NW Diversity Learning Series Session, January 27, 2022
"Fact or Fiction: Learning How to Challenge DEI Data"
Presenters: Jevin West and Carl Bergstrom

Metrics—With Unintended Consequences

At the January session, presenters **Jevin West** and **Carl Bergstrom**, professors at the University of Washington and the Center for An Informed Public, talked about the metrics used to measure success. Metrics have a nuanced context. In other words, they can be gamed, manipulated and corrupted. Jevin and Carl shared several examples, then asked the participants this question: **Are there any metrics of success at your company that have led to unintended consequences?"** There was no shortage of answers. So, we collected all the answers and share them with you below.

Participant examples of metrics with unintended consequences:

- When you apply for a job and they say "we are all family here".
- Not disaggregating AAPI data. (Asian American Pacific Islander communities)
- Metrics for hiring practices and promotions to increase diversity among our employees, not necessarily improving hiring practices or diversity among the levels of the organization but creating a feeling of tokenism for our employee of color.
- Performance appraisal completion %. Leads to activities of "checking off the box" vs having a real robust conversation regarding an employee's performance.
- We're such a productivity metric focused organization - we often focus only on WHAT people produce, not HOW they do so.
- Safety metrics where you want to encourage people to report to get treatment, but bonuses are tied to low safety incident rates.
- Metrics of success on customer service during natural disasters or difficult times, [e]specially with personnel shortages and upset customers.
- Metrics for demand of talent in certain geographies.
- Metrics for cost reductions that weren't really there.
- How about SATs as a basis for who used to get into college and who doesn't.
- The requirement of a 4 year degree for an entry-level role.
- Degree requirements that weren't there before the financial downturn in early 2000's.