



GAZZOLA PAVING LIMITED

Unconscious Bias Policy

GAZZOLA PAVING LIMITED's Unconscious Bias Policy provide guidance to all employees concerning the nature of Unconscious Bias in the workplace and its effect on diversity. All employees of Gazzola's operating companies, must understand the impacts of Unconscious Bias and work toward elimination to promote greater diversity.

What is Unconscious Bias?

Unconscious or implicit bias refers to the associations that are made between different qualities and social categories such race, gender or disability and are judgements that are made without conscious awareness. These automatic preferences or stereotypes are a major contributor to a lack of workplace diversity.

Every time we make a decision, our background, life experiences and cultural values all impact our reasoning. Over time, the human brain has developed an ability to use these experiences to create short-cuts and enable us to navigate the incredible amount of information we're exposed to on a daily basis.

Types of Unconscious Bias

A common component to many people's cognitive behaviors, the concept of unconscious bias is made even more complex by the many types of biases that can exist. Some of them include;

- Gender bias – preference towards one gender over another which often comes from deep rooted beliefs about gender roles and stereotypes.
- Affinity bias – an unconscious preference towards people who share qualities or viewpoints with us or with someone close to us.
- Halo effect – viewing one particularly strong positive trait about someone in a way that overpowers our judgement of them and can skew our ability to see any of their negative traits.
- Horns Effect – focusing on one badly perceived trait that can cloud judgement of the positive ones.
- Beauty bias – a social behavior that often adversely affects women in the workplace.
- Confirmation bias – selectively seeking information to back up an opinion that is already held without looking at the bigger picture

The Impact of Unconscious Bias in the Work Place

Although widely recognized that diversity of thought and innovation are key to secure bottom-line results and workplace productivity, our unconscious preferences for people who are like us continues to severely challenge our ability to create these conditions. Biases can sneak into every encounter we have from the language used in job specifications and decisions on who to hire or promote to managers overlooking poor performance of those they know and like.



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In recruitment, biases can lead to generalizations that determine the right candidate for the job not based on their skills, but on the perceived origin of their name or nationality. Gender biases are also common with many job roles that historically attract one gender over the other, for example female nurses or male engineers. Whilst in some industries there may be traditional stereotypes, it is important for managers to advertise and hire on the qualities and characteristics required to the job and be aware of how easily gender biases can arise.

Overcoming Unconscious Bias and Promoting Diversity

Implicit biases can be hard to address because by their very nature they are unconscious and may be hard to recognize and accept. However, promoting a culture of respect for difference encourages diverse ideas to be expressed leading to greater creativity and innovation. This is important in the workplace but also in the way that businesses respond to customer needs and ultimately strengthen their business brand.

To eliminate unconscious bias in the workplace, consider the following;

- Educate employees on the types on unconscious bias and negatives consequences that can arise from allowing such behavior to become normalized
- Monitor each other for unconscious bias and question comments or remarks on cultural or gender stereotypes
- Deliberately slow down decision making to reduce the likelihood of a making a snap decision.
- Invest in setting up Diversity and Inclusion committee to build and maintain processes and enforce cultural behaviors that align with the diversity goals of the company.

At Gazzola Paving Limited, this starts with awareness and becoming mindful of unconscious bias, but it is of particular importance for those with decision making power on hiring, promotions and business best practice. Individual awareness and ownership must also be underpinned by policy, processes and frameworks to truly promote diversity throughout the workplace.


Virgil Gazzola, Vice President

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