountability. Their background, stature, and qualifications equip them to play the organizational catalyst's multiple roles. These individuals are accomplished scholars with administrative experience within the department or the university who are known for their commitment to academic quality and equity. They often come into the position having played a significant role as a mentor to graduate students and junior faculty and having worked with faculty and administrators at different levels within the university. They are part of and accountable to professional networks and communities that will hold them accountable for achieving concrete outcomes and sustaining change.

Indeed, negotiations are a crucial driver for the creation of these organizational catalyst roles. Change agents must develop the information, social capital, networks, and resources required to persuade relevant stakeholders of the need for such a position, and to equip the position with sufficient resources, stature, and access to enable success. These "negotiation projects" frequently begin with the development of "mindfulness" among a core group of activists and leaders, who then take the steps necessary to root that mindfulness in institutional practice.

Organizational catalysts bring together the individuals from different institutional locations who otherwise would not connect and whose participation is necessary to address cross-cutting problems, such as lack of child care or partner placement challenges. They also focus attention on recurring problems and effective strategies for addressing them. Their insider/outsider status enables the organizational catalyst to capitalize on the opportunities for change, to inject diversity considerations into ongoing decision making and long-term planning, and to bring together the mix of people needed to produce concrete results. For example, a diversity provost meets individually with department chairs to learn about the difficulties they have confronted in identifying and recruiting diverse candidates. When family responsibilities and partner placement issues emerge from these conversations as a recurring priority, the organizational catalyst is in a position to raise these concerns at a policy level, with the legitimacy of the chairs' mandate behind her.

This negotiating posture can be buttressed by the results of a faculty survey underscoring the impact of child care, partner issues, and work–family conflict on faculty satisfaction and retention. Because she is part of the strategic planning process, she can place these items on the agenda at crucial points in both individual and systemic negotiations: when a faculty decision turns on resolving work–family issues and when building projects open up possibilities for integrating child care into architectural design (Freudenberger, Howard, Jauregui, & Sturm, 2009).

Interestingly, much of the work of effective diversity provosts involves improving the contexts under which women and people of color, along with other faculty, negotiate their advancement into and through the academy. They are involved in troubleshooting for individuals who experience marginalization and exclusion, which gives them access to information and a way to connect particular instances to larger patterns. They create and share information relevant to advancement, such as information about the content of salary packages, tenure policies and processes, openings for new academic leadership, and opportunities for funding, academic visibility, and collaboration. They help develop research and teaching collaborations that will enhance the social capital of new entrants to the faculty. They create new networks of graduate students, faculty, and academic leaders, often organized around both professional advancement and support. They generate system-wide options to solve recurring problems, such as job banks for dual career families or developing opportunities for cluster hiring to overcome the problem of tokenism within particular departments. They create institutional self-consciousness about the role of unconscious bias in academic decision making by producing credible information about the patterns emerging from individual decisions and by sharing cutting edge research and best practices with faculty and academic leaders. They put gender and racial dynamics on the table as issues to be addressed. They change who gets to be at the table for negotiations and decisions, emphasizing the importance of including women and people of color in leadership positions. They create accountability over time for the processes, values, and outcomes of negotiations relating to faculty inclusion, participation, and advancement. They use information to mobilize power and change.

In short, much of their work involves reworking the contours within which negotiations occur and learning from the successes and failures of negotiations aggregated over time and place. This reworking process itself occurs through ongoing negotiations about the design of the decision making process itself.

Identifying Core Strategies for Linking Individual and Systemic Change

The previous section identified an institutional role which, if embedded in a larger institutional change initiative, connects negotiations to systemic change and also reshapes the environment to reduce gender and racial disparities in negotiations. Through an analysis of faculty diversity initiatives and institutional transformation projects, a set of strategies has emerged for tackling the systemic underpinnings of inequality in the negotiation process. These strategies include: (a) critical reframing through root cause analysis, (b) generating and mobilizing information, (c) developing the social capital needed

for effective negotiation, (d) creating and connecting opportunity networks, and (e) developing constituencies of accountability. These strategies are most sustainable when they are reflexive in nature; they are used by the organizational catalyst, who works to build them into organizational design.

Critical Reframing Through Root Cause Analysis

The first move is conceptual and makes interrelationships visible and amenable to analysis and intervention. This conceptual shift involves a methodological stance toward negotiation that encourages participants to reframe their issues and interests through a process of critical inquiry. Critical inquiry exposes the systemic underpinnings of individual-level issues, and conversely, assures that changes at the level of the organization are made meaningful at the level of the individual. This strategy also enables the organizational catalyst to link issues of race and gender to core institutional values and problems. If the issue is first presented at the individual level, the organizational catalyst probes the relationship of the issues raised to a broader set of patterns. If the issue is addressed as a systemic or policy issue, the organizational catalyst then draws on that systems-level change in facilitating individual level negotiations.

The methodology forging these linkages involves a form of root cause analysis, which explores why a problem or issue arose, and persists by asking insistent questions that trace the problem to its organizational source (Sturm & Gadlin, 2007). This approach connects gender and race to core institutional problems, using race and gender dynamics as a signifier of more general organizational problems. The intermediary continually probes to determine whether the questions as initially posed locate the problem at the level where it can be meaningfully addressed.

An example from the academic arena will help make this idea more concrete. Some of the more effective diversity initiatives have organized work around solving the problems that pose barriers to diversifying the faculty (Freudenberger et al., 2009; Rapoport, Bailyn, Fletcher, & Pruitt, 2002). Many barriers to diversity also affect a department's effectiveness in other core areas, including recruitment, hiring, promotion, retention, faculty mentoring, and interdisciplinary collaboration. The diversity initiative reveals how gender and racial equity connect to core institutional concerns and at the same time preserves diversity as a distinct analytical and normative category. Critical reframing broadens the agenda on the table and brings unlikely allies into the negotiated order. This strategy explicitly links diversity goals to the broader normative frame of advancing academic inquiry and achievement. It encourages exploration of how advancing women and people of color can improve the quality and dynamism of the overall academic enterprise. For example, the emphasis on improving searches was in part motivated by a desire to bring more women and under-represented minorities into our recruitment pools, but it has infused the recruitment process more generally with energy, rigor, and creativity. A root cause orientation enables the diversity work to address core faculty concerns. It focuses energy on addressing underlying institutional limitations that must be remedied to achieve diversity but that benefit a much broader constituency.

Often, gender and racial inclusion cannot occur without changing governance structures generally, which in turn benefits the overall institution. Take a situation involving an untenured faculty member who, after 3 years, has not yet been invited to present work at a major conference or obtained a major grant to support her work. She seeks advice about how to negotiate with her department chair as part of her third year review. The faculty change agent investigates at the departmental and school-wide level. She learns that internal grant money is allocated informally, and that people with close research ties to the chair have gotten most of the money. Men in particular research fields with strong representation among the senior faculty have gotten tremendous amounts of informal mentoring, opportunities for collaboration, and co-sponsored grant applications. Much of this informal social networking takes place under the radar screen and is taken for granted. Those outside the inner circle are left to fend for themselves. The faculty change agent prepares an informal report, which is used to defuse criticism of the junior faculty member and put in place a developmental plan for her advancement. This situation also triggers a broader initiative to address the absence of support for junior faculty in developing funding opportunities, collaborating with significant scholars in their field, and participating in core activities defining legitimacy at the departmental level. Her use of root cause analysis thus shifts the terms of the negotiation at both the individual and systemic levels.

Root cause analysis opens up the possibility of expanding the time frame and scope for understanding and addressing issues that recur in individual negotiations. This is a way to advance a dual agenda which connects issues of race and gender to broader issues of institutional improvement (Ely & Meyerson, 2000; Meyerson, 2001). It also could be understood as a way to implement the learning and integration perspective developed by Thomas and Ely (1996). This dynamic signals a larger problem with the policies, practices, and culture surrounding professional development—a problem that requires a systemic intervention changing the baseline for all faculty. Although these issues may disproportionately affect women and people of color, they are issues or problems that affect a much broader group. By identifying the roots of the problem in the larger system, organizational catalysts open up the possibility of developing solutions that will be effective at the level of the individual. They develop solutions that generate greater transparency for hiring and tenure decisions and that improve the quality of mentoring and leadership, not only for previously disadvantaged group members, but for the larger community. They also generate the creation of longer term solutions that improve the overall environment and build the capacity of women and people of color to negotiate from positions of strength.

Developing and Mobilizing Information

Information mobilization is another important strategy for contextualizing individual negotiations. Strategic access to information has been identified as a critical factor determining the ability to negotiate effectively, reduce the expression of bias, and develop structural solutions to recurring problems. Three kinds of information have been shown to be instrumental in reshaping negotiation dynamics through intermediation. First,

organizational catalysts use the strategy of converting tacit knowledge into transparent or accessible knowledge. They share their own knowledge of the rules of the game, and they also self-consciously and systematically connect newcomers with people within the system who possess and are willing to share that knowledge.

Second, systems-level information gathering occurs through pattern analysis: monitoring and aggregating information about individual-level negotiations and their outcomes, and sharing this information both with decision makers and those affected by these patterns. This can involve analysis of demographic data revealing aggregate workplace patterns in areas such as hiring, promotion, tenure, leadership, resource allocations, and honors. Systems-level patterns can also be discerned by tracking and analyzing the kinds of issues that recur in their individual level interventions. Importantly, there is a crucial intermediary dimension to this information mobilization strategy. This vantage point also reveals the barriers and levers for advancement, and thus the strategic locations for change. The critical move is to deliver this systems-level information to decision makers at the point when they are making individual-level decisions of the kind for which patterns of bias have been documented. It is also critical to develop systematic ways of providing this information about institution-level innovations to individual women and people of color at the critical junctures when they most need that information. Individual-level problems thus become a source of information and a catalyst for systemic change, as well as a metric for whether that change has been institutionalized.

A third strategic type of information concerns best practices and innovative alternatives, which open up the possibility for effective negotiated outcomes that benefit both the individual and the larger system. This information includes research on how similarly situated individuals and organizations have addressed the same issue. It also includes research that more systematically analyzes the impact and efficacy of strategic alternatives. This type of information expands the range of alternatives available in negotiations, and enables individual negotiations to act as catalysts for institutional-level change. Developing this information outside the context of particular situations allows long-term solutions to be introduced when individual negotiations create urgency for their implementation.

Developing Social Capital

A third strategic intervention focuses on developing social capital for individuals who have been marginalized from the networks and relationships enabling individuals to advance (Rankin et al., 2007). Social capital, defined as ''resources embedded in a social structure that are accessed and/or mobilized in purposive action,'' is critical to individuals and organizations in achieving their objectives (Lin, 2001, p. 29). One of the core strategic moves of organizational catalysts involves forging relationships and regularizing opportunities to enhance the social capital and networks of those involved in these negotiations. In the academic context, for example, this has been done by bringing work to the attention of senior scholars, identifying opportunities for research collaborations, and getting individuals into positions where they are at the table with others who have

knowledge and influence. This also comes about by identifying pivot points where strategic knowledge or intervention will have a ratcheting effect, such as grant writing or research collaborations. Decision making processes are redesigned to facilitate the opportunity for active participation by women and people of color in central areas of meaning-making.

Creating and Connecting Networks

A fourth related strategy involves developing and linking social, professional, and knowledge networks, which are crucial mechanisms for both individual mobility and systems change. At the level of individual development, one form of network development involves "posses"—similarly situated individuals who move through their environments as cohorts and provide a base of collaboration, support, and validation. The Posse Foundation has brilliantly applied this idea at the undergraduate level by bringing diverse groups of students from unconventional backgrounds into selective universities as a group, which serves "as a catalyst for increased individual and community development" (http://www.possefoundation.org). This strategy has proven to be key to sustaining and expanding the participation of newcomers, as well as their ability to shape their environments. A second form of network involves opportunity networks, a strategy that connects newcomers to established members of their field and creates occasions for ongoing interaction among people at different points in their development.

A third form of networking involves bringing together individuals and institutions involved in change. Organizational catalysts develop and sustain collaborative networks. They cultivate communities of practice—people who share common interests, experiences, or concerns but otherwise lack opportunities to work together. This work creates occasions to collaborate among people with overlapping areas of concern. This is accomplished in part through reframing issues to lie at the intersection of common concerns, such as by connecting people who care about improving retention of graduate students with those who care about including women and people of color in that process. Part of this work involves bolstering decisions to exercise everyday leadership at key pivot points defining access and participation, including in the context of negotiations. In the process, they redefine how the institution operates.

Creating Constituencies of Accountability

It is challenging to sustain a dynamic relationship between individual negotiation and systemic change. The kinds of questions raised through this process will likely challenge the status quo, and disrupt settled assumptions and expectations. This process requires an investment of resources and energy, as well as a capacity to take risks and learn from mistakes. This kind of destabilizing process is unlikely to be sustained without some mechanism of accountability rooted in constituencies committed to change. The organizational catalyst's ability to avoid cooptation and sustain change depends upon creating an ongoing role for such constituencies of accountability.

One strategy for introducing accountability has been to create task forces and working groups that have a role in monitoring or evaluating the progress of initiatives or the patterns revealed by a conflict resolution process (Dobbin & Kalev, 2007). Another is to bring new people into leadership and governance responsibilities who already have a track record of leadership and activism around issues of gender and racial equity. A third strategy involves creating networks of accountability with counterparts in other institutions or through professional associations, in which people can compare practices and outcomes on an ongoing basis. Each of these strategies provides people committed to gender and racial equity regular opportunities to connect with each other, compare issues and outcomes, define priorities and measures of success, and use each other to encourage their institutions to sustain their efforts and produce meaningful results. They essentially create new occasions for negotiation about the underlying issues presented in routine negotiations. This is fundamentally a process of institutionalizing negotiated ordering that advances gender and racial inclusive practices. It moves recurring individual issues to an organizational frame, and then puts new constituencies at the table to redesign processes.

Another related accountability role performed by organizational catalysts involves keeping the pressure on. They put issues affecting diversity and equity on the agenda, raising questions about the implications of decisions for advancing inclusion and identifying opportunities to improve. They create occasions and incentives for people in positions of responsibility to act, and for people who care about gender and race to press for change. They maintain the institution's focus on gender and race as part of its core mission. They keep problems on the front burner and help put together workable solutions, making it harder not to take action. They see their role as requiring them to "hold the institution's feet to the fire and make sure that it gets institutionalized," (Sturm, 2006, p. 298).

How do organizational catalysts do this? They spot gender issues when they come up and make sure they are the subject of explicit discussion. They put issues affecting women's participation on the agenda. They help create multiple constituencies for change—constituencies who otherwise wouldn't see their interests as overlapping. For example, they frame issues so that faculty concerned about the quality of the graduate student experience and about faculty retention join with those concerned about the climate for women and people of color to push for change. They arrange meetings with high level administrators so that they can hear the arguments from influential faculty together with advocates for improving the institution's involvement of women and people of color. They use the evidence from the data to demonstrate the existence of the problem and construct a case for action. They use their social capital and that of others who they have brought into the process to make it more costly to do nothing. Perhaps most importantly, the organizational catalysts help figure out what to do, and then they do the leg work to maintain the momentum so that these proposed changes actually occur. Their sustained attention to the issue and their follow-through with concrete action plans makes it much easier for high level administrators to take action. It also provides that crucial link between system-wide reforms and the micro-level contexts in which those changes must be actualized.

Conclusion

This article has introduced the role of the organizational catalyst as a mechanism for bridging individual negotiations and systemic change. This innovation acknowledges that institutional transformation requires multiple negotiations at many different levels that, over time, can change the overall institutional culture and context for negotiation. This dynamic process makes use of negotiation to equalize the negotiation arena. Organizational catalysts harness networks to create new networks and systematize systems analysis. They exercise power to distribute power. This reflexive approach has the potential to link individual negotiation to institutional redesign. By negotiating about the social and institutional structure, organizational catalysts are reshaping contexts and arenas for negotiation.

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