

Cognitive Biases in Hiring

- A cheat sheet -

Unconscious bias is no longer a term used only by academics. HR practitioners are becoming increasingly aware that it creeps into the recruitment process, impacting the quality of hiring decision. At Applied we work to remove these biases – here are 20 of the most common ones. Look out, it's a minefield!

BIASES RELATED TO OTHERS

Affinity bias

The tendency to like people who are similar to us

Confirmation bias

The tendency to search for information that confirms our preconceptions

Groupthink

Individuals suppressing their own objections in favour of group harmony

Halo effect

Judgements on one aspect of something unduly influencing other aspects

Attribution substitution

Using a simple attribute to make a complex judgement

Out-group homogeneity

The perception that everyone outside of your group is similar

Self-serving bias

Belief that success is linked to self, failure is linked to external factors

Stereotype threat

Being at risk of living up to a negative stereotype of your group

Social desirability bias

Giving a socially desirable response to questions rather than actual opinion

BIASES RELATED TO CONTEXT

Availability heuristic

Being influenced by things that come to mind easily

Base rate neglect

Tendency to ignore data and statistics in favour of individual examples

Cognitive load

The strain put on someone's brain, leading to poorer decisions

Decision fatigue

Each successive decision fatigues us, leading to poorer decisions

Loss aversion

Tendency to feel losses a lot more keenly than gains

Order effect

Responding to things differently by the order they are presented in

Peak and end effect

Judgement of an experience is heavily influenced by the peak or end of that experience

Status quo bias

Avoiding making a decision entirely and just sticking with the way things are

Present bias

Disproportionately prioritising the present over the future