



Unconscious Bias

Quick Reference Card

What is Unconscious Bias?

Unconscious bias or implicit bias is the hidden prejudice and stereotypes that affect our attitudes, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.

They are formed by our experiences, upbringing, and cultural influences, often without our awareness or control.

Our brains sometimes make snap judgments in terms of race, gender, age, or other characteristics, which can lead to unintentional discrimination.



Biases in the Workplace

Gender bias is one of the most prevalent biases in the workplace. Women often earn less than their male counterparts for the same job.

Hiring Bias: Older workers may be considered less productive, while younger are tagged inexperienced.

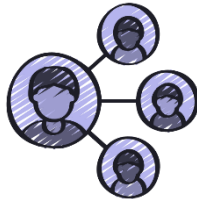
Promotion Bias: Employees with similar backgrounds may be favored for promotions due to affinity bias.

Racial and ethnic bias involves treating people unfairly due to their racial or ethnic background.

Biases in Social Settings

The **halo effect** is a common bias in social settings. Suppose you meet a friendly person, you'll likely think they're smart, funny, and kind, without really knowing them.

We often exhibit the **in-group bias** socially. Example: During a sports event, you will cheer passionately for your home team, even if you don't know the athletes.



Our biases are not confined to face-to-face interactions; they also manifest in online interactions, particularly on **social media**. You follow news sources that align with your political views, leading to a reinforcement of your beliefs.

Common Types of Unconscious Biases

Unconscious biases come in many forms. Here are some common types:

- 1 **Affinity Bias:** Inclination towards individuals who share similar backgrounds/characteristics with us.
- 2 **Confirmation Bias:** Seeking out information that confirms our existing beliefs while ignoring evidence that contradicts them.
- 3 **Halo Effect:** Occurs when we attribute positive qualities to someone based on one positive trait.
- 4 **Stereotyping:** Making generalized assumptions about people based on their perceived group traits, such as race, gender, or age.
- 5 **Groupthink Bias:** Conform to the decisions of a group, often resulting in suboptimal outcomes.
- 6 **Attribution Bias:** Involves attributing the actions of others to their character while attributing our actions to external factors.
- 7 **Beauty Bias:** Favor attractive individuals, assuming they possess other positive qualities as well.
- 8 **Contrast Effect:** Assess someone based on our recent exposure to a different, often extreme, comparison.

Common Bias Pitfalls in Recruitment

Unnoticed Biases: You might treat people differently based on accents without realizing it.

Bias Blindness: Thinking you're open-minded doesn't mean you're free from biases.

Feedback Rejection: Dismissing criticism and discussions about biases hinders personal growth.

Intent vs. Impact: Good intentions don't nullify the negative effects of your actions.

Echo Chambers: Surrounding yourself with similar views limits exposure to diversity, reinforcing biases.

Bias Fatalism: Believing biases are unchangeable leads to complacency in addressing them.



Engage in Difficult Conversations



While conversations can be challenging, they are necessary for growth and resolution.

Right Time & Place: Choose a non-rushed, private setting.

Prepare: Understand your goal, gather facts, and organize your points.

Active Listening: Listen without interrupting, ask questions, and acknowledge feelings.

Use 'I' Statements: Express feelings personally to avoid accusations.

Stay Calm & Respectful: Control emotions and maintain a respectful tone.

Find Common Ground: Identify shared goals and use them to build solutions.

Focus on Solutions: Brainstorm together.

Next Steps: Set concrete actions and follow-up plans.

Reflect & Learn: Post-conversation, evaluate and improve.

Steps to Mitigate Bias

Explore the practical steps to mitigate bias in your daily life:

Self-Reflection and Awareness:

Question your assumptions based on preconceived notions.

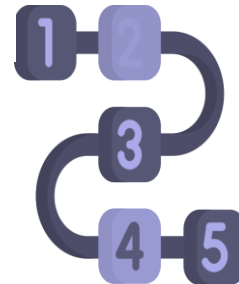
Engage in Empathy:

Understand and share the feelings of others without judgement.

Address Biases in Decision-Making:

Strive to make decisions based on evidence and fairness rather than stereotypes.

Educate Yourself: Read books, watch documentaries, or attend workshops that focus on diversity and inclusion.



Foster Inclusive Conversation: Create spaces where people from

diverse backgrounds feel comfortable sharing their experiences and opinions.

Role of Leadership in Addressing Bias

Leaders set the tone for the organization, and their attitudes have a significant impact on bias recognition and reduction. Here's how:

- ☐ Establish a culture of inclusion and respect.
- ☐ Promote Inclusive and blind hiring practices.
- ☐ Commit to ongoing learning about bias.

Find out the resources of continuous learning!

- ☐ Online Courses and MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses)
- ☐ E-books and Audiobooks like Kindle and Audible
- ☐ Podcasts, YouTube, and Video Tutorials
- ☐ Online Forums and Communities

Build Inclusive Communities

An inclusive community is a group where people of all backgrounds, abilities, and perspectives are respected and heard. Let's take an example here:

A Neighborhood Association: It holds regular meetings where residents of all identities are encouraged to voice their concerns or ideas.

They have anti-discrimination policies and actively promote diversity.

Bias-Reducing Tools & Processes

One powerful way to manage unconscious bias is by implementing bias-reducing tools and processes.



Blind Recruitment: Anonymize resumes & prioritize skills over personal details.

Standardized Interviews: Use uniform questions for all candidates. Exclude personal or biased queries.

Diverse Panels: Employ varied interviewers to combat bias.



Evaluation Scorecards: Implement objective candidate scorecards. Assess based on set criteria.

Structured Decision-Making: Apply formal frameworks for fair decisions.

Bias Training: Train and update teams in bias awareness.



Data Analysis: Analyze hiring/promotion data for bias trends.

Anonymous Feedback: Offer private channels and open reporting for bias reports.

Ongoing Improvement: Regularly evaluate and improve anti-bias measures.



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