

Unconscious Bias

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Aim

- Explore the impact of unconscious bias on our day to day behaviours and decision making
- Develop insight into your own unconscious bias
- Decide what to do with it

**There is no
right or wrong
today – speak up –
we will respect
each other**



“Oi, you lot, I don’t want any funny business.”

Could I be wrong?

The tip of the iceberg



Understanding Unconscious Bias

- Stereotypical associations of which we may be completely unaware
- Presents a disconnection between conscious egalitarian values and unconscious prejudices and assumptions made about people
- Explanation for why, despite equalities apparently being enshrined in law, society still looks so unfair. By framing prejudice as something that could be involuntarily soaked up from the world around us
- Our brains are hardwired to make unconscious decisions, because the number of choices we face every day would be overwhelming if we had to consciously evaluate every single one. That means there is a direct link between our unconscious thinking and our actions and behaviour. And when it comes to making choices at work, it's important to know they are not based on bias.

Understanding Unconscious Bias

- Neuroscientists have uncovered brain regions involved in stereotyping and shown that such stereotypes begin to form early in childhood. Recent work found that the brain responds more strongly to information about groups who are portrayed unfavourably, suggesting that the negative depiction of minorities in the media can fuel bias.
- Scientific measures in place to assess unconscious bias in individuals and in institutions – The Implicit Association Tests of Harvard University

Affinity bias – the thinking trap of similarity



"I LIKE YOU, YOU REMIND ME OF SOMEONE"



Impact

Negative or stigmatising attitudes toward population groups are held at a subconscious level and are automatically activated during encounters

What if decisions are not based on fact?
What is driving behaviour?

Employment,
socialising,
client care

Anti-discrimination legal framework does not and cannot properly redress most instances of discrimination



Key messages to remember

- Diversity is all kinds of differences
- Some differences are obvious; some are invisible
- We can sometimes choose how much of our diversity to reveal
- You may have varied responses to the same aspect of diversity depending upon the context
- Be aware of your initial impressions and work on your second thoughts
- Be open to being wrong about a person
- If you are uncomfortable with some aspect of difference, ask yourself why
- We are taught what is acceptable and unacceptable very early in life
- We have a tendency to judge others as less than ourselves if they don't have the same standards
- Personal programmes can be upgraded

The Inclusion Scale



Admiration: Being fully inclusive of this individual. Treating them with high regard and esteem for a person. Personable towards them. High social interaction. Differences are seen as positive

Acceptance: Being fair, objective and permissive towards those who are different. Moderate social interactions. Differences are positive

Neutrality: No real interaction with or responsiveness towards them. No personal acknowledgements. Differences are unimportant or insignificant to you.

Evasion: Apprehensive, uneasy and uncomfortable in the presence or thought of another. Differences not acceptable so you avoid them

Hostility: Argumentative, antagonistic and actively unfriendly towards another. Differences are completely unacceptable and repellent



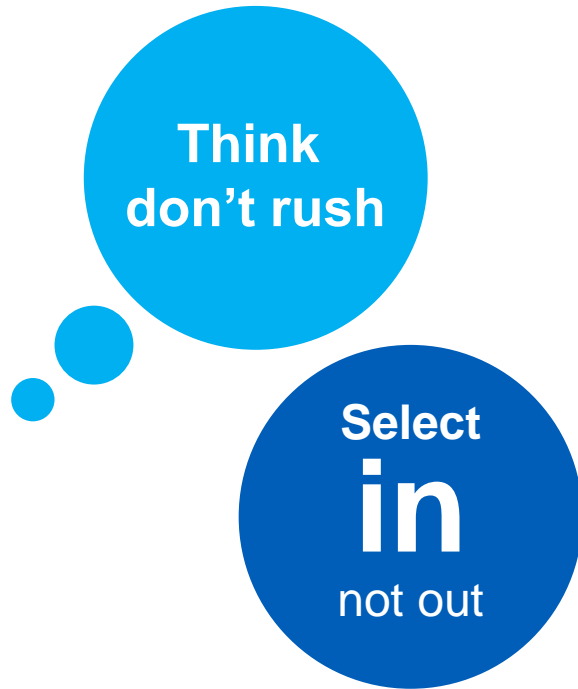


Key messages to remember

- We respond to people based on who we are
- How we respond can say more about us than other people
- We have a right to our own values system
- We don't have the right to impose our values and beliefs upon others
- When someone takes you outside of your comfort zone, see what you can learn about yourself while you're out there
- Expand your understanding of yourself and the world around you, and you may increase your ability to respond more favourably to many more aspects of difference

Could I be wrong? Be inclusive

Bias control:



You can be adaptable: highly aware of differences and similarities amongst people they work with. Capable of flexing personal style to match different styles and cultures of others.

You can build inclusive relationships: Demonstrates a genuine interest in and respect for differences in other people. Values time spent getting to know the different drivers, aspirations & development needs of individual team members. Is aware of one's own un/conscious biases and is capable of minimising their impacts.

Questions?