

Impact of Unconscious Bias

Unconscious bias can have damaging impacts on employer reputation and employee experience. Over time, it can even hinder an organization's ability to execute its business efficiently and affect decision making. Let, talking about diversity and inclusion, hiring impact, and various other similar matters can be uncomfortable. Many times, organizations avoid discussing the impact of topics like unconscious bias, racism, diversity, and inclusion, and many others that affects business growth. These matters can do more harm than anticipated.

How it affects us and business growth?

Let's see how unconscious bias can affect your business growth, inclusive culture, hiring, and more below:

Bias as referred to pre-conception that most of us are unaware off. It usually happens outside of our control. Rather, it is triggered by our brain automatically to make quick decisions. That's why it is shown up in small ways unexpectedly.

One simple example can be assuming that an older employee can't use the latest technology.

The evidence regarding unconscious bias impacting business decisions negatively is increasing, here are some statistics -

The workplace bias cost is projected at \$64 billion per year. It is based on the expense of replacing or losing above 2 million American workforces due to discrimination and unfairness.

Employees experiencing unconscious bias tend to disengage actively and reduce their contribution.

As per a study, unconscious bias can often lead us to isolation, withholding, and alienation. Consequently, these activate stress hormones that can lead to:

- Low emotional engagement
- Increased stress related illness
- Increased absenteeism
- Reduced customer satisfaction
- High employee turnover

Such personal impacts can adversely affect the overall business growth and impede innovation.

Impacts of Unconscious Bias on hiring and evaluation:

Unconscious bias or implicit bias clouds our judgment leading to poor decisions. It is ubiquitous and can present itself in myriad ways. Researchers have identified more than 150 types of unconscious bias that exists and many of which can impact the employees and companies, including:

- Recruitment
- Promotions
- Retention
- Monitoring
- Evaluation

It hinders candidates' equal opportunities in terms of selection and promotion, especially in leadership and high-level management roles. According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, manager and senior executive roles in the private sector are still 70% male.

Lack of diversity in the workplace:

Unconscious bias can be a huge setback in creating a diverse and inclusive culture at your workplace as it introduces unintentional discrimination and can perpetuate racism. Implicit bias can impact workplace in different ways including:

- Reduced employee development
- Wrong recruitment decisions
- Impair diversity

Diverse workplaces are important for business growth, as it drives innovation and creativity. As per one of the study reports, diverse workplaces can lead to a 33% better than average profits rate.

Final Thoughts:

Finally, the more we are aware of unconscious bias, the more we can mitigate it which can yield a significant talent advantage for any company.