

UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

It Matters



Presented by Training Evolution, Inc.

Your Objectives

1. Understand the definition of unconscious bias.
2. Understand the different types of unconscious bias.
3. Understand the sources of unconscious bias.
4. Understand the pros and cons of unconscious bias.
5. Understand ways to avoid unconscious bias in the workplace.


Unconscious Bias Defined

Unconscious bias are social stereotypes about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their **unconscious** awareness.

Unconscious bias happens outside of our control. It occurs automatically and is triggered by our brain making a quick judgment.

Examples of Unconscious Bias in the Workplace

Resumes with ethnic sounding names pushed down in the selection for interviews.



Asian candidates given priority positions requiring math and science.



Women more frequently interrupted in business meetings.

Why Do We Have Unconscious Bias?

- “the human mind takes in 11 million bits of information every minute. But is consciously aware of only 40.”

Timothy Wilson, Univ. of Virginia

- And since your brain cannot process 11 million bits of information a minute, it takes mental shortcuts.

Mental Shortcuts Simulated

According to research at Cambridge University, it doesn't matter in what order the letters in a word are, the only important thing is that the first and last letter be at the right place, The rest can be a total mess and you can still read it without problem.

This is because the human mind does not read every letter by itself, but the word as a whole.

Do You Have Unconscious Bias?

1. How much of what you see, hear, feel, experience, etc. are you aware of?
2. How much of what you do is under conscious control?
3. How accurate is your judgement of what you see, hear, feel, experience, etc.?
4. How fair minded are you?

Do You Have Unconscious Bias?

“A father and son were involved in a car accident in which the father was killed and the son was seriously injured. The father was pronounced dead at the scene of the accident and his body was taken to a local morgue. The son was taken by ambulance to a nearby hospital and was immediately wheeled into an emergency operating room. A surgeon was called. Upon arrival and seeing the patient, the attending surgeon exclaimed “Oh my God, it’s my son!”

Can you explain this?”

9 Types of Unconscious Bias

1. Conformity Bias

- **Bias caused by group peer pressure.**
- *Doing whatever the smartest, most popular, or senior person suggested.*

2. Beauty Bias

- **Thinking the most handsome/beautiful individual will be the most successful.**
- *“She was probably chosen for that position because of her looks.”*

3. Affinity Bias

- **Favoring people who we have an affinity to.**
- *We attended the same college, grew up in the same town, or they remind us of someone we like.*

9 Types of Unconscious Bias, cont'd

4. Halo Effect

- **Allowing one positive thing about a person to affect your opinion of them in other areas.**
- *“They are a great public speaker, therefore they must be great at managing people.”*

5. Horn Effect

- **Allowing one negative thing about a person to affect your opinion of them in other areas.**
- *“I don’t like the way they dress, they must be lazy and unprofessional.”*

6. Similarity Bias

- **Favoring people who are similar to us or like us.**
- *Similar race, religion, gender, experience level, etc.*

9 Types of Unconscious Bias, cont'd

7. Contrast Effect

- Judging whether or not a person did as well as the person before them.
- *“Our old boss is better because they didn’t make us follow the letter of the law.”*

8. Attribution Bias

- Thinking when we do something well it’s because of us and when we do something poorly it’s because of others.
- *“It’s my team’s fault, they never follow my very clear instructions!”*

9. Confirmation Bias

- Making judgements about a person and subconsciously looking for evidence to back up our opinions.
- *“I knew I was right, this person does not like me.”*

Unconscious Bias – The Pros & Cons



What's Your Story?



Avoiding Unconscious Bias

Recognize your own biases

Increase exposure to biases

Focus on people

Slow down your thinking, decisions and processes so you can step back and think.

Challenge yourself (and others) on people decisions.

Build practices into your decision-making processes to counter unconscious bias, such as diverse selection panels during the hiring process.

Language to Assist in the Elimination of Bias

- Use language that is clear and non-biased, such as "he or she" instead of always using "he" in internal documents, job descriptions and other management practices. (College applications.)
- Also, managers often subconsciously use positive language for preferred team members or groups.
- Lack of clarity can cause confusion and create openings for bias to emerge.

The Language of Inclusion

- Don't single out a person's race, sex, ethnicity or personal characteristics when it is irrelevant to the topic.
- Call people by their preferred names.
- Avoid identifying people based on a disability.
- Use gender-neutral language.
- Avoid stories, photographs and captions that make assumptions based on stereotypes.
- Avoid stories that emphasize exceptions to stereotypes.

Building Personal Awareness

- Perceptions
- Stereotyping
- Polarization
- Self-Fulfilling Prophecy



Growing in Awareness

Consistency Theory

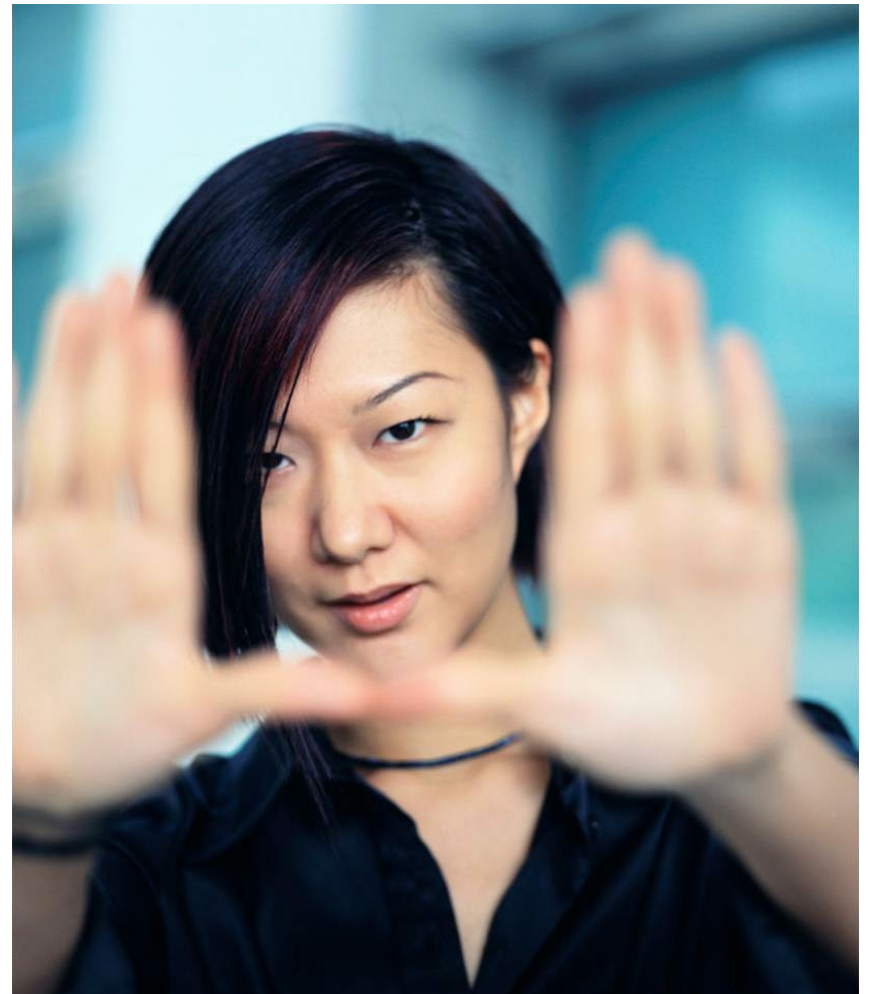
- Working from our perceptions, we formulate assumptions about people based on their belief systems or personality traits.

Frames of Reference

- Our frame of reference is the way we interpret the world around us.
- It is a habitual way of looking at things, based on our experiences, background, skills and attitudes.

Experiencing Labels

- What did you notice about the interactions?
- How did the labels impact the context of what was being said?
- What impact did the labels have on behaviors?



Additional Activities



Plan to Act



- How will you prevent unconscious bias?
- How will you maximize this investment?
- What are your goals for implementation?