

Activity #3 -- Unconscious Bias (Continued Activities)

Overview:

This activity is to bring awareness to young men and women about the topic of unconscious bias.

Objective:

Students will learn about unconscious bias on the internet and about their own unconscious bias by taking an on-line test.

Time Suggested: 30 minutes, depending on discussion.

Step 1:

Have half of the group choose Activity #1 and half choose Activity #2

Step 2:

For those choosing Activity #1, have them search images for the assigned words in different search engines. They can also choose categories of their own. Then, have them as a group discuss the questions that are listed for the activity. Have this group share with the larger group their conclusions.

Step 3

For those choosing Activity #2, have students log in and choose an unconscious bias test to take. Have them report back to the large group what they experienced, what they found and how it felt to take test.

Step 4:

Review the Strategies for Addressing Unconscious Bias. Talk about whether the students think there is unconscious bias happening on the team. Is it harming anyone? Can it be reduced or managed? How?

1) Unconscious/Implicit Bias of Computer Programmers

Using a smartphone or computer, search on two different web browsers (e.g. Google and DuckDuckGo) for the words:

- “CEO images”
- “Doctor images”
- “Teacher images”
- “Professor images”

Questions:

- a. Do you see an equal number of men and women portrayed in the images?
- b. Should images be equal between men and women?
- c. Should image representation equal the actual numbers in the workforce?
- d. Does it matter? To whom?
- e. Were coders using bias? If so, conscious or unconscious?

2) Self-Awareness

Take an Implicit Association Test (IAT Test)

<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/iatdetails.html>

Choose either of these two tests to take:

- Gender -- Science
- Gender -- Career

Questions:

- a. How did you do?
- b. What are your thoughts about a test like this?
- c. Did you notice anything happening with your thinking while taking the test?

Strategies for Addressing Unconscious Bias

- Create a guilt-free zone. We all have unconscious biases.
- Call it out when you see it. Once recognized, unconscious bias can be reduced or managed.
- Be open to hearing people when they point it out.
- Encourage second chances.
- Remediate situations caused by it -- proactively and retroactively.