

Training Toolkit

A Leader's Guide for Understanding and Managing Bias
Facilitator's Guide

VisionSpring
Inclusion Learning Loop

A Leader's Guide for Understanding and Managing Bias

INTRODUCTION

What is an Inclusion Learning Loop™ Training Toolkit?

The Inclusion Learning Loop™ training toolkits are complete out-of-the-box training curriculums that provide Inclusion Learning Loop™ members access to a library of diversity- and inclusion-related workshops. All of our toolkits include facilitator materials, a PowerPoint presentation, pre-work or foundational materials, and an action planning worksheet. Each of our training toolkits equips trainers with all the information, tools and materials needed to deliver a rich and comprehensive development experience.

What is the Leader's Guide for Understanding and Managing Bias Toolkit?

The Leader's Guide for Understanding and Managing Bias Toolkit is a training tool that can be leveraged by D&I practitioners as part of their training offerings. The tool is designed to help managers and leaders recognize situations where bias may have impacted his or her decision-making process and behaviors and how those decisions can impact others. Additionally, the conversations and exercises built into the agenda will help participants recognize and manage bias within themselves.

Who is it designed for?

The intended participant is any individual in the organization who manages others or has decision-making authority that may impact the success of others in the organization. This workshop is designed to be delivered by diversity and inclusion practitioners and trainers. **Some facilitation skill and an intermediate-to-advanced level of D&I competency is required to lead a successful meeting.**

How can you use it?

This workshop can be included as part of your organization's internal D&I training offerings and/or part of your professional development offerings targeting leadership development. This workshop can be delivered by a facilitator who has training skills and knowledge of unconscious bias, diversity and inclusion. You will also find the PowerPoint presentation to accompany this facilitator's guide. Tools to enhance subject knowledge are provided on the Inclusion Learning Loop™ - [link to toolkit](#).

This exercise can be effectively executed in 4.0–5.0 hours.

Exercise objectives:

The Leader's Guide for Understanding and Managing Bias is designed to help individuals recognize and manage bias within themselves and others.

Objectives:

- Deepen your understanding of conscious and unconscious bias
- Develop tools to identify how bias may be impacting your decisions and behaviors
- Gain strategies for managing your bias and its impact
- Create a set of actions for dealing with bias in your personal interactions

Materials:

Flip chart and markers

Tape to post flip chart pages

Name tags or cards (depending on audience)

Copies of the Scenarios for each group

Copies of Action Plan Worksheet for each participant

A [PowerPoint](#) Presentation had been provided as part of this toolkit.

Facilitator Preparation: Review Content and Materials

Familiarize Yourself with the Workshop Materials and the Content

1. Review Facilitator Guide
2. Review PowerPoint
3. Review background information materials to become knowledgeable on the content
4. Additional reading materials can be found in the Unconscious Bias Articles Section on the Inclusion Learning Loop™ – [link](#)

Decide if you will Assign Participant Pre-work

Much of the information found in the bias foundational materials is woven into the presentation portions of the workshop. Decide if you want the participants to read the materials prior to the workshop or if you want them to “hear” the information for the first time via the presentation.

1. [Read](#) the article – What is Bias?
2. Decide how you would like to use the materials
3. If assigning as pre-work, send the link to all participants at least one week prior to the workshop

Assemble all Workshop Materials

1. Review materials list and secure through proper channels
2. Decide if you are going to print participant materials or supply them electronically to all workshop attendees.
 - a. if yes, [print](#) participant materials.
 - b. if no, [print](#) scenarios for all participants.
 - c. if no, [print](#) role play exercise for all participants.
 - d. if no, [print](#) the Action Planning Worksheet for everyone.

Background Information

What is Bias?

Bias is an inclination or preference either for or against an individual or group that interferes with impartial judgment. Biases can be explicit—in the form of stereotypes or prejudices—or implicit, which can exist without the knowledge of the person. Bias is a very real part of life and of every corporate culture, and substantial research shows a connection between unconscious bias and actions and behaviors.

Why it Matters/The Effects of Biases

Despite investment and rigorous efforts dedicated to diversity and inclusion, organizations struggle with widespread disparity. This can often be difficult to explain and extremely frustrating on the part of D&I leaders. Hidden or unconscious bias has emerged as a viable explanation for the disparity that exists not only in our workplaces but also in the media, our political system, our education system and in the healthcare industry.

Teaching Tolerance, A Project of the Southern Poverty Law Center, reports that discrimination continues in housing and real estate sales, and racial profiling is a common practice even among ordinary citizens. Members of minorities continue to report humiliating treatment by store clerks, co-workers and police. Studies indicate that African American teenagers are aware they are stigmatized as being intellectually inferior and that they go to school bearing what psychologist Claude Steele has called a "burden of suspicion." Such a burden can affect their attitudes and achievement.

Bias has impact in many workplace scenarios as well:

- A study conducted by the National Bureau of Economic Research revealed that job applicants with “white sounding” names are 50% more likely to be called back for an interview than applicants with “black sounding” or “ethnic sounding” names.
- Many studies have been conducted that conclude that the existence of bias will impact the outcomes of job interviews. For example, a now-famous study found that white interviewers sit farther away from black applicants than from white applicants, make more speech errors and end the interviews 25% sooner.
- Although fewer than 15% of American men are over 6 feet tall, more than 60% of corporate CEOs are over 6 feet tall.
- A woman still earns only about 77 cents on every dollar a man makes in the same position, and a woman of “child-bearing” age is far less likely to be hired or recommended for a promotion.

The Impact of Bias:

- Bias can lead to disparity and unfair treatment.
- Bias detracts from inclusion.
- Bias erodes employee engagement.
- Although bias can be positive, the effects are almost always negative.
- Bias interferes with impartial judgment and good decision-making.

What You Can Do About Unconscious Bias:

1. Educate yourself and deepen your understanding of what bias is and is not. Developing a better understanding and awareness of the existence of bias can be a powerful first step in managing the impact on yourself and others.
2. Understand the criteria being used by managers in your organization to evaluate decisions relating to promotions, career opportunities and access to high-profile assignments.
3. Evaluate that criteria and determine if any biases exist in which the criteria may unintentionally work against or in favor of a particular group of employees. For example, a criterion based on number of hours in the office or participation in meetings where a number of meetings may be held at 8:00 am may be bias against working parents—particularly working mothers.
4. Recognize your specific biases: Recognizing and admitting that you have a particular bias is the first step in overcoming your own bias—and can be the hardest part. Take a hard and critical look at some of the key decisions you've made—particularly hiring and promotion related decisions—in the past year or so. This can be a very useful tool in recognizing patterns that stem from bias.
5. Determine why the specific bias exists: Biases can stem from many places—strong cultural connections, personal experiences either negative or positive, misinformation, or religious messaging. Our biases are the filters through which we see the world. It is an important part of the process to understand what motivates the bias.
6. Become aware when a particular bias is effecting actions or decisions: If you become aware of your unconscious biases, you can monitor and attempt to manage the biases before they are expressed through behavior.
7. Take actions for managing your bias: When making decisions, make a conscious effort to pretend the bias does not exist. As this process of checking yourself for bias in the decision-making process becomes more routine, you will eventually begin to lose the bias altogether. Practice makes perfect.

Workshop Agenda

- 1) Welcome and Introductions (10 minutes)
- 2) Overview of Objectives
- 3) Background Information—What is Bias? (10 minutes)
- 4) Recognizing Bias: Exploration through Scenarios (60 minutes)
- 5) Examples of Bias: Personal Reflection/Group Discussion (20 minutes)
 - Reflect on an example where a bias may have been present that impacted your impartial judgment or decision-making capability.
- 6) Role Play: How Bias Can Impact Hiring Decisions (45 minutes)
- 7) Role Play Exercise Debrief (20 minutes)
- 8) What You Can Do About Bias (5 minutes)
- 9) Peer Coaching (40 minutes)
- 10) Action Planning (20 minutes)
- 11) Wrap Up (5 minutes)

Welcome and Introductions

Welcome, Workshop Objectives and Agenda

Say: I would like to welcome and thank all of you for participating in our Leader's Guide to Understanding and Managing Bias workshop. Throughout the course of the workshop, we will help you recognize and manage bias within yourself and others.

This workshop will help you:

- *Deepen your understanding of conscious and unconscious bias.*
- *Develop tools to identify where and how bias may be impacting your behavior and your leadership capability.*
- *Gain strategies for managing your bias and its impact.*
- *Create a set of actions for dealing with bias in your personal interactions.*

I would like to take a moment to review our day's agenda:

- *We'll start with a review of our ground rules and introductions.*
- *We'll provide some background information to deepen your understanding of what bias is and is not and*
- *We'll talk about the impact of bias.*
- *We'll explore bias through the use of scenarios.*
- *And then we'll ask you to share some examples of bias from your own experiences.*
- *We will be using a role play exercise to illustrate the impact of bias on the hiring process.*
- *We explore how you can begin to manage bias in proactive and productive ways.*
- *And will close the day with some peer coaching and action planning.*

Workshop Ground Rules

- Listen actively—respect others when they are talking.
- Be open to new ideas.
- Do not be afraid to respectfully challenge one another by asking questions, but refrain from personal attacks—focus on ideas.
- Maintain confidentiality (what we say here does not leave the room).
- Say **OOPS** and/or acknowledge when you may unintentionally say something and wish you had not.
- Say **OUCH** when someone’s words or actions may hurt you.
- Parking Lot
- Have Fun!

Say: Are we all comfortable and in agreement with these ground rules? Are there any ground rules anyone would like to add?

Introductions

Say: *I would like to ask each of you to introduce yourselves by telling us:*

- Your name

- Your title and department

- One unusual, little-known fact about yourself as an ice-breaker question

What is Bias?

Say: We are going to start today's workshop by providing a bit of background information so we are all on the same page with respect to how we are defining bias.

What does bias mean to you?

Engage participants in a large-group discussion. Consider flip-charting responses. The objective is to get people talking about bias and to deepen your understanding of the current perceptions regarding the topic.

Allow 3–5 minutes for discussion.

Summarize responses and share the definition for bias.

Bias is an inclination or preference either for or against a group or individual that interferes with impartial judgment.

- Bias is an inflexible belief about a group of people and can be positive or negative.
Share an example of a positive and negative bias: Millennials are tech savvy/Boomers don't understand technology.
- Bias can be **explicit**—which is an attitude someone is aware of having in the form of prejudices or stereotypes or,
- **Implicit**—which exists at the unconscious level without the knowledge of the person.
- Someone can consciously reject stereotypes and support anti-discrimination efforts but can hold negative associations in his/her mind unconsciously.
- Everyone has some level of bias, and bias does not belong to just one demographic group.
- Bias enables us to make quick decisions and is necessary for survival.

We now know that bias is a natural function of the human brain and it in fact exists for a reason. Does anyone know what function bias serves/why we have bias? Our brains are designed to categorize information based on past experiences and/or information we take in via sources like our parents, our community, television and the media. And then we use that historical data to make decisions.

- Having bias does not make a person good or bad. Bias simply exists in all of us.
- Bias is an opinion not a behavior. Bias can be managed so as not to impact behavior.
- As individuals we have the ability to control the impact our biases have on our decision-making process.
- Over time, bias can be eliminated.

For Access to the Complete Facilitator's Guide Contact Erica Colonero at Erica@visionspringinc.com

