



## 7 Strategies for Overcoming Unconscious Bias

1. Check Your Initial Thoughts – Pause long enough to give yourself time to process what you are thinking and doing and how it might be affecting your actions and decision. Be Logical – Process how many people you actually know that conform to your actual bias.
2. Question your assumptions. Ask, “Why am I thinking this way?” Analyze – Ask yourself if what you are experiencing, or enacting is consistent with your personal and organizational values.
3. Tackle Microaggressions – Just stop! Stop the verbal indignities, insults, unwelcoming and sometimes intimidating comments and behaviors.
4. Take a risk. Move beyond your comfort zone. Disrupt the norm. Speak out and hold yourself and others accountable.
5. Be Intentional – Act as if the bias doesn’t exist. Intentionally adjust your behavior to counter any biases you tend to exhibit.
6. Vary Your Media Intake – Expand your social media, television, radio, newspaper consumption beyond what is typical for you. Try media from different cultures, genres, political perspective, etc.
7. Promote Connectedness – Value difference and concentrate on commonalities. Lead to connect ideas and people. Be a bridge builder.





Activity: Anti-Bias Behavior Self-Assessment

Directions: Using the rating scale of NEVER to ALWAYS, assess yourself for each item by placing an "X" on the appropriate place along each continuum. When you have completed the checklist, review your responses to identify areas in need of improvement. Create specific goals to address the areas in which you would like to improve.

- 1. I educate myself about the culture and experiences of other racial, religious, ethnic and socioeconomic groups by reading and attending classes, workshops, cultural events, etc.

Rating scale from Never to Always with a vertical tick mark in the middle.

- 2. I spend time reflecting on my own upbringing and childhood to better understand my own biases and the ways I may have internalized the prejudicial messages I received.

Rating scale from Never to Always with a vertical tick mark in the middle.

- 3. I look at my own attitudes and behaviors as an adult to determine the ways they may be contributing to or combating prejudice in society.

Rating scale from Never to Always with a vertical tick mark in the middle.

- 4. I evaluate my use of language to avoid terms or phrases that may be degrading or hurtful to other groups.

Rating scale from Never to Always with a vertical tick mark in the middle.

- 5. I avoid stereotyping and generalizing other people based on their group identity.

Rating scale from Never to Always with a vertical tick mark in the middle.

- 6. I value cultural differences and avoid statements such as "I never think of you as \_\_\_\_\_," which discredits differences.

Rating scale from Never to Always with a vertical tick mark in the middle.

- 7. I am comfortable discussing issues of racism, anti-Semitism, ableism, gender, age and other forms of prejudice with others.

Rating scale from Never to Always with a vertical tick mark in the middle.

- 8. I am open to other people's feedback about ways in which my behavior may be culturally insensitive or offensive to others.

Rating scale from Never to Always with a vertical tick mark in the middle.

- 9. I give equal attention to other people regardless of race, religion, ability, gender, socioeconomic class or other difference.

Rating scale from Never to Always with a vertical tick mark in the middle.

- 10. I am comfortable giving constructive feedback to someone of another race, gender, age or physical ability.

Rating scale from Never to Always with a vertical tick mark in the middle.





# The People Company

Helping people THINK better, DO better, BE better

11. The value of diversity is reflected in my work, which includes a wide range of racial, religious, ethnic and socioeconomic groups, even when these groups are not personally represented in my community.

Never |-----| Always

12. I work intentionally to develop inclusive practices, such as considering how the time, location and cost of scheduled meetings and programs might inadvertently exclude certain groups.

Never |-----| Always

13. I work to increase my awareness of biased content in television programs, newspapers and advertising.

Never |-----| Always

14. I take time to notice the environment of my home, workplace, house of worship and children’s school, to ensure that visual media represent diverse groups, and I advocate for the addition of such materials, if they are lacking.

Never |-----| Always

15. When other people use biased language and behavior, I feel comfortable speaking up, asking them to refrain and stating my reasons.

Never |-----| Always

16. I contribute to my organization’s achievement of its diversity goals through programming and by advocating for hiring practices that contribute to a diverse workforce.

Never |-----| Always

17. I demonstrate my commitment to social justice in my personal life by engaging in activities to achieve equity.

Never |-----| Always

### Areas of growth:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Goals:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

This activity was adapted from “Commitment to Combat Racism” by Dr. Beverly Tatum & Andrea Ayvazian in *White Awareness: Handbook for Anti-Racism Training* by Judy H. Katz. ©1978 by the University of Oklahoma Press, Norman. Reprinted by permission of the publisher. All rights reserved.

