Jelly Bean Value Exercise
A Taste of Diversity

Developed by the Office of Equity and Inclusion at the University of Delaware
When facilitating, please give credit to the developers of this activity.

Advise participants with a nut allergy to be cautious, as the candy has been made in the same factory as nut products. You may also need to ask if everyone is familiar with jelly beans – we have found non-US Residents are not always familiar.

1. Pass out the value charts to everyone (see attached). Instruct participants to assign a dollar value to each of the following jellybean *flavors* – from $0-$5.
    ### *(DO NOT MENTION COLOR!)*

❖ Cherry
❖ Orange
❖ Lemon
❖ Sour Apple
❖ Licorice
❖ Coconut

Facilitator Notes:
- *Allow 1-5 minutes for this. Ask folks to look up when they are ready so you know to move on to the next steps.*
- *Participants will have many questions, and do your best NOT to answer questions, just reinforce that they should <u>assign a dollar value to each flavor</u>. They will likely ask if it's permissible to value things a certain way. Again, reinforce their only job is to assign a value to a flavor.*
- *It's perfectly OK for someone to use dollars and/or cents, use the same value more than once, use combinations, rankings, etc. Again – provide as little instruction as possible here to allow them to establish their own value for each flavor. (The value itself is not the important part.)*
- *They should commit to their value and be able to justify why they assigned the amount to the flavor.*

2. Pass out the tins. At this point in the exercise, announce there is NO TALKING ALLOWED! Instruct participants to open their tin and determine the total value of the tin.

Facilitator Notes:
- *Allow 1-5 minutes for participants to total up their tins. Again, ask folks to look up when they are done so you know when it's safe to move on.*

- *If anyone should be confused, encourage them to simply do the math using the value they assigned to each flavor to get a Total Tin Value.*
- *Strictly enforce NO TALKING. (They'll fight this rule.)*
- *Participants are allowed to eat the beans, trade/switch, cut them, anything they need to do to determine the value. However, you should NOT prompt them or encourage they do anything in particular. Most people will see the red one, assume it's cherry, and keep moving.*
- *Some people will ask which ones are ____ flavor. Don't answer.*

3. When you see everyone, or most everyone, has their value determined, go around the room, and ask each person to share their tin value.

Facilitator Notes:
- *You will see a wide range.*
- *You may want to point out the two extremes (high and low).*

4. Ask participants how they determined their values.

Facilitator Notes:
- *Answers will range from person to person; generally you'll hear that it has to do with their preference of flavor. (For example, "Well, I hate licorice, so I gave that a $0!)*
- *You may want to ask what other methods were used…see if anyone valued everything the same…ask if anyone tasted their jellybeans during the process. (Some may say they did, and then you can ask them what they discovered.)*

5. Announce "The Kicker" – What if I told you that the color of the jelly bean may or may not correspond with the flavor you assigned it? Now what – how does that impact the value of your tin?

Facilitator Notes:
- *By this time, the cat is out of the bag, so you can move on to some follow-up questions for discussion to process the activity. Provided here are some potential questions you could use to get the conversation going:*

- How many of you used **assumptions** to value your flavors?
- What assumptions did you make? How did it feel when your assumptions proved to be wrong?
- If you had known that the color did not necessarily indicate a flavor, how would you have changed your values? How would your *process* of valuing been altered?
- How many of you treated the flavors of the jelly beans equally? Even if you didn't like the flavor, did you think to value them all the same?

The Follow-Through…
To truly maximize your value, you should have valued each flavor equally and at the highest price point – even the ones you don't care for or even hate. (How many of you "hate" licorice flavored jelly beans?)

The ability to quickly and automatically categorize things is a fundamental quality of the human mind. Categories give order to life and every day, we group things into categories based on social and other characteristics. By itself, this is not bad or wrong. It's what we *DO* about it that can get us into trouble.

This categorization is the foundation of stereotypes, prejudice and, ultimately, discrimination.

A Stereotype is a generalization that allows for little or no individual differences or variation. Stereotypes can be positive or negative, and are based on images in mass media or reputations passed on or even personally experienced. So, in this exercise, you probably stereotyped the flavor of the jelly beans based on your past experiences and likes/dislikes of the flavors.

So fine, no problem. But…

A prejudice is an opinion or attitude about something – it's usually applied to a group or its individual members, but let's use this in the jellybean context.
- You like cherry flavor and you don't like lemon, so therefore you *think* you like the red ones more than you like the yellow ones. That's your opinion. It may differ from mine and it may change over time – maybe you'll like lemon flavoring in 10 years, who knows. Again, okay, no real problem here, you have a right to your opinion.

The problem arises when stereotypes form prejudices, which then result in discrimination. It likely happened in this exercise. How many of you valued your favorite flavors more than you did the flavors you dislike? (Likely several people did.)
- So, what if we transferred those same assumptions to people? Or resumes we see on our desks? How do we value people??

Wrapping It Up…
- So what does this exercise say about appreciating diversity?
- Did anyone read the label inside the tin? What does it say?
- When you make decisions based on assumptions or even biases (you know you don't like licorice, therefore, you value the black jellybeans less than the others), how does that have a bigger effect on your workplace or colleagues?

Facilitator Notes:
- *Generally, the participants get the bigger point easily – something like "Don't judge a book by its cover" or "It's what's inside a person that matters."*

University of Delaware's Jellybean Exercise

Flavor	Value ($0-$5)	Raw Number	Total Value ($)
Cherry			
Orange			
Lemon			
Sour Apple			
Licorice			
Coconut			
TOTAL			$

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