

# UNCONSCIOUS BIASES

What are they? ➤ How to Counteract

## NORMATIVE BIAS

Assumptions about and preference for traditional career path. Lack of understanding of excellence in different forms.



- Become informed about different knowledges, experiences and career paths, and how they can be assessed in terms of equivalencies and transferrable skills

## PERFORMANCE BIAS

Overestimation for individuals historically overvalued and underestimation for individuals historically undervalued.



- Establish selection criteria before hand.
- Consider how unconscious biases might result in over or under estimating qualifications of candidates.
- Consider using techniques such as removing names from applications.



## CONFIRMATION BIAS

Predisposition to "find" or not "find" information in order to confirm expectations and stereotypes



- Look at all of the information about the candidate, and not just pick the material that supports an initial impression.
- Remember biases can be exhibited even by people in the same equity group as the applicant.

## PERFORMANCE-ATTRIBUTION BIAS

Success of those from dominant groups is attributed to abilities, whereas for those from low status groups success is attributed to help or special programs.

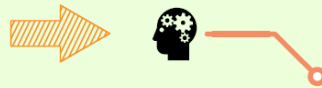


- Don't make assumptions about how they got to where they are.
- Recognize that everyone gets 'help' to succeed in some form.
- Recognize that the accomplishments of those who get help to provide them with equitable opportunities are still a result of their abilities.



## LIKEABILITY TRADE OFF

How well someone would "fit" and how much peers think they would like working with someone.  
For underrepresented groups this can overshadow assessments of competence.



- Incorporate diversity as a key criterion for selection that will enhance team performance.
- Develop an appreciation of differences and how diversity can contribute to innovation and team problem solving.

## MATERNAL BIAS & DEBASEMENT FILTER

- Don't make assumptions and if there are concerns, ask the candidate about specific job requirements.
- Reconsider traditional expectations of employees in a more diverse society.
- Acknowledge that employers have a social responsibility to support employees personally, as well as professionally.

Doubting that someone would be seriously interested/invested in the position because of their family status, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, etc.



[www.queensu.ca/equity](http://www.queensu.ca/equity)

Adapted from Ryerson University

