

Fair Appraisal

The Role of Unconscious Bias



Outline

- What is unconscious bias (or implicit association)?
- Types of bias
- Relevance to appraisal
- Identifying and managing bias

Principles for respectful inquiry

- Listen to understand
- Honour confidentiality
- Be mindful of the impact of what we say
- Assume good intention in others
- Give and receive caring feedback
- Be curious about emotional responses

What makes a good doctor?

- In your groups, use the outline to illustrate a 'good doctor'. You may add text explanations or other elements to the picture.

You have no more than 10 minutes – so work fast.

How objective are we?

Moss-Racusin *et al* (2012) had staff in science faculties in US colleges rate the application of a student for a position as a laboratory manager.

The same application was used 127 times and randomly assigned either a female (64 times) or male (63 times) name.

Selectors rated the male applicant as significantly more hireable than the female applicant. They also chose a higher starting salary and offered more career mentoring to the male applicant.

The gender of the selector did not affect responses.

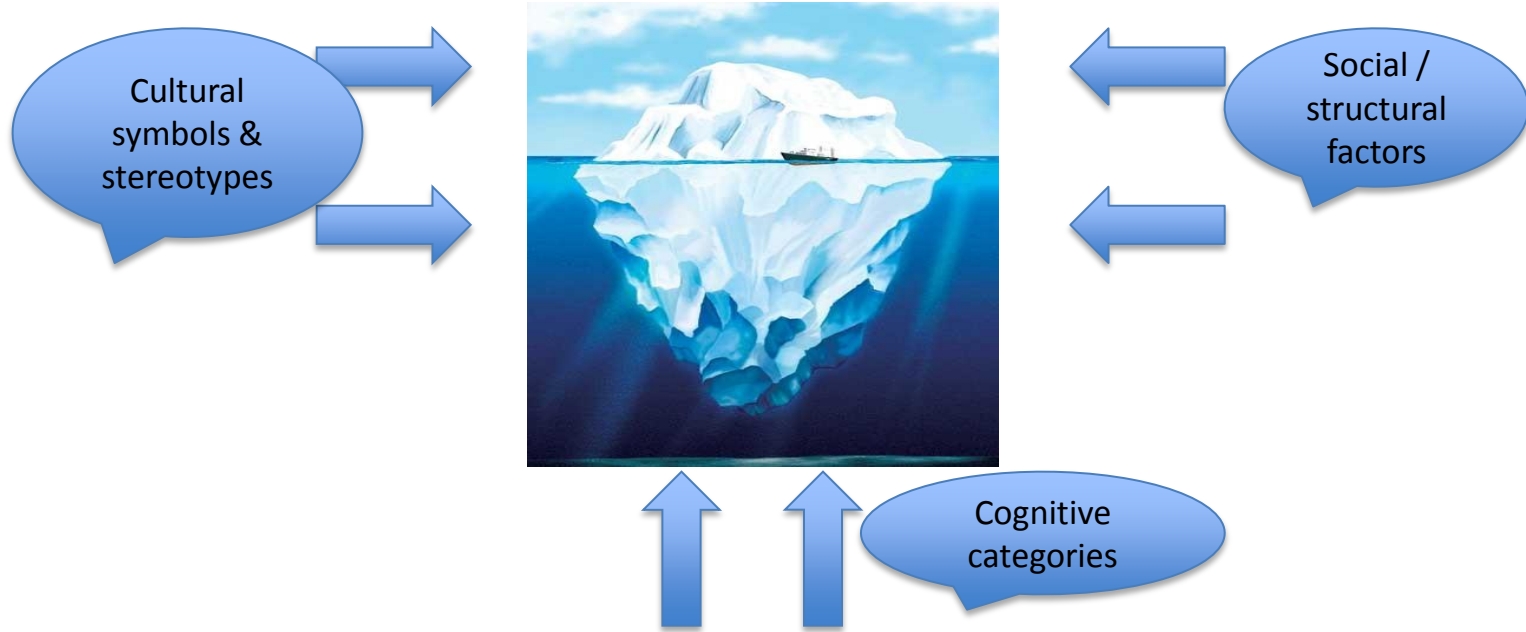
Moss-Racusin, CA, Dovidio, JF, Brescoll, VL, Graham, M & Handelsman, J (2012) 'Science faculty's subtle gender biases- favour male students'. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences for the United States of America* 109(41): 16474-16479

A recent research report looking at the experiences of BAME staff within the Civil Service showed that in Performance Management Review BAME people were underrepresented in those considered to be “succeeding” in their objectives and overrepresented among those merely “achieving” or who “must improve”.

BAME staff are winning a smaller number of promotions at Senior Civil Service level now than in 2010 and the overall proportion of promotions going to BAME staff has fallen.

Ethnic Dimensions (2014) ‘Identifying and Removing Barriers to Talented BAME Staff Progression in the Civil Service’.

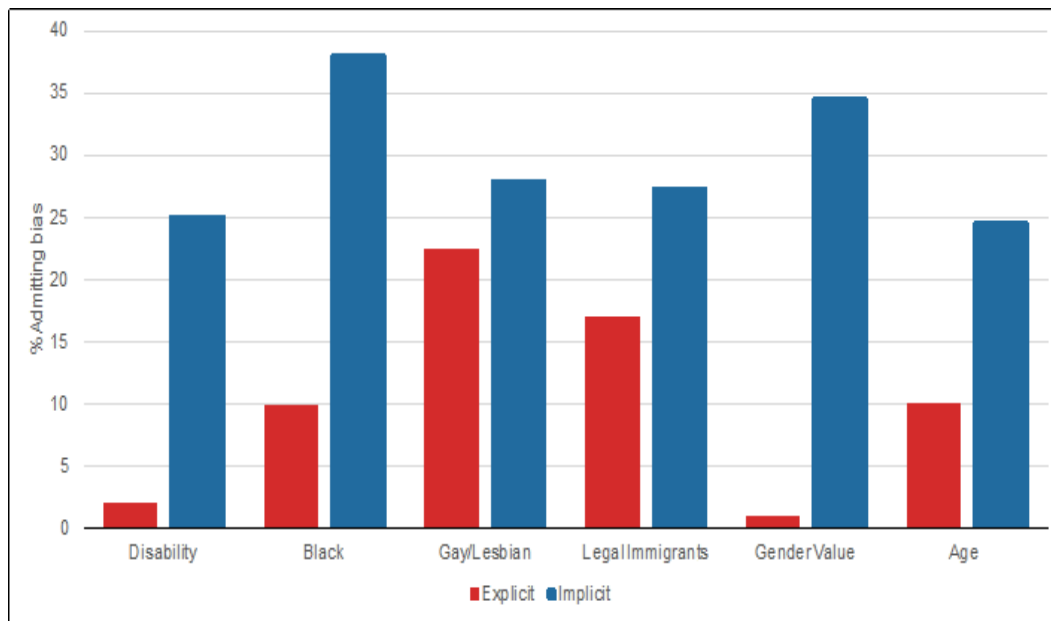
The black box of your brain.....



Unconscious Bias/Implicit Association

- Bias we are unaware of – tends to happen outside our control
- Based on automatic judgements or assessments of people or situations
- Influenced by our background, environment, personal experiences
- We can be made aware of these biases and act to control them.

The difference between explicit and implicit bias



Types of bias

- **Affinity** (these people are like me. Basis for in-groups.)
- **Confirmation** (what I already thought)
- **Attribution** (we tend to differential attribution for our in-groups and out-groups)
- **Stereotype** (eg, white males are often seen as leaders, women often thought of as 'better at communication')
- **Group Think** (minimise conflict - agree with the group)
- **Halo Effect** (good in one area – good in all areas?)
- **Salience** (previous performance continues to affect view)
- **Micro-aggressions** (behavioural manifestations of bias)

Scope for bias – management and development

Workplace culture
(‘fitting in’,
informal support)

Feedback &
Performance
Support

Development &
learning
opportunities

Work allocation

Coaching &
mentoring

Scope for bias -- appraisal

Who gives
feedback?

Whose feedback
matters?

Honesty/usefulness/
timeliness

Stereotypes –
professional identity

Stereotype threats –
self limitation

Microaggressions

Recognising and reflecting on bias

- Implicit association tests
- Encounter diaries
- Reflective practice
- ‘Reverse mentoring’
- Awareness of resilience & emotional intelligence

What can we do about unconscious bias?

- Accept we are all biased
- Challenge stereotypes and use counter-stereotypical information
- Change perception and relationship with out-group members
- Consider and try actively to manage micro-behaviours.
- Be an active bystander
- Manage emotional and cognitive load.

And in appraisal --

- Approach task with active intention to be fair and unbiased – but be self-aware and open to challenge.
- Cross check sources and types of information, and consider if processes (affinity, confirmation, stereotyping) may affect that information.
- Use the process – but do so thoughtfully.
- Be an active bystander. If something looks wrong, say something.

This resource may be made available, in full or summary form, in alternative formats and community languages.

Please contact us on **0131 656 3200** or email **altformats@nes.scot.nhs.uk** to discuss how we can best meet your requirements.



NHS Education for Scotland
Westport 102
West Port
Edinburgh
EH3 9DN
www.nes.scot.nhs.uk

© NHS Education for Scotland 2017. You can copy or reproduce the information in this resource for use within NHSScotland and for non-commercial educational purposes. Use of this document for commercial purposes is permitted only with the written permission of NES.