FROM: Unconscious Bias
TO: Conscious Inclusion and Action
NACS HR FORUM
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Simpactful
EDUCATE – Build understanding of what Unconscious Bias is, where and how it shows us

ENGAGE – Create an interactive environment to share experiences and help support one another

SOLVE – Begin to identify individual and group actions to overcome any unintended effects of bias

COMMIT – Personally and organizationally to be part of move to Conscious Action
what you will learn

After this training you will:

• Understand the importance of Unconscious Bias in the work environment
  • Determine unconscious/conscious motivators
• Have explored where Unconscious Biases may be
• Have tools available for driving the awareness of biases – in yourself & in others
TIMES HAVE CHANGED!

Or have they?
Leadership Perspective – What’s so bad about it?
unconscious bias is recognized as a barrier at work
What do you see?
“A father and son were involved in a car accident in which the father was killed and the son was seriously injured. The father was pronounced dead at the scene of the accident and his body was taken to a local morgue. The son was taken by ambulance to a nearby hospital and was immediately wheeled into an emergency operating room. A surgeon was called. Upon arrival and seeing the patient, the attending surgeon exclaimed “Oh my God, it's my son!” Can you explain this?
Is Emily more employable than Lakisha?

Applicant: Brendan, Greg, Emily & Anne

Applicant: Tamika, Aisha, Rasheed, & Tyrone

+50%
Exposed to as many as 11 million pieces of information at any one time, but our brains can only functionally deal with about 40.
What is Unconscious Bias?

**DEFINITION**

1) The willing and unwilling, implicit people **preferences**, formed by our socialization, experiences and exposure to others’ views

2) **Ingrained habits of thought** that lead to how we perceive, remember, reason, and make decisions

• Operates beyond our control and awareness
• Informs our perception or awareness of a person or social group
• Can influence our decision-making or behavior toward a social group

**MENTAL BLINDSPOT**

People can be consciously committed to equality and work deliberately to behave without prejudice and yet still have unconscious bias
unconscious bias is human & everywhere

Our Brain is Wired to Use Unconscious Biases
• It’s normal
• It’s automatic
• It’s human
• Everyone has them
  • It’s okay
  • It’s to be expected

75% unconscious bias
20% physiologic brain functions
5% conscious thinking
CONSIDER THIS:

• Less than 15% of American men are over six foot tall, yet almost 60% of corporate CEOs are over six foot tall. Why does this happen?

• Similar patterns are true for Generals and Admirals in the Military, and even for Presidents of the United States. The last elected President whose height was below average was William McKinley in 1896, and he was “ridiculed in the press as ‘a little boy.’”
we all acquire individual frames of reference

Our frame of reference can influence our Unconscious Biases
types of unconscious bias

**CONFIRMATION BIAS**
Pay more attention to information that confirms your existing belief system and disregard what is contradictory.

**ATTRIBUTION BIAS**
Make more favorable assessment of behavior and circumstance for people in your “in-group” (by giving second chances and the benefit of the doubt). Judge people in “out-groups” by less favorable stereotypes.

**AVAILABILITY BIAS**
Default to ‘top of mind’ information.

**AFFINITY BIAS**
Like likes like – tendency to gravitate towards and develop relationships with people who are more like ourselves. Leads people to invest more energy and resources with those in our affinity groups while unintentionally leaving others out.
How many F’s?

FINISHED FILES ARE THE RESULT OF MANY YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY COMBINED WITH THE EXPERIENCE OF SEVERAL YEARS.
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a frame of reference example

• Have you ever noticed that when someone you know buys a new car that you love, there are suddenly many more of this type of car on the street?

• Has the reality changed or just what we notice (or don’t notice) and this changes our perception of reality?
Is Unconscious Bias good or bad?

• May help in situations where a split-second judgment is required, it can be counterproductive in other situations, e.g.: work stress
  • We may miss opportunities, especially those that we do not expect to see
  • We may make a poor decision based on assumptions we don’t realize we are making
• The “images” we have in our minds of those around us can influence how we see:
  • their “potential” – or abilities
  • their competence & expertise
micro messages – a subtle way unconscious bias can create unintentional impact

When it happens repeatedly to the same person – it is probably due to unconscious bias

Examples of Micro Messages:
• Consistently mispronouncing or forgetting a person’s name
• Eye-rolling
• Not introducing someone
• Failing to give credit where it’s due
• Making eye contact with only males while talking to a group of both males and females
• Excluding someone from a social gathering

Small actions, high impact – especially over time
GROUP EXERCISE

• Provide examples of when you might have observed influences of Unconscious Bias?
• What was the impact?
unconscious bias is recognized as a barrier at work
“... We would like to believe that when a person has a conscious commitment to change, the very act of discovering one’s hidden biases can propel one to act to correct for it. It may not be possible to avoid the automatic stereotype or prejudice, but it is certainly possible to consciously rectify it...”

– SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER
journey to conscious action and inclusion
strategies for conscious action

- Watch your first thought
- Use the power of logic
- Hit the pause button
- Act as if bias doesn’t exist
- Cultivate common ground
For the next 2 weeks, practice watching the first thought that comes to mind when encountering someone different than yourself.
If you’re not intentionally including everyone, you are unintentionally excluding someone

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