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
- Establish selection criteria beforehand.
- Consider how unconscious biases might result in over or under estimating qualifications of candidates.
- Consider using techniques such as removing names from applications.
Overestimation for individuals historically overvalued and underestimation for individuals historically undervalued.

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
- 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.
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.
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.