

4 insights

ON UNCONSCIOUS BIAS EVERY
HIRING MANAGER SHOULD KNOW

to reduce prejudice, hire the best candidates,
and impact business results

creative + *talent* + partners 

Here's what is crystal clear about Hidden Bias:

It exists in every company.

And left unchecked, unconscious bias will steadily undermine your agency's ability to recruit, promote, and retain top talent. **That's a dangerous implication.**

The ability to become **a truly diverse company** is possible. The key is to raise the awareness of every hiring manager (heck, any manager) to help lessen the limitations they unknowingly place on others.

Here's why raising awareness around unconscious bias is critical:

- + Hiring- Every candidate is unconsciously judged, some merely by their name. A study of identical resumes showed ***those with white-sounding names received 50% more calls for interviews than identical resumes with black-sounding names.***¹ We've got to get hiring managers more aware of who they screen out and why.
- + Promotion - Women are often victims of unconscious bias, especially as it relates to performance and promotion. Research shows that when men and women work together on tasks, ***women are given less credit for a successful outcome and viewed as having made smaller contributions to it.***²
- + Retention - It does a company no good if you hire the best talent and you don't have strategies to keep them. Diverse and inclusive workforces demonstrate ***1.57 more team collaboration and a 1.19 greater intent to stay.***³

Diversity is a competitive advantage.

Only through increased open-mindedness does your company have a chance at true diversity. And we're not just talking race or ethnicity. **Less bias in every facet leads to diversity of thought and diversity of thought leads to more innovative ideas.**

Your agency success is what's ultimately at stake.

Take these 4 insights seriously. Read them. Share them. ***Use them as a catalyst*** to start changing the way your agency thinks about unconscious bias and its impact on recruiting, promoting and retaining top talent.

Starting now...

1. Check Yourself

Take a mental note of your first impression of someone's resume. Do you instantly have a gut like or dislike about something you read? Their name, their alma mater? Is it based on a stereotype or an unconscious bias?

And do the same during interviews. A study done by the Clayman Institute of Gender Studies at Stanford found that **the number of women musicians in orchestras went up from 5% to 25%** since the 1970s—a shift that happened when judges began auditioning musicians behind screens so that they could not see if a male or female was playing.

This isn't to say that interviews have to be done behind screens of course, a bit silly in our world. But by gut-checking yourself at all stages of the hiring cycle, you increase the chance that you are staying objective and moving the best candidates forward.

2. Be Aware

Unconscious bias are prejudices we have but are unaware of. These biases cause us to make decisions in favor of one group to the detriment of others, especially dangerous in a hiring situation. **The key to any behavior change is to first become aware.**

Be aware that you have biases lurking within. Learn more about what's a typical bias in the workplace then be diligent in self-policing yourself against them.

Some common biases that show up at work:

Tall men move into leadership positions . Blonde women make 7% more in salary than women with another color hair. Overweight employees are given less opportunities.⁴

Now, are these always true? No! Yet **it's essential that hiring managers are at least aware of the tendencies toward bias at work** so they can keep themselves in check.

3. Create Structures

Unconscious bias is the result of your brain taking in and sorting millions of pieces of information in milliseconds. Most of this micro-sorting is done before you even blink an eye, which is why we aren't aware of most of our biases.

To slow the brain down (and lessen the risk of a split second prejudice), **hiring managers can create structures around activities like resume screening, interview questions and decision making.**

Things like asking standardized interview questions, adding an objective interviewer into the mix and requiring verbal justification for every hire can be just the right change in process to reduce unconscious bias.

Creating structures allows for more deliberative actions and ultimately give the time necessary to make the most productive hire.

Remember, your business success depends on diversity of hires.

4. Offer Training

Awareness is key; long-lasting results are essential. Training is the most impactful method to help employees learn to recognize their own biases and discover ways to start changing their behavior. It's not enough to know better, you've got to do better.

In my **Taming Unconscious Bias Workshop** we go deep on how bias in the workplace limits opportunities (theirs and others). It's a mix of insightful learnings plus actionable next steps. Attendees walk away prepared to face real-life bias scenarios with success.

Reducing bias isn't a one-off lesson. Training helps make it a lasting behavior.

1. Bertrand, M. & Mullainathan, S. (2004). Are Emily and Greg more employable than Lakisha and Jamal? A field experiment on labor market discrimination. *The American Economic Review*, 94(4), 991-1013.

2. Heilman, M.E. & Hayes, M.C. (2005). No credit where credit is due: attributional rationalization of women's success in male-female teams. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 90(5), 905-926

3. Corporate Executive Board (CEB), (2012). Global labor market survey. *Creating Competitive Advantage Through Workforce Diversity Report*

4. Price, S. (n.d.). Think slow. BCCJacumen.com.

Meet Cecilia



You have completely reinvigorated my passion in work...and in life, quite frankly.
- Stephanie Theodoropoulos

You grabbed my attention for a full two hours. I only looked at my watch once, which was to hope you could speak a little longer.
- Christopher Vyletel

Cecilia's presentation was right on point. She has so much energy and has the skill to really connect with the front row and the back row. Her compelling and inviting style is engaging and enlightening, her enthusiasm is believable.
- Gary Thormasgaard// Orange County, CA

I have been to many business information presentations in my life and most are very boring. Cecilia has a way about her that keeps you both engaged & entertained. I came out of the presentation with "real life" applicable management ideas, not just concepts. I highly recommend her.
- Tim Alexander// Orange County, CA

Cecilia Gorman spent 20 years in advertising, focused on agency operations, integrated production, creative management, and leadership development.

She believes the core responsibility of leaders is to develop the next generation and her deep passion for teaching has become the foundation of all her programs. Cecilia is a Certified John C. Maxwell Trainer, Speaker & Coach and her greatest strength lies in an ability to motivate talent toward a more passionate and productive future.

"Refreshing to witness a presenter who has the ability to communicate real-life experiences & relevant topics for the advertising industry."

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