

Biases in the Workplace



As you look over this list, consider where each bias might show up - first in yourself (Who, me?!), and then in those around you.

Biases can distort our view of the data itself:

- **Perceptual Blindness** is the failure to notice something that is completely visible because of a lack of attention, and/or because we are *focused on something else*.
- **Expectation Bias** is the proven tendency to "see what we expect to see", or only notice something if it is far *outside* our expectations. We bend reality to meet our expectations.

Biases can distort our view of ourselves:

- **Self-serving Bias** is the proven tendency we have to associate positive outcomes with our own character and actions, but blame any negative results with external factors that are not our fault.
- **Overestimation Bias** is the very frequently demonstrated tendency that we have to overestimate our contribution to a team or effort.
- **Confirmation Bias** is a powerful - and dangerous - dynamic that we're seeing a lot of these days. Through this distortion we focus in on information that confirms what we hold to be "true" and we filter out and dismiss information that doesn't agree with our current beliefs.

Biases can distort our view of others:

- **Affinity Bias** is the tendency to connect with others who share similar interests, experiences and backgrounds as ourselves.
- **Conformity Bias** is the very common tendency that we have to act similarly to the people around us regardless of their idiosyncrasies and even outright mistakes. And just as importantly, is that we tend to have doubts and mistrust of those who don't conform. This bias is also known as "peer pressure" and it's a very primal instinct.
- **The Halo Effect and Horns Effect** is the tendency to sustain either a positive or negative belief in someone's ability or character, based solely on an early impression, an initial experience, or even their reputation.

Of course these biases overlap and can have a compounding effect. In fact, it's particularly hard to recognize our own biases for that exact reason - *my self-serving bias prevents me from recognizing that I in fact have biases!*

For a more comprehensive list of biases in the workplace, [CLICK HERE](#).