



Implicit Bias Fact Sheet

What is Implicit Bias?

- Implicit bias is when someone consciously rejects stereotypes and supports anti-discrimination efforts but also holds negative associations in his/her mind unconsciously.
- Based upon visual and aural cues, individuals make automatic judgments about what category a particular person fits within, and we often act on those judgments.
- Implicit bias begins in the limbic system (which serves primal survival needs) and emerges from brain stimuli and schema.
- According to brain science, biases are often positively or negatively triggered by past experiences, memories, and conditioning and, thus, different things unintentionally get linked together.
- Things become less constructive and more violent when the brain, which automatically generalizes, starts to categorize people and conclude things about them in ways that are unproductive and discriminatory.
- Implicit bias does not mean that people are hiding their racial prejudices. They literally do not know they have them.

How Does Implicit Bias Impact in Our Daily Lives?

- Implicit bias informs us how to behave or respond in a given situation.
- It can affect people's decisions and their behavior toward people of other races.
- Implicit bias creates embedded stereotypes that heavily and arguably always influence our decision-making without our conscious knowledge.
- Once a group or category has been defined through brain processes and cultural conditioning, humans tend to exaggerate the differences between groups and to presume homogeneity within a group.
- Implicit bias includes selective attention and in-attentional blindness.
- Implicit bias can lead to:

- Diagnosis bias
- Value attribution
- Confirmation bias
- Commitment confirmation or loss aversion (wedded to a particular point of view)
- Anchoring bias
- Internalized bias
- Incorrect “trusting the gut”
- Sustaining and reinforcing discriminatory action and thinking

What Types of Power Can Be Influenced by Implicit Bias?

- Coercive
- Reward
- Relational
- Resource control
- Assumed or demonstrated expertise
- Informational power
- Personality power

Implicit bias leads to:

- Micro-inequities
- Micro-aggressions
- Micro-advantages

Implicit Bias creates inequality and inequity in:

- Criminal justice
- Health care
- Political representation
- Educational access
- Housing
- Employment opportunities
- Social acceptance

How to counter implicit bias:

- Recognize that implicit bias is always operating and is a normal part of the human experience.

- Be aware of your own biases: Acknowledge your own reactions, interpretations, and judgments.
- Examine one's own narrative traditions about different groups of people.
- Develop the capacity for self-observation, empathy, or perspective taking.
- Pay attention to what's happening beneath the judgments and assessments.
- Understand the other reactions, interpretations, and judgments that may be possible.
- Consciously identify and navigate through unconscious bias.
- Replace stereotypes with counter stereotypes.
- Interrupt the behavioral effects of implicit bias.
- Encourage individuation.
- Describe and accept the concept of neural plasticity.
- Practice constructive uncertainty.
- Search for the most constructive, empowering, or productive way to deal with the situation.
- Explore awkwardness or discomfort.
- Increase and practice direct intergroup contact.
- Practice indirect forms of intergroup contact.
- Get feedback and data on bias and how it impacts different individuals, groups, and how it operates politically, economically and socially.
- Actively work to alter perceptions regarding implicit bias.