



**Member
Events**

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LEARNING
EXPERTS

Unconscious Bias

22nd November
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By the end of this session, you will understand the importance of being aware of our preconceptions when communicating in the workplace



Discrimination

Discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of their protective characteristic.

There are four definitions of discrimination:

Direct Discrimination:

Treating someone less favourably than another person because of their protective characteristic

Indirect Discrimination:

Having a condition, rule, policy or practice in your company that applies to everyone but disadvantages people with a protective characteristic

Associative Discrimination:

Directly discriminating against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic

Perceptive Discrimination:

Directly discriminating against someone because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic

Understanding Unconscious Bias



- The concept of fast thinking provides a useful insight into how unconscious biases works. Our brains need to be able to make fast, automatic decisions about the world around us so that we can react quickly to dangerous situations. These decisions are very dependent on a number of variables, including environment and context, can be very conscious.
- While this is a useful skill for our brains to have, it can trip us up when we are dealing with people. Studies have shown that fast thinking leads us to make snap judgements based on defined social categories. We judge positively when people are from a similar background or have a personal connection to us, and negatively when they don't.

Different forms of bias

Where there is affinity between people, they will tend to make more eye contact, allow each other room to speak, and listen to one another. Where there is not an affinity we may talk over another person or not listen properly to the points they make. These micro-inequities and micro-affirmations can make a workplace seem welcoming and full of opportunity for one person, while another feels ignored or overlooked.

In some ways, being biased is part of human nature. It's natural to feel affinity with people who are like us, but what about the people who are not?

When we are thinking clearly about our decisions we can overcome this bias.

But we are not thinking clearly when we are: stressed, under time pressure or rushing, angry, upset and emotional, physically tired, relying on impulses and habits

Then, we are less likely to recognise that bias is happening.



Different forms of bias

Although we do like to think of ourselves as a fair judge of character, we are constantly passing judgement on each other without even knowing it...

1. Have you ever ran late for a meeting and then blamed it on public transport but when it is someone else blame it on their poor timekeeping? **The fundamental attribution error** we usually make is to assign external reasons for our own behaviour, but internal motives for others

2. The halo effect is when we are far kinder judges of people if we find them attractive. There is no correlation between beauty and any other ability or personality trait we do tend to believe that attractive people are kinder and more intelligent. Height also comes into this..... researchers have found that a person's height influences how capable and intelligent we think they are.



Different forms of bias



3. The confirmation bias – if we hold a particular belief about someone, we will look for evidence that supports our theory, while conveniently ignoring any facts that don't fit. If we believe that someone is lazy we will spend more time thinking about and discussing the times they didn't wash up than all the times they emptied the bins

4. Implicit association – Researchers have studied how we make mental connections between certain positive and negative words and pictures of different people – for example old or young, white or black, male or female – betraying racism, sexism and other stereotypes

5. The “just world” phenomenon – We tend to believe that people get what they deserve. So strong is our need to believe in the moral order of the universe that we may actually look for evidence that a victim of a crime had done something to warrant their bad luck

6. The “black sheep” effect – We are harsher critics when we are judging people who belong to the same group as us if we think they have acted in a way that might harm the group. This bias allows us to protect the group at the expense of the “black sheep”

WHEEL OF POWER/PRIVILEGE



Adapted from ccrweb.ca

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Exercise

Assumptions

Thank You!

