

Unconscious Bias Challenge [MASTER COPY] - 15 Questions

Number of questions: 15

Description

Welcome to a Qstream set of diversity questions. Diversity means many different things to people because of our own backgrounds, experiences and interactions with others. Each of us has a unique filter through which we see the world and because of this we interpret questions, ideas and experiences from that individual perspective. These questions are designed to engage your thinking and curiosity. They might also challenge how you see the world or raise questions that you can talk about with your team. We recognize that while we have created these questions and answers, some people may have different interpretations based on their own backgrounds and filters. If you do interpret the questions differently, we encourage you to talk about it with the people you work with. When you talk with team members or interact with them, remember that it is important to respect other people's experiences, even if they do not mirror or reflect our own. We invite you to explore with us the rich world of diversity and the human experience.

This Qstream will help you to better understand what bias is, how it impacts our interactions and how it can impact your connections with others.

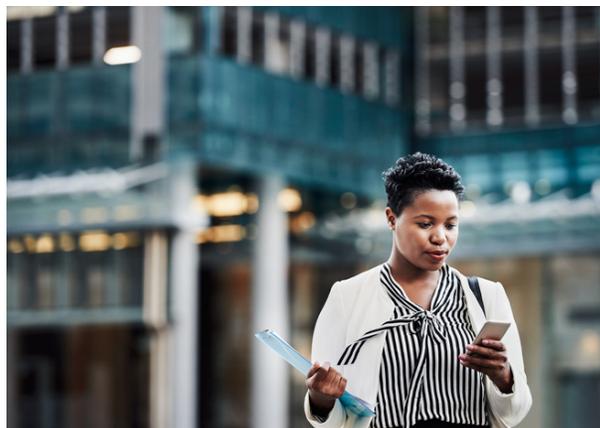
Syllabus

Author: Kari Heistad 2019

Founder and CEO., **Culture Coach International**

<https://the-culture-coach.com/>

(Multi-correct answer): What is Bias?



What is bias?

Choices:

- The way our brain makes negative assumptions about people
- A way our brain thinks that has been programmed into us through evolution
- Attitudes and stereotypes that affect our perceptions and actions
- Not having a neutral viewpoint

Explanation:

Bias is something we all have, and by itself, it is neither good nor bad. It is a conscious or unconscious judgment we make based on information we have learned from our own experiences or by what we have been taught by others. Bias can come into play about anything including individual people, groups of people, companies, sports teams, and even the kinds of ice cream we think are the “best.”

Question Topics: Intro to Bias

(Multiple Choice): What is “unconscious bias”?



What is “unconscious bias”?

Choices:

- ✓ A bias that we are unaware of that happens outside of our control
- ✗ Something that we are unaware of that we cannot change
- ✗ Our unconscious brain not being focused

Explanation:

While bias in general can be conscious and something we are aware of, unconscious bias is something that is harder to spot because it happens in our unconscious and thus we may not be aware of it happening until after the fact. A good way to catch unconscious bias is to ask yourself, when a thought comes up about a person or a group of people, would I have this same reaction if this person(s) was a different race/ethnicity/gender/sexual orientation/religion? If the answer is no, than this is a sign you should explore how your unconscious bias is impacting how you perceive others.

Question Topics: Intro to Bias

(Multi-correct answer): What Creates Bias?



“Bias” is how our brain thinks. Bias is created:

Choices:

- ✓ Through past interactions that influence how we perceive others
- ✓ By how people are described by others
- ✓ By what our colleague tells us—even if it is meant with good intentions
- ✗ By hiding characteristics, such as gender or height bias

Explanation:

Bias can be created in virtually every situation. It is created by what we see and hear around us from friends, family, colleagues and the media. If we hear a particular type of people often referred to as “smart” we can tend to think that all of those people are really smart – regardless of how smart they actually/really are. Or, we might see images that show a group of people mostly as criminals on TV shows or the news and so we develop a bias thinking that those people are criminals more than other types of people.

Even something as simple as height can cause a bias. Numerous studies have supported the fact that taller men are more successful; and Malcolm Gladwell in his book “Blink” says the following:

“I polled about half of the companies on the Fortune 500 list, asking each company questions about its CEO. In my sample, I found that on average CEOs were just a shade under six feet. Given that the average American male is 5'9” that means that CEOs, as a group, have about three inches on the rest of their sex. But this statistic actually understates matters. In the U.S. population, about 14.5% of all men are six feet or over. Among CEOs of Fortune 500 companies, that number is 58%.”

We also need to be careful about how we create bias in others. If you have worked with Mary before – and you didn't feel that her work was stellar – and now she is going to be working with your friend Frida, you may tell Frida to be careful because Mary was not that great working for you. But, perhaps

Mary was having a hard time in her life two years ago when she was working with you and now everything is fantastic. Now, because you introduced a bias about Mary to Frida, Frida will consciously – or unconsciously – be looking for things going wrong instead of things going well.

[For the full article about height and success, click here](#)

Question Topics: Intro to Bias

(Multiple Choice): Confirmation Bias



There are many different types of bias. “Confirmation bias” is one way that we can be biased and is defined as when:

Choices:

- A person confirms what you already know
- You only pay attention to data that you agree with and deny everything else
- You ask someone to confirm a piece of information
- Your team confirms information that you have presented as being correct

Explanation:

Confirmation bias is when you are only looking for – and believing information – that confirms an opinion you already have.

For example, you are not too fond of Craig. Even though Craig does countless things very well, he makes a mistake one day that drives you crazy. You focus on this one mistake and use it to justify your dislike because it aligns with your viewpoint of Craig. You completely disregard all the other things he is doing right. Instead of seeing Craig as being an important team member and one that you can help with coaching, you do not make an effort to help him improve and you only focus on anything that he is doing wrong when talking to other team members.

[For more information on confirmation bias, check out this article.](#)

Question Topics: Types of Bias

(Multiple Choice): Foundation Attribution Bias



If a foundation is what we build upon, and attribution is when we give credit to others, “foundation attribution” is when you:

Choices:

- Credit others’ actions to who they are but attribute your own actions to a situation
- Give credit where credit is due for work performed

- ✗ Think other people have a personality flaw
- ✗ Think that the foundation of your personality is better than others

Explanation:

Foundation attribution bias is when you think someone else failed because of their personality (the foundation of who they are), but if the same thing happens to you, you attribute your failure not to who you are, but instead, to the situation. For example: in your mind you think, “I wasn’t able to meet the deadline because it was too difficult and there wasn’t enough time given to me.” But, when Cindy doesn’t meet a deadline then she is unreliable and lazy.

[For more information on foundation attribution bias, check out this article.](#)

Question Topics: Types of Bias

(Multi-correct answer): In-Group vs. Out-Group

An in-group is when we are part of a group of people that are similar.

An “in-group bias” is when:

Choices:

- ✗ You bring new people into your in-group
- ✓ You tend to favor those who are a part of your group
- ✓ You exclude people who are not part of a particular group
- ✗ The most important people in the company make decisions

Explanation:

In-groups (people like us in some way) and Out-groups (people not like us) are part of human psychology; these groups can be formed in arbitrary ways such as growing up in a particular city or they can be more specific such as belonging to a specific religion. We can be part of both in-groups and out-groups at the same time.

In the workplace, being aware of in-group bias means checking assumptions about other people whom you want to work with or whom you trust. A typical situation where in-group bias is seen is when people are forming new teams to work with. The tendency is to fill those teams with people from your in-groups– people from your department, team or employee resource group for example.

While it can be good to work with people whom you are familiar with, this can also be negative because by limiting who you are working with, you are not tapping into the different perspectives and access to new networks that out-group people can provide.

To combat in-group bias, when you are forming teams or working on projects, watch if you are choosing the same people over and over again. If so, seek to find different people to include in your teams. When discussing ideas, watch for in-group bias when you give preference to ideas from people from your in-groups over people from out-groups.

[For more information on in-groups and out-groups, click here.](#)

Question Topics: Types of Bias

(Multiple Choice): Gender Bias



“Gender bias” is when you believe which of the following?

Choices:

- One gender is better than another.
- Men or women are better suited for a particular job.
- Both genders are equal.

Explanation:

Gender bias is when you choose someone for a role, position or work based on their gender. For example, you choose a man to join your coding team instead of the woman who has more experience or you choose the woman to join your team that cares for newborn babies.

Another example: A new team is formed and a choice needs to be made between two potential team leaders to lead a team of all men: Gina and Rodrigo. Gina is more outgoing and has more experience in the area but, people don't think she will have the authority needed to lead the group. So, they choose Rodrigo, who is more reserved to lead the team because they think being a man he will command the authority needed as a leader.

Question Topics: Types of Bias

(Multi-correct answer): Beauty Bias



“Beauty bias” is when you:

Choices:

- Believe beauty is in the eye of the beholder
- Believe that your appearances make you better at your work
- Judge people more positively or negatively based on their appearance
- Think that you are beautiful

Explanation:

Beauty bias is when you may think someone is better for a role or that they are more skilled or knowledgeable just because they are attractive. This can come up when people have a preference for a particular look for a role. For example, a tall thin woman with long blonde hair to hand out samples at the trade show instead of someone who does not fit that description but who knows the products very well and can answer questions.

Another example would be you choose to always work with Tina and Remy because you see them as beautiful and handsome since they always dress very well and look nice. There are other hard workers in the office, but you do not pay much attention to them because they don't receive as many compliments on their appearance as Tina and Remy do.

Question Topics: Types of Bias

(Multi-correct answer): Halo Effect



Considering that a halo is an imagined sense of glory, the “halo effect” is when:

Choices:

- ✓ You think a person can do no wrong
- ✓ You focus only on the good things about a person
- ✗ A person is a high performer
- ✗ You focus only on the bad things that a person does

Explanation:

The halo effect is when you are not looking at all of the data available to you and instead, you are just focusing on the positive. For example: You have known Jose for years and he was a great in the past, but lately his work has been slipping. But you keep making excuses saying, “He has always done so well in the past, I am sure he is just having a hard time today” when, in reality, his work has been slipping for months.

The opposite of the halo effect is called the “horns” effect: which is when you focus on something negative and you overlook the positive aspects of a person. For example: In the past you had one big issue with an employee named Anjali, but you haven’t worked together in a while. After Anjali joins a work team you are part of, you ignore all of the good ideas that she brings to the team, thus hurting the team you are both part of.

[For more information on the halo effect, click here.](#)

Question Topics: Types of Bias

(Multiple Choice): Overconfidence Bias



Having confidence in your work is a good thing. But an “overconfidence bias” is defined as having which of the following?

Choices:

- ✓ A belief that your skills and abilities are better than they actually are
- ✗ The confidence to act on your beliefs

- ✗ Too much confidence in others
- ✗ The ability to step back and to ask for help when needed

Explanation:

When you are overly confident in your abilities, it means that you are not being realistic about what you can do successfully. Overconfidence bias can lead you to taking risks that aren't appropriate because you believe that you know what you are doing. While being confident is a good thing, it is also important to recognize where your skill level stops, and when you need to ask for help so that you don't jeopardize yourself or put others at risk.

[Cognitive Bias Examples can be found by clicking here.](#)

Question Topics: Types of Bias

(Multiple Choice): Anchoring Bias

“Anchoring bias” can often have a bigger impact on long-term work, such as lengthy team projects or research. It can be defined as:

Choices:

- ✓ Relying on an initial piece of data to make further decisions or judgments
- ✗ Using a piece of data as the starting point of your work but evolving over time
- ✗ Using a framework of decision making as the anchor for your work
- ✗ Doing research about the best piece of information to use for your work

Explanation:

The anchoring bias is when you make a judgment about a starting piece of information or data, and you use this to frame other decisions going forward. This means that you are not looking at data from an objective point of view, but rather in relation to the first piece of information.

For example: you are doing some research into a new market for the company. You find a piece of data that shows students under 21 would love avocado flavored chips. You base the rest of the research around this piece of data and present a report that recommends the development of an avocado flavored chip. You later learn that the research for this data was paid for by an avocado company. As you anchored to this initial piece of data, you made decisions based on this piece of information that may not have been the best information for your company.

[Bias in Research and How to Address It Article](#)

Question Topics: Types of Bias

(Multiple Choice): Types of Bias



What is “selection bias”?

Choices:

- ✓ Choosing the same people over and over again
- ✗ Selecting the best people for each team project
- ✗ Making sure you select a diverse group of people for the next project
- ✗ Checking the selection of the team with your boss

Explanation:

Selection bias is when you choose the same people, or the same type of people, over and over again. Even if other people are doing great work, if they are not part of the list of people you turn to every time you put a team together, then they probably won't get asked.

This can happen when teams have not learned the value of having diverse perspectives on the team and thus, leaders go back to the same people that they have always had, instead of inviting in diverse perspectives and viewpoints of other people.

Selection bias can come in a variety of ways, including these examples: length of time in a role (perceived as being a better selection), relationship with the person making the decision (best friends choose best friends), role (sales will be better than someone from marketing), and gender (a woman wouldn't understand).

Selection bias can hurt people's careers because if they do not get a chance to learn new skills or to gain experience in new areas, they won't be ready for the next opportunity when it comes up.

Question Topics: Types of Bias

(Multiple Choice): Self-Serving Bias



Everyone has a number of great attributes. However, we must also be careful of the “self-serving bias,” which can be defined as:

Choices:

- ✓ Believing that positive outcomes are based on skill, while bad outcomes are based on luck
- ✗ Believing that we know best, no matter what
- ✗ Believing that our confidence is our best attribute
- ✗ Making decisions that serve only our best interests in the long term

Explanation:

If “skill” or “luck” result in your success is all a matter of perception. The self-serving bias is when you believe that when positive things happen it is from your own skills and when negative things happen it was all due to bad luck. This absolves you of any responsibility for anything bad that happens which might be good for your ego, but is detrimental for your long-term success. Be careful about how you frame your successes/failures and make sure that you are being honest about what contributed to those results.

Question Topics: Types of Bias

(Multi-correct answer): How Do We Overcome Bias

Bias is very prevalent in our lives. How do we combat it and help ourselves become more aware of its impact in our interactions?

Choices:

- ✓ Question ourselves on where our opinions come from and check that we are not stereotyping people.
- ✓ Make a list of where we think bias might impact us the most and pay more attention in those situations.
- ✗ Spend time with people who are different than we are to learn new ways of seeing the world.
- ✗ Accept that biases cannot be changed.

Explanation:

As you have seen in this Qstream, bias can come in many forms. While it will be impossible to completely eliminate bias from our lives, it is possible to take steps to recognize bias when it happens and to address it. Asking ourselves where our opinions are coming from helps us to find biases within ourselves.

When we are interacting with someone and we have a specific reaction to them, we need to ask ourselves, would we have the same reaction if they were a different gender/race/ethnicity? For example, if you are in a group of people and you ask the woman to get you a cup of coffee, to check for bias, ask yourself, would you have asked a man to get you a cup of coffee in the same situation? If you would have (ie. they both are hosting a group of people and the woman happened to be closer) than you are not responding with a bias about women making coffee. However, if you asked the woman to make a cup of coffee because she is the only woman in the group, then you need to think about what biases you have about gender roles.

If you know when your biases might be triggered, putting into place a way to help yourself remember that is a good idea. If you typically like to hire people who went to the same college as you, before reviewing resumes for a position, remind yourself of your bias and watch if you choose more people who graduated from your alma mater. Lastly, spending time with people who are different than you will help you to see the world in a new way and challenges the biases that you may have.

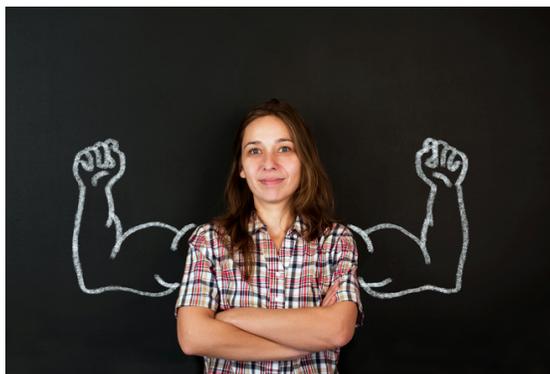
To learn how to overcome bias here are two articles

[6 Ways to Overcome Bias](#)

[NPR - Here and Now on Bias](#)

Question Topics: Overcoming Bias

(Multi-correct answer): Standing Up To Bias



Bias is very prevalent in our lives, behaviors, and speech and we encounter it often in ourselves and in others.

What are some ways to help counteract the bias we see in situations?

Choices:

- ✓ Raise awareness about what is happening with the appropriate people/department/managers.
- ✓ Don't escalate the situation by joining in on the teasing or gossiping.
- ✓ Ask the group if they think any bias is entering into our decision making/selection process/research.
- ✗ Pretend not to see what is happening so that you don't have to get involved.

Explanation:

Being an ally when you see bias happening means getting involved, but how you get involved can vary greatly. Biases cannot be changed until we are willing to be aware of them in ourselves and also in the situations that we find ourselves in. Making people aware of biases does not mean that you need to embarrass other people. Sometimes a bias may happen without someone realizing what they have done; so talking with them in private can be the best solution.

Another course of action would be making the appropriate people (human resources, a supervisor or manager) aware of biases so that they can help to address them and if they are the people involved, think about sharing with someone else too.

If you feel safe doing so, speaking up can make a big difference, something like the phrase, "That hasn't been my experience with _____" puts a different voice into the room, and it can help others realize that they are being biased. You can also influence others by what you *don't do* – i.e. not repeating gossip about people, not laughing at jokes and not passing along emails that are inappropriate.

Question Topics: Overcoming Bias
