



Common Biases

We all have biases. While we all would like to think of ourselves as being objective, fair-minded individuals, the reality is many well-intentioned individuals are often influenced by their unconscious biases. Research shows that the hiring process (recruitment, mentoring, hiring, and promotions) can be biased and unfair. Unconscious biases play a significant role in whom we hire, therefore awareness and understanding of unconscious bias can help us to grow and become a more inclusive organization.

To understand and acknowledge and recognize your own bias, consider taking the [Harvard Implicit Bias Assessment](#).

Bias	Definition
Contrast Bias	An individual is judged either positively or negatively because of comparisons with others or staff previously evaluated (rather than on the relevant competencies needed for success in the position or on the agreed upon performance objectives).
Halo Effect	One positive attribute overshadows everything else during the rating period. The individual is always seen in a positive light, regardless of performance.
Horns Effect	One negative attribute overshadows all positive performance aspects during the rating period. The individual is perceived negatively, regardless of performance.
Similar-to-me Bias	Interviewer inflates the evaluation of an individual because of a mutual personal connection, rather than job-related criteria.
Stereotyping Bias	Occurs when the interviewer assumes an individual has specific traits because they are a member of a group. If job requirements include lifting 50 pounds, an interviewer might inaccurately assume women cannot meet this requirement.
Recency Bias	The evaluation is based largely on the individuals most recent behavior rather than on the behavior throughout the performance review period.
Cultural Noise Bias	When candidates answer questions based on information they think will get them the job. Basically, they say what they think the interviewer wants to hear.
Nonverbal Bias	When interviewer is influenced by body language and nonverbal cues, such as loudness or softness of voice, or the type of handshake given.
Effective Heuristic Bias	When interviewer judges someone's job suitability by superficial factors such as visible tattoos or personal body weight standards.
First Impression Bias	A snap judgment about someone based on their first impression positive or negative that clouds the entire interview.