Unconscious Bias

November 2025

Objectives

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Understand unconscious bias and its impact on performance reviews



Identify common biases



Learn strategies to minimize bias

Unconscious Bias & Why Does It Matter?

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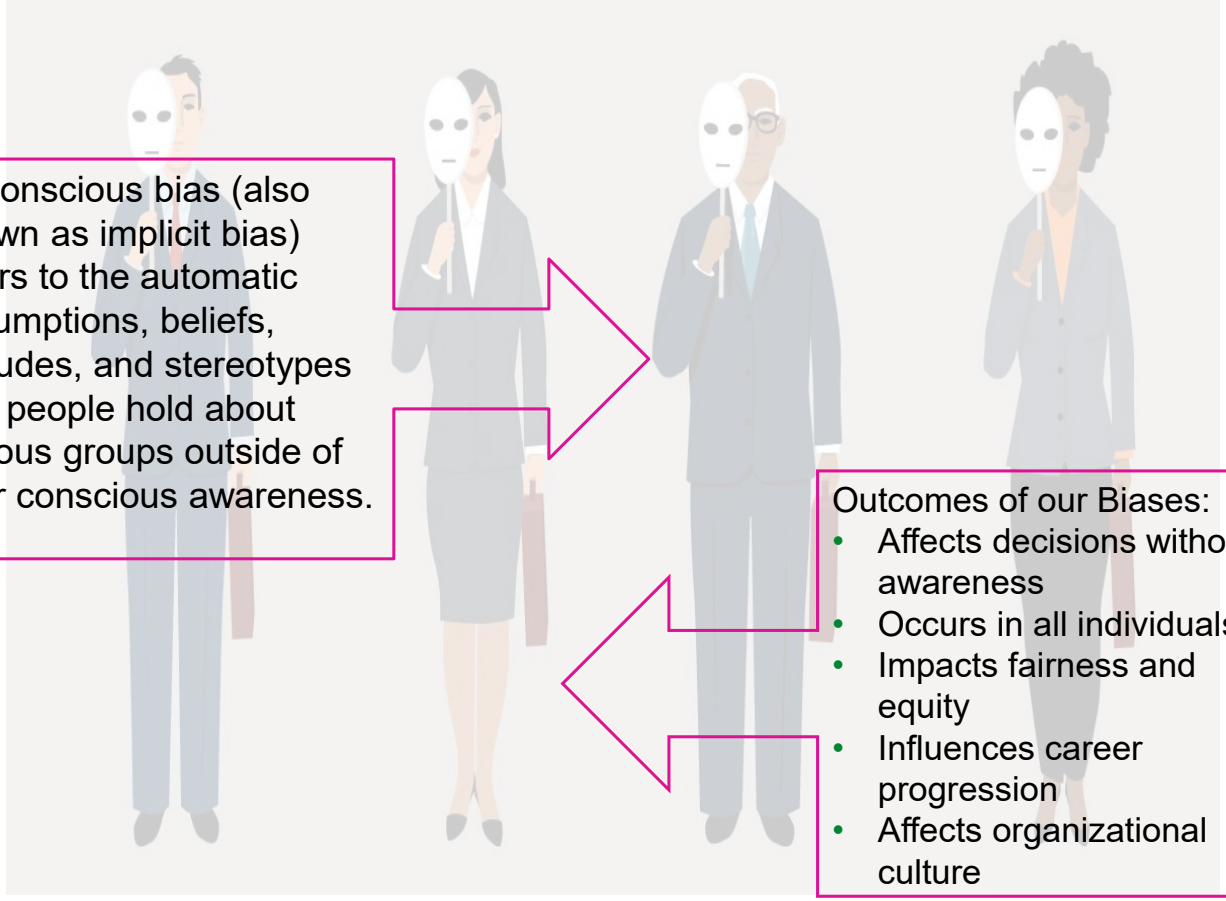

Unconscious bias (also known as implicit bias) refers to the automatic assumptions, beliefs, attitudes, and stereotypes that people hold about various groups outside of their conscious awareness.

Outcomes of our Biases:

- Affects decisions without awareness
- Occurs in all individuals
- Impacts fairness and equity
- Influences career progression
- Affects organizational culture

Common Biases

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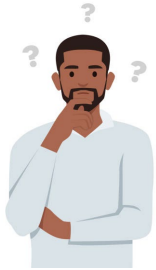
Affinity Bias
A preference for people who are similar or have the same qualities.



Ageism
The tendency to judge an individual's ability based on their age.



Confirmation Bias
Looking to confirm our own opinions and pre-existing ideas.



Recency Bias
Remembering someone's most recent actions more than past.



Gender Bias
The tendency to prefer one gender over another.



Halo
When one impressive thing affects your opinion of them.



Horn
When one bad thing clouds your opinion of an individual.



Perception Bias
Stereotypes and assumptions about different groups.

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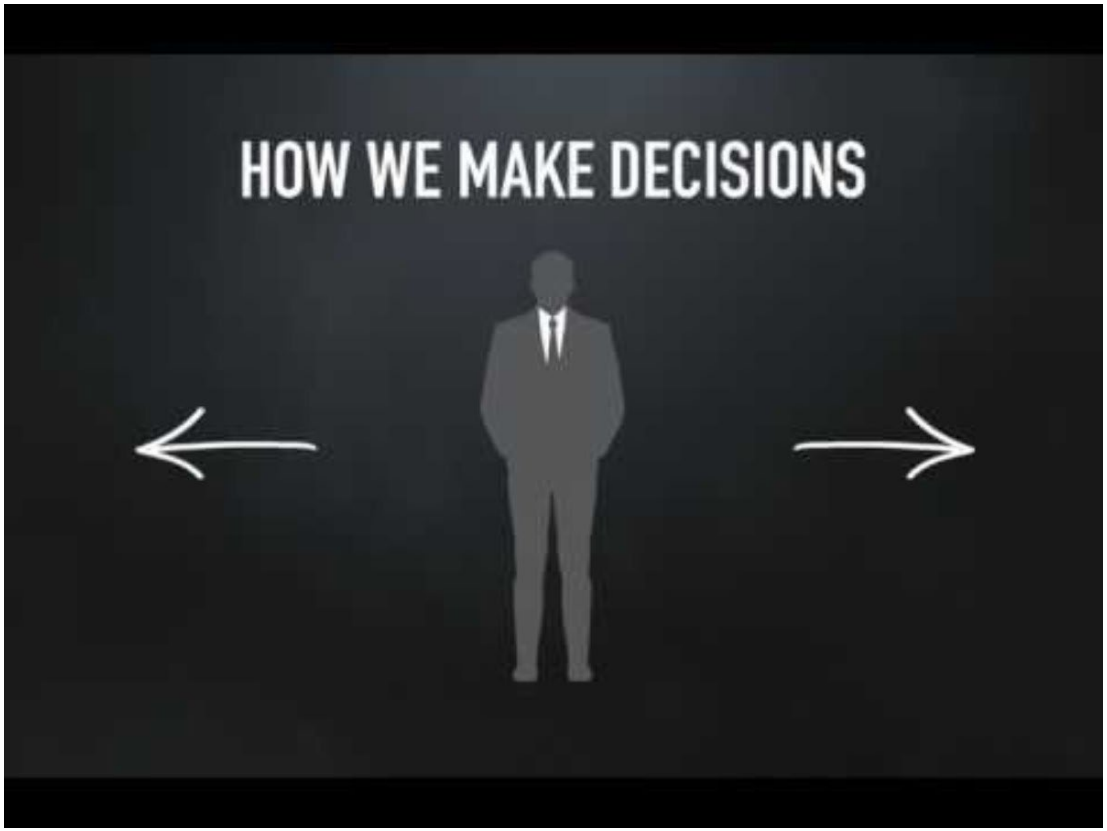

Impact on Organization

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Reduced Morale

Decreased Engagement:

☹ When employees believe their contributions are overlooked or undervalued due to bias, they become disengaged and less motivated, impacting job satisfaction and productivity.

- Employees who are disengaged will not be interested in problem-solving, process improvement, collaboration, or innovation and may even sabotage the efforts of others.

Reduced Trust

☹ Bias erodes trust between colleagues and between employees and management, creating a workplace where people don't feel safe to be open and honest.

Missed Talent Opportunities

Stalled Career Advancement:

☹ Unconscious bias can lead to unfair decisions in hiring, promotions, and salary increases, making employees feel that their hard work won't be rewarded, which damages morale and increases turnover.

Assumption of Capability:

☹ Stereotypes about genders or background can lead managers to push employees into supporting roles and underestimate their ability to handle demanding positions

Limited Assignments:

☹ Biases can lead to fewer "stretch assignments" for certain employees, limiting their exposure and hindering their career progression.

Legal & Ethical Risks

Hostile Work Environment:

☹ When biases manifest as microaggressions or unfair treatment, they can contribute to a hostile work environment, leading to legal claims.

Impaired Judgment:

☹ Biases can interfere with objective decision-making and information assessment, leading to poor and potentially unethical outcomes.

Strategies to Reduce Bias

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Documentation

- Document the employee's performance throughout the year
- Frequent scheduled check-ins
- Create clear goals

Structured Criteria

- Apply the Leadership Behaviors to support ratings: Eversource Leadership Behaviors
- Follow the Ratings & Definitions to determine performance
- Adhering to the *Comp Guidelines* will ensure consistence with merit and incentive rewards

Calibration

- Provides additional opinions and perspectives
- Promotes consistency across business units
- Helps differentiate performance

Reflect

- Pause before acting or making a decision
- Phone a friend for additional insight
- Think about how your decision will be received

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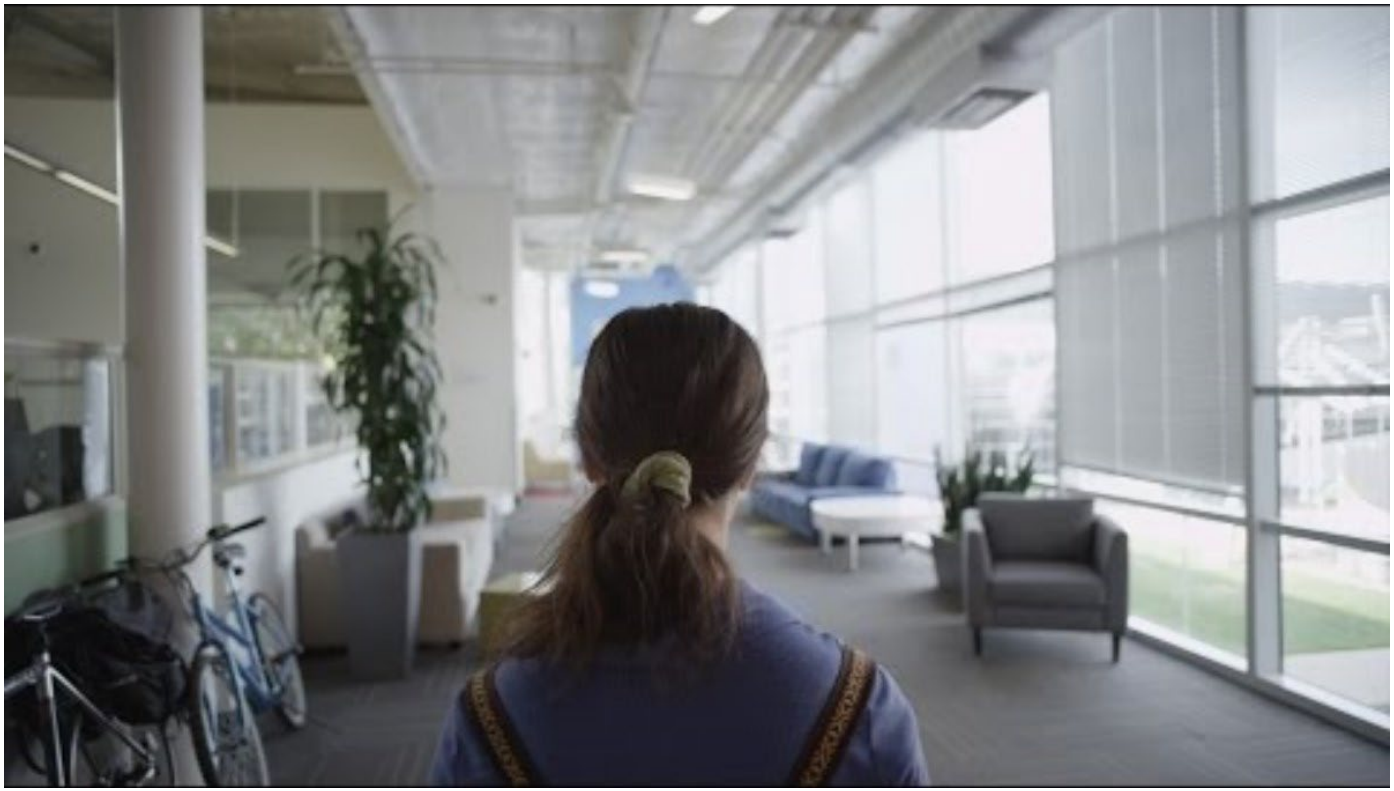

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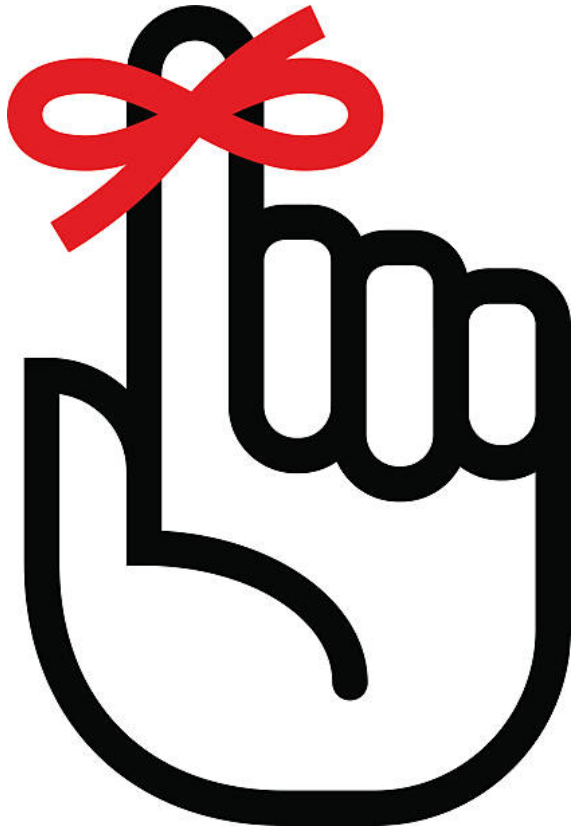
Action Items

- ✓Acknowledge your biases
- ✓Commit to unbiased reviews
- ✓Apply strategies consistently
- ✓Consider the impact of your decisions
- ✓Share learnings with team
- ✓Participate in training



Resource

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- Eversource Leadership and Development
- Eversource Leadership Behaviors
- Submit an AskHR Ticket
- Contact Your HR Business Partner
- Employee Assistant Program (EAP)
- Connect HRConnect at 1-800-841-8684