





Around the Coffee Table with Dale Jodoin

All Victims Deserve Protection

By Dale Jodoin
Columnist

Compassion must protect victims, too.

Over coffee, we talk about helping people who have lost everything. We should. A lost job, illness, or rent increase can leave someone without a home. Nobody deserves to be treated as worthless because they sleep outside.

But when did compassion become a reason to leave other people defenceless? The person sleeping in a tent deserves safety. So does the shopkeeper, the employee walking home, and the family worried about someone breaking into their house.

We cannot judge every homeless person by the criminal element operating among them. Edmonton police have described gangs embedded in encampments, selling drugs and using fear and extortion for profit. People without homes need protection from these criminals, too.

This crosses borders. American prosecutors have alleged that Los Angeles gang members used tents to blend into the homeless population while dealing drugs. In Seattle, a man was sentenced for his role in a trafficking organization selling narcotics in homeless encampments. These examples show why we must separate people needing help from people exploiting their hardship.

Downtown businesses need protection as well.

A little store may represent someone's savings, a second mortgage, and years of work. Behind that counter is a person trying to pay bills and keep employees working.

A hungry person asking for food is one thing. Someone saying, "You'll be sorry," if a shopkeeper refuses free food or calls police about theft is another.

That is intimidation. Using threats to demand something for free is the extortion I am talking about. Police should be asked what complaints they receive and what business owners are facing. When customers become afraid to visit, income drops. When windows break or stock disappears, bills still arrive. If a business closes, jobs disappear and the community loses another taxpayer. Oshawa offers grants for security and safety improvements. That helps. But locks, cameras, and guards cannot become a substitute for public protection. What about the business that cannot afford a guard? What about ordinary homeowners? They already pay taxes. Must they pay again just to feel safe?

You can understand why people might feel abandoned.

City halls should demand more help from Ottawa and provincial governments. I want mayors and councillors speaking plainly when government responses fall short. Polite words mean little to someone sweeping broken glass before opening. And courts must answer for decisions that leave victims feeling forgotten. When repeat offenders return to hurt people, public confidence suffers. In my view, courts that fail to give public safety weight help destroy the country's faith in justice.

Police do their work. Victims report crimes. Yet if accountability never seems to follow, why should either believe the system will protect them?

Ask officers how repeated arrests affect their morale. Ask victims what a court appearance costs them. I will say this: judges who repeatedly disregard public safety when dealing with proven criminal harm should not be judges. Why must victims keep paying for the same offender's next chance? Blind justice should serve fairness, not socialism or any political cause. It must never be blind to suffering.

We need housing, mental health care, and addiction treatment. We also need consequences for those who threaten, steal, exploit, and attack.

Without that balance, compassion can turn cold. People may demand that everyone living outside be locked away. Innocent people would suffer alongside criminals.

Around our coffee tables in Oshawa, ask what history will say. Did we help neighbours and protect our streets, or leave everyone to fend for themselves?

Our unborn children will inherit that answer.



WE ALL BELONG...

YOU BELONG - WE BELONG -

LEMAIRE

THE CANDIDATE THAT BELONGS IN OFFICE

905-441-7953

scheshawnaward5@gmail.com
Scheshawn Lemaire
For Oshawa City Council Ward 5



The Art of Finding Work

By Nick Kossovan

You don't logically analyze why you immediately trust a stranger who shares your taste in music, nor do you deliberate over ordering your usual at a local diner. You aren't making logical choices; you're following evolutionary hardwiring. We instinctively embrace biases that draw us to people and groups we connect with effortlessly or that we believe are safe.

Be honest: it's comforting when someone shares your generation, ethnicity, gender, political ideology, or love of golf. You instinctively interpret those shared traits as commonalities, not differences, that signal safety rather than threat.

I don't know anyone who doesn't gravitate toward people they feel comfortable with. Seeking allies is basic human psychology; after all, we're tribal by nature. Nevertheless, let's acknowledge a collective hypocrisy: the moment a hiring manager's alleged bias conflicts with a job seeker's self-interest, the job seeker makes unsubstantiated claims that "isms" are preventing them from being hired.

This reaction is naive. HR rhetoric wants job seekers to believe that recruiters and hiring managers operate like objective evaluation algorithms, but that's fiction. As human beings, they're inherently biased and emotional, and they hire largely based on affinity. Most hiring decisions don't hinge on a rigorous skills assessment; they're driven by the subconscious "similar-to-me" effect.

Nobel laureate Daniel Kahneman nailed it: "We are not only rational animals; we are also rationalizing animals." We don't decide logically; we rationalize our gut instincts afterward. Accepting this aspect of human nature isn't defeat; it's a reminder that, as a job seeker, you must obsessively focus on triggering those gut instincts first. You can't erase another person's biases, but you can try to influence them to your advantage. Because most self-proclaimed career coaches profit from keeping job seekers angry and anxious, standard (read: cliché) job-search advice overlooks a fundamental truth: biases aren't prejudices, preferences, or tribal affiliations; they're cognitive mechanisms. They're simply the brain's way of simplifying decision-making, whether choosing a restaurant, selecting a financial advisor, or hiring Candidate A over an equally qualified Candidate B. This isn't a design flaw; it's human nature. Navigating a hiring manager's biases requires deliberately engineering the signals you send.

You can use biases to your advantage only if you manage them intentionally. The moment you enter the room, your appearance, mannerisms, vocal inflection, and posture immediately signal your professionalism and self-assurance. Visual and auditory cues are entirely within your control. Assuming an interviewer must accept you "as you" isn't strategy; it's entitlement. Nobody owes you acceptance.

The following five visual, auditory, and mannerism-related cues are under your control:

1. Dress for stature: Wear clothing that conveys authority and competence.
2. Match vocal cadence: Mirror your interviewer's pace and tone to reduce psychological defences.
3. Command presence: Maintain a steady posture, open body language, and direct eye contact to project confidence.
4. Signal active engagement: Nod and confirm key points to foster shared understanding.
5. Project thoroughness: Arrive early and be over-prepared to make an unforgettable first impression.

When biases such as ageism work against you, generic advice like "removing dates" is garbage, as if your age won't become evident somewhere in the employer's hiring process. Although bias is hardwired into our DNA, it's also lazy thinking. Savvy job seekers counter that lazy thinking by treating their resume and LinkedIn profile like precision-guided missiles designed to cut through bias. If anything is confusing or ambiguous, a recruiter's or hiring manager's cognitive bias won't prompt investigation; they'll move on. Overcoming any bias requires crystal-clear clarity.

Harvard economist Dr. Iris Bohnet asserted that defeating bias requires "designing systems that neutralize gut instincts." Because most employers fail at this, you must manage the psychological friction yourself. Starve their biases of oxygen with undeniable proof. No ironclad guarantees exist when navigating human nature, but remember this: Just as you expect your values and beliefs to be respected, you must respect an interviewer's cognitive defaults.

Your job isn't to change their hardwiring; it's to appeal to the analytical side of their brain. Explicitly communicate how you'll increase their profitability, because that's ultimately how employers determine a candidate's value.

Counteract inherent hiring biases with these five strategies:

1. Quantify impact: Eliminate listing duties. Replace arbitrary descriptions ("great team player") with results-oriented metrics ("increased operational efficiency by 22%").
2. Employ their language: Use the terminology, jargon, and abbreviations of your industry, profession, or the employer to elicit a "one of us" response.
3. Demonstrate your ability to drive business: Describe your employment history in terms of revenue growth, cost reduction, and risk mitigation.
4. Feature social proof: Showcase recommendations, published articles, testimonials, association and board memberships, and public engagements. External validation disarms internal skepticism.
5. Explain employment gaps: Don't leave them open to interpretation. Provide a brief, logical explanation for any gap.

Until humans stop making hiring decisions, bias isn't going anywhere. The expectation that an employer's hiring process should be fair is a highly subjective standard that breeds bitterness and anger. You can't change someone's hardwiring; you can only change your strategy. Therefore, focus on the one variable you can control: the signals you broadcast. You mitigate bias by framing your candidacy as offering employers undeniable value, which is all you can do.

Scugog Fire Announces New Junior Fire Chief

Scugog – Scugog Fire & Emergency Services is pleased to announce that Grade 5 student Max Miller has been selected as the 2026 Junior Fire Chief! Max was selected from hundreds of contest entries for his creative poster demonstrating his knowledge and understanding of lithium-ion battery safety. His artwork highlighted important fire safety messages in support of this year's Fire Prevention Week theme, "Charge into Fire Safety™: Safe Charging is a Superpower." To celebrate his accomplishment, Max spent the day alongside Scugog firefighters, taking part in a variety of exciting Junior Fire Chief duties. The day began with a surprise announcement in Max's classroom, followed by the opportunity to activate the school's fire alarm and help supervise a school-wide evacuation drill. Max then visited the Township of Scugog Municipal Office, where he met with Mayor Wilma Wotten, Chief Administrative Officer Warren Mar, and other Township staff. Max also experienced a day in the life of a firefighter, participating in firefighting activities and learning more about the important work of Scugog Fire & Emergency Services. The celebrations included a few extra surprises thanks to the generosity of local businesses. Max received a brand-new bicycle donated by Port Perry Canadian Tire and enjoyed a McDonald's lunch courtesy of the local McDonald's restaurant.