

# TACKLING UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

IP Inclusive Workshop Toolkit

08 Nov 2017



**IP INCLUSIVE**

Working for diversity and inclusion in IP

## Where Unconscious Bias can arise:

Unconscious bias can occur whenever we make decisions.  
Consider the possibility of bias when thinking about:

- Recruitment and Selection
- Performance Appraisals
- Allocation of roles and responsibilities (both internal and externally-facing)
- Salary Reviews
- Committee / Team structures
- Social events and gatherings
- Working arrangements

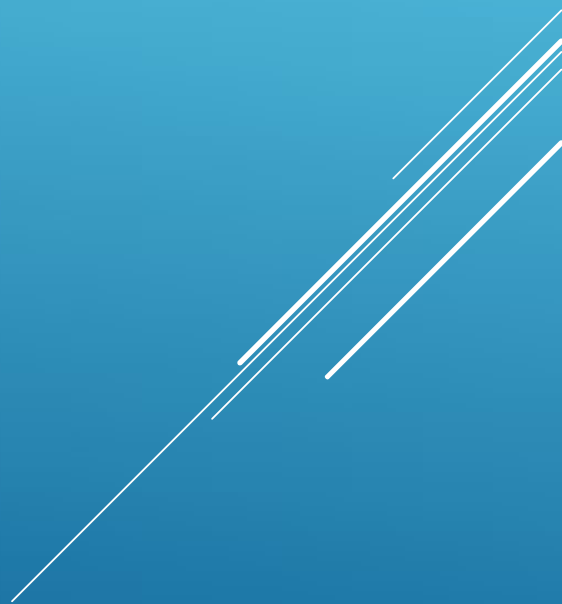
Unconscious Bias can mean that decisions made are not fair or evidence based. This could lead to discrimination, and significantly impact on workplace performance.

## The Impact of Unconscious Bias

Unconscious bias can have detrimental effects throughout an organisation, on its people and on its performance:

- Talent recruitment and retention
- Staff engagement and productivity
- Capacity for innovation
- Engagement with external stakeholders (including clients)
- Legal and regulatory compliance issues


## Key Areas for overcoming Unconscious Bias

- Senior buy-in and visible leadership
  - Starting the conversation
  - Levelling the Playing Field
  - Monitor and Review
- 

## Senior buy-in and visible leadership

*Senior buy-in and visible leadership will help create an environment where diversity becomes an integral part of the organisation and where unbiased inclusivity is the default*


Consider:

- ✓ Does your organisation have senior buy-in? If not, who are the key influencers you need to get on board?
  - ✓ Do you have any senior diversity and inclusion champions or role models? A focal point helps to provide direction
  - ✓ Have you built the business case on why diversity matters? If not, consider how you could build the business case by exploring the link between diversity and improved performance
- 

## Senior buy-in and visible leadership continued ...

*Senior buy-in and visible leadership will help create an environment where diversity becomes an integral part of the organisation and where unbiased inclusivity is the default*

Consider:

- ✓ Is your organisation ready to begin raising awareness of diversity, inclusion and unconscious bias?
  - ✓ Are your promotional materials, and other externally-facing communications, aligned with the organisation's diversity and inclusion policies? Could they be better used to reinforce those policies?
- 

# Let's start the conversation


*Create a culture where you celebrate and value the difference we all bring to the workplace*

Consider:

- ✓ Encourage staff to start the conversation locally at a team level (for example, use your staff intranet or newsletters to raise awareness of diversity matters)
- ✓ Take part in broad awareness sessions such as World Mental Health Day, International Day Against Homophobia etc.,
- ✓ Launch your own 'awareness weeks' – a time to focus on particular issues to raise awareness (e.g. wellbeing week or mental health awareness week or even just a general 'let's tackle unconscious bias' week)
- ✓ Explore the power of personal stories – invite colleagues to share their journeys using your social media or news feeds (e.g. Yammer)

## Let's start the conversation continued ...

Consider:

- ✓ Staff training on unconscious bias, at all levels
  - ✓ The power of staff-led networks and role models, for example:
    - ✓ Women@work network sharing experiences and best practice tips for removing barriers to progression (could be extended to men becoming WoMen@work focusing on barriers regardless of gender)
    - ✓ LGBTQ+ network focused on raising awareness of LGBTQ+ issues across the organisation and providing peer to peer support
- 



# Levelling the Playing Field

*Consider the procedural changes you can introduce to make it an equitable playing field*

## Consider: **Your Recruitment Processes**

- ✓ 'name-blind' recruitment (i.e. removing personal data from the recruiting process)
- ✓ Being clear about your shortlisting criteria and the language you use in job descriptions
- ✓ Unconscious Bias training for your key recruiters
- ✓ Rotating your recruiters or recruiting panel to broaden the pool who make the decision to recruit
- ✓ Think about how you can prime your recruiters to look for positive associations, perhaps requiring recruiters to test for their own unconscious biases
- ✓ Using competencies or technical assessments rather than just 'CV'
- ✓ Broaden where you advertise your vacancies
- ✓ Lateral hires rather than 'promotion' boards
- ✓ Avoiding academic bias by only recruiting from certain universities
- ✓ Being mindful of new GDPR requirements

## Levelling the Playing Field continued ...


Consider: **Training, Allocation of Work, Performance Appraisals, Policies**

- ✓ How could independent challenge be brought into the process?
- ✓ Training for key staff to recognise their own unconscious bias. Being aware is the first step towards mitigation
- ✓ Focus on the positive behaviour rather than stereotype; require objective mapping of skills
- ✓ Review mechanisms for how work is allocated and for scrutiny of the resultant decisions
- ✓ Benchmarking against best practice (e.g. organisations that rank in the Top Employers for Working Families)
- ✓ Adopting and promoting (both internally and externally) diversity friendly policies such as flexible working

## Monitor and Review

*Use your management information to celebrate how well you're doing, as well as focus on key areas for development*

Consider:

- ✓ How do you use your management information to inform and influence where you can best improve?
  - ✓ Introducing voluntary, anonymised engagement surveys focused on diversity
  - ✓ How you use your exit interview information (both real-time and post-exit)
  - ✓ How you communicate your metrics and commitments to improve
- 

## FURTHER RESOURCES

- ✓ ACAS: Unconscious Bias Information available at:  
<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=5433>
- ✓ CIPD: Unconscious Bias available at:  
<https://www2.cipd.co.uk/NR/rdonlyres/666D7059-8516-4F1A-863F-7FE9ABD76ECC/0/Reducingunconsciousbiasorganisationalresponses.pdf>
- ✓ Implicit Awareness Tests, Harvard University:  
<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>
- ✓ IP Inclusive at <http://www.ipinclusive.org.uk/>



**IP INCLUSIVE**

Working for diversity and inclusion in IP