



Unconscious Bias



WHAT is Unconscious Bias?

Unconscious bias is the automatically held perceptions, feelings, and beliefs shaped by individual personal history and inherent cognitive restrictions. These biases are often misguided and can lead to unintended, and unfair treatment of others.

Stereotypes
Family
Personal
Experience
Environment
Religion
Media
Culture

WHY should I care about Unconscious Bias?

Unconscious bias can negatively impact the individual, unit, and organization.

Combating unconscious bias through education can improve inclusion by developing:

- Interpersonal skills
- Effective communication
- Cultural adaptability
- Inclusive leaders



WHO can be impacted by Unconscious Bias?

Individuals



- Alienation¹
- Conformity pressure^{2,3,4}
- Interaction anxiety/discomfort⁵

Unit or Team



- Disengagement and stagnation^{6,7,8}
- Compromised unit cohesion, trust, and morale⁹

Organization



- Damaged mentor relationships¹⁰
- Evaluation & Promotion Discrimination^{11,12}
- Prejudiced policy¹³

WHEN and WHERE

The when and where of Unconscious Bias go hand and hand and can be difficult to differentiate. In short, the when can be thought of as a broader sense of time *when* Unconscious Bias occurs and the where can be thought of as a type of event *where* Unconscious Bias can be observed or seen.

When

Decision-making processes

Everyday interactions

Times of crisis or high stress

Where

Recruitment and hiring and promotions and advancement decisions

Team assignments and task assignments

Policy enforcement and performance evaluations

HOW can you recognize Unconscious Bias?

Micro-aggressions can be a result of unconscious bias. These can look like:



Ignoring ideas



Interrupting



Rolling eyes



Disrespectful remarks

Micro-behaviors are often subtle and can look like subtle statements that can be degrading or demeaning, or subtly negative gestures or facial expressions, tone of voice, or word choice.¹⁴