

Leading and Managing from Within: Overcoming Unconscious Bias

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UNCONSCIOUS BIAS DEFINED

Unconscious biases, also known as implicit biases, are underlying attitudes and stereotypes that people unconsciously attribute to another person or group that affect how they understand and engage with a person or group.

They are learned stereotypes that are automatic, unintentional, deeply ingrained, universal, and able to influence behavior.

Unconscious bias is far more prevalent than conscious prejudice and often incompatible with one's conscious values.

EXERCISE:

Think about a time when your judgement or decision may have been influenced by somebody's gender, race/ethnicity, age, size, height, disability, or accent.

COMMON TYPES OF UNCONSCIOUS BIAS



Tendency to gravitate towards people like ourselves in appearance, beliefs, and background.



Gender

Preference or prejudice towards one gender over another.



Race/Ethnicity

Preference or prejudice towards one race/ ethnicity over another.



Affirmation

Only seek out details that confirms or supports one's prior beliefs or values.

Microaggression: Commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental actions, whether intentional or unintentional, that can be insulting.

Micro-inequities: Subtle, unconscious messages that devalue, discourage, and impair workplace performance.

COMMON ORGANIZATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF UNCONSCIOUS BIAS







Innovation



Hiring Decisions



Pay & Salary Decisions



Career Promotion



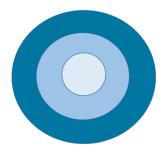
Retention

EXERCISE

List three words to describe you as a professional.

EXERCISE

List 5-10 names of people you trust professionally.



STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING & OVERCOMING UNCONSCIOUS BIAS



Slow Down



Listen



Be Aware



Be Intentional

Resist the temptation to compartmentalize.

View people as unique individuals.

BUILD GROW EXPAND



Ally

Someone who is not a target of oppression but still works to end it.



Advocate

Someone who publicly supports a change or policy.



Accomplice

Someone who will focus on dismantling the structures that oppress an individual or group.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION

ORGANIZATIONS

Review hiring practices.

Review performance review process.

Review job descriptions.

Review job postings.

Review evaluations.

Create structures & protocols.

YOU

Be attuned to stereotypes.

Anticipate the bias.

Manage your impressions.

Control your career.

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RESOURCES

Unconscious Bias Assessment:

Project Implicit, Harvard University- https://implicitbias.harvard.edu/implicit/

Books:

Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People, by Mahzarin R. Banaji, Bantam Books Trade, 2016.

Break Through Bias: Communication Techniques for Women to Succeed at Work, by Andrea S. Kramer and Alton B. Harris, Bibliomotion, Inc. 2016.

The Leader's Guide to Unconscious Bias: How to Reframe Bias, Cultivate Connection, and Create High Performing Teams, by Pamela Fuller, Mark Murphy, and Anne Chow. Simon & Schuster, 2020.

Subliminal: How Unconscious Mind Rules Your Behavior, by Leonard Mlodinow, Random House Audio, 2012

Websites:

Addressing Unconscious Bias, McKinsey & Company Organization, http://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/addressing-unconscious-bias

Proven Strategies for Addressing Unconscious Bias in the Workplace, Diversity Best Practices, 2008, http://www.cookross.com/docs/UnconsciousBias.pdf

Gender Bias in Job Descriptions, Catalyst 2015, http://www.catalyst.org/zing/can-you-spot-gender-bias-job-description

Videos:

McKinsey & Company: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JFW2cfzevio

Gender Bias & Communication: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SEHi4yauhu8

