

Top tips to help tackle unconscious bias

1. Accept that we all have unconscious biases

Bias is part of being human, but we can't tackle it if we don't acknowledge this. Take an Implicit Association Test (IAT) to become more aware of your own biases.

2. Make considered decisions

Unintentional bias is more likely when you make fast decisions or act on the spur of the moment, so be sure to take a step back.

3. Monitor your behaviour

Question your first impressions and extreme reactions to people; reflect on any rapid decisions you make (i.e. were they made objectively or was unconscious bias at play?)

4. Pay attention to bias related to protected characteristics

For example, age, disability, sex, maternity, race, religion, etc. - as this is discrimination and hence illegal.

5. Widen your social circle

Don't sit with the same colleague every day. Move around and spend time with people from different cultural and academic backgrounds etc. This will build your cultural competence and lead to better understanding.

6. Set ground rules for behaviour

Don't tolerate interruptions in your team; make sure everyone gets a fair hearing and has an equal chance to give their opinion.

7. Avoid making assumptions or relying on gut instinct

For example, "My boss said that she didn't offer me the project because I have a new baby and there's some travel." Don't assume you know best, as you may jump to the wrong conclusion.

8. Use rotas to avoid stereotyping

Have rotas for 'housekeeping' tasks, such as taking the minutes in a meeting, organising refreshments, etc., to ensure fairness and reduce the potential for gender stereotyping.

9. Speak out if you notice bias

For example, if a male colleague talks over a female colleague, tactfully point out that you wanted to hear what she had to say. If your boss only ever assigns the stretching projects to the guys or your white colleagues, have a quiet word.

10. Apologise if you get it wrong

Remember that we can only deal with bias if we're honest and admit our mistakes.

