



Consultancy

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#HSCTopTips

Before Commissioning Unconscious Bias Training...

Your organisation

Describe the problem you are seeking to address and document how unconscious bias training helps.

Collate data on inequalities and the impacts on people's lives (whether workforce, service users or both). Start any project on unconscious bias with developing empathy and buy-in.

Clarify the difference between unconscious bias and prejudice. Unconscious bias training may not have an impact on the behaviour of participants if they really (consciously) believe, for example, that women are inherently less suited to leadership roles.

Unconscious biases occur because of reinforcements of ideas about social groups by families, society and organisations. Personal change arising from unconscious bias training is like swimming upstream. Don't waste money by training staff for them to return to unreconstructed organisations. Review organisational language, discourse and behaviour that reinforces bias and tackle these.

Your training provider

They must be able to explain the relationship between language and discourse and inequality. Many forms of unconscious bias can be detected in language which gives voice to discourse. For example, the word *feisty* carries much meaning that plays out as inequality and discrimination.

A trainer must be able to draw a convincing connection between each example of a micro-aggression that may seem innocuous, with structural inequalities. For example, telling someone to 'man-up' is part of a cluster of terms and discourse that ends up with suicide being the leading cause of death amongst 20-34 year olds in the UK, with this affecting three times as many males as females.

Ensure that trainers have evidence of the scientific foundations of unconscious bias. Demonstrating (not just talking about) the universality of unconscious bias is essential. It changes the emphasis from what people are to what they may not have undone but can still tackle (i.e. socialised biases) .

Your training provider must be able to routinely give examples of how unconscious bias becomes manifest in your sector. This must be evidence based rather than impressions.