



Outcome Report

Break the Bias Series – Understanding Unconscious Gender Bias

Diversity in Business Leadership Programme &
Student Engagement

In Collaboration with SABIC

Date: Tuesday, 7 March 2023

Location: Zoom Platform

Facilitated by:

Shatha Al Shammari - Senior HR Business Partner at SABIC

Baker Sindi Senior Manager - Compliance Programs in MiddleEast & North Africa at SABIC

Ghyda Abdullah – Associate Legal Counsel at SABIC

Delivered to:

University of Bahrain (UoB) in Bahrain.

The session had over 220 students.

Main objective:

The Pearl Initiative in collaboration with SABIC had the 6th and final session of the “Break the Bias” initiative, focused on ‘Understanding Unconscious Gender Bias’. SABIC is PI’s corporate partner & project funder. Bias, specifically gender bias, is something that almost each one of us has faced one way or another. The main aim of this session is to enhance student’s understanding of the different biases and ways of preventing them and how they can apply some of the practical tips and tools.

Key takeaways:

The speakers shared the different types and levels of biases with examples. They also provided tools and tips to deal with those biases.

A few identified and explained biases were:

1- Ageism

Age discrimination is based on the belief that older employees aren't as competent or capable of performing a job as younger employees. This idea could be a result of a person's belief that a person's age is related to their work abilities, knowledge, or skill. The bias tends to favor young driven employees.

While ageism affects everyone since everyone grows older by the day, there are certain groups that are affected more than others. Women and minority groups are particularly affected as they already face multiple biases against them.

How to Avoid: Management can combat ageism by including younger and older employees together in a group to have them interact and form positive relationships. This allows the value of the experience and know-how of the older employees to be observed by the younger employees.

2 - Gender Bias

Gender bias is slightly different from sexual harassment, which includes [verbal, physical, and visual harassment](#). Individuals are protected from gender discrimination and sexual harassment under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act.

Gender bias is when one gender is treated more favorably than the other sex. This means that a person can receive better treatment in the form of hiring, getting promotions, or other work perks without involving harassment like [quid pro quo](#).

Gender bias notably affects women more than men. Despite having the same capabilities, women are typically treated less favorably resulting in an imbalance in the workforce.

How to Avoid: Gender bias can be avoided by determining whether a gender swap would matter in that role. For example, if employees are being considered for a promotion, an employer should think about whether it would make a difference if a male or female were in those positions.

3 - Name Bias

Name bias happens when a person forms prejudgments about another person based solely on their name. A person's name can give unconscious hints to another about their race or gender. This can negatively affect the hiring process since it introduces other biases from a person's name.

Name bias occurs most during the hiring stage when going through resumes. For example, if an employer sees the names Tyler Smith and Alejandro Rodríguez, the employer may be more willing to interview Tyler Smith if the name Alejandro Rodríguez gives hints of the person's race which can trigger a bias the employer may have against people of that background.

How to Avoid: Name bias can be avoided by blocking out the names of applicants when reviewing resumes. This allows you to focus on if they are the best person for the job based on qualifications and experience.

Testimonials:

With around 95% overall satisfaction rate, students stated the below

"Thank you very much for the webinar, it was helpful and enjoyable"

"Thank you for your effort in bringing new information to us"

"Keep up your hard work and you all did amazing"

"I just want to thank you again for this beneficial webinar"

"It's so lovely program but in an early time if they can open the zoom because some of us busy so next time open it earlier."

"The webinar was very informative and a great source to enhance learning, the interactive polls were a good push to involve the audience in the discussion as well as the questions for the Q&A"

27 students "thanked all involved parties especially the wonderful speakers"