



# HOW TO MITIGATE IMPLICIT BIAS

In the Workplace  
& Beyond

A CCWomen Toolkit by Taylor Salmons



Implicit biases are (mostly) unconscious assumptions about others that are based on internalized social conditioning. These biases stem from a variety of lived experiences and can be different for each person. Some biases are rooted in media messaging, education, and family upbringing, while others may simply come from a lack of exposure to certain groups. We all have unconscious biases, and sometimes, we can even hold them against groups that we are a part of ourselves.

Although our biases might not be intentional, they can still be harmful, especially in the workplace. For instance, white applicants are 2x more likely to get called for an interview compared to Black applicants with the same resume. Women are 4x more likely than men to be treated as though they not competent at their jobs. 46% of LGBTQ+ people reported experiencing unfair treatment at their jobs (such as being harassed, denied a promotion, or excluded from certain activities with coworkers) on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

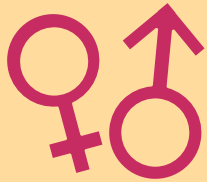
Unfortunately, just learning what biases are do not help mitigate the issue. In fact, discrimination can actually surge when people learn **ONLY** that implicit bias is both highly prevalent and involuntary. Often, people conclude that acting on bias is unavoidable (it is not).

The best way to truly combat implicit bias at your organization is to standardize your hiring processes with tools that resist prejudice, implement reflective exercises and group discussions that create a stage for diverse viewpoints, and use technology to simulate scenarios where your employees can put their training to the test.

## THIS TOOLKIT INCLUDES...

- Types of Implicit Bias
- Reflective Exercise
- Checklist for a Non-Biased Recruitment Process
- General Best Practices

# TYPES OF IMPLICIT BIAS



## GENDER BIAS

Gender bias, commonly referred to as sexism, occurs when someone unconsciously associates certain stereotypes with different genders.



## AGEISM

Ageism refers to discriminating based on age. This occurs most often in relation to older team members.



## HALO EFFECT

The halo effect describes developing an overall positive impression of someone because of one of their qualities (i.e. attractiveness, alma mater).



## CONFIRMATION BIAS

Confirmation bias occurs when someone seeks out information on another that validates their preconceived assumptions about them.



## CONFORMITY BIAS

Conformity bias is like groupthink. It happens when we change our opinions to match that of the bigger group.



## AFFINITY BIAS

Affinity bias is the tendency to favor people who share similar interests, backgrounds, and experiences.

# REFLELCTIVE EXERCISE

Use this table to guide small group discussions or mitigate biases on an individual level.

Contemplate the beliefs you need to have in order to act without bias. Write them down (i.e. "I believe working mothers are just as dedicated to their career as single women").

Take the Implicit Association Test to uncover what biases you still hold. How did your answers contradict with the beliefs written above? Why do you think that is?

Complete Microsoft's Inclusion and Bias Training. What did you learn?

What can you do in the next 4 weeks to change your biases and prevent acting on them?

# RECRUITMENT CHECKLIST

Changing your recruitment process is an excellent way to prevent systemic bias, especially against BIPOC folk, from continuing to perpetrate into your organization (even unknowingly). [In a 2019 study](#), researchers sent out 83,000 fake job applications. For every 1,000 resumes received, white candidates got 250 responses, while Black candidates only got 230. Prevent prejudice like this in the screening and interview process by applying the following steps or presenting the idea to leadership.

Source technology that removes demographics and other identifiable characteristics to ensure a "blind" interview process.

Eliminate any self-assessment tests from application process or performance reviews. [Women consistently rate their performances lower than men](#) with the same qualifications do.

Outline a set of selection criteria for evaluation that is based purely on key qualifications, personal attributes, and applicable knowledge. Establish these expectations with the entire hiring team.

Involve multiple stakeholders in interview process to ensure a variety of perspectives.

Conduct background checks only after an offer is extended and accepted.

# GENERAL BEST PRACTICES

Facilitate interactions between different employees in your organization. Create space for sharing experiences.

Address biased actions when you recognize them and call out stereotyping.

Represent different groups throughout your leadership team.

Use media-led activities like watching a movie or starting a company book club to expose employees to counter-stereotypical stories.

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