

# Inclusive leadership workshop: challenging unconscious bias

Building understanding

(Leadership teams)



## WHY

A diverse workforce and inclusive work environment brings numerous benefits for organisations.

A key component of building a diverse and inclusive workplace is recognising and challenging unconscious bias. Unconscious bias can affect business decisions and inhibit diversity progress.

Building the capability of leaders to recognise and challenge unconscious bias, and adopt consciously inclusive behaviours and actions, is fundamental to sustainable cultural change.

When supported by strategic efforts to embed diversity, our programs contribute to:

<b>INCREASED INNOVATION</b>	By challenging groupthink
<b>MORE ROBUST DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES</b>	By developing processes for team members to contribute equally and for dissenting views to be respected
<b>IMPROVED MARKET OPPORTUNITIES</b>	By developing skills to better engage and empathise with diverse customers
<b>ACCESS TO BROADER TALENT POOLS</b>	By removing unconscious biases in recruitment, selection, talent identification and promotion processes
<b>BETTER EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT</b>	By building a culture where all employees can provide inputs; where diversity of thought and background is genuinely respected
<b>GENDER-BALANCED AND CULTURALLY-DIVERSE LEADERSHIP TEAMS</b>	By a clear articulation of the business case for diversity and implementation of systemic change management processes

## DESCRIPTION

This workshop builds awareness of the value of diversity and inclusion from a business perspective. It explores ways to recognise and challenge unconscious biases that inhibit diversity progress. The workshop includes a range of experiential activities to engage the hearts and minds of leaders.

The following key messages are introduced and developed throughout the workshop:

- Diversity and inclusion are important business priorities
- We all have biases – the importance is noticing them and taking steps to mitigate any negative impact
- Unconscious biases impact decision-making in all areas fundamental to business planning and leadership, and can inadvertently reinforce exclusion in the workplace
- Talent cohorts are potentially overlooked due to unconscious biases relating to gender, culture, and age (among others) that impact talent identification, selection and promotion processes.
- Types of practical actions and tools that participants can apply to reduce their own biases in the workplace, and across talent management processes.

The program provides personal insights and practical actions. Leaders learn about fundamental concepts of inclusion and exclusion, in-groups and out-groups, biases and stereotypes, in a positive and engaging way.

## APPROACH

During the program, participants have the opportunity to reflect, share experiences, and consider how they can hold themselves and other leaders and managers accountable for positive change.

The design allows for safe and expertly facilitated conversations, and has several opportunities for reflection and action planning, both individually and as a group.

The ideal length of the workshop is 2 – 2.5 hours.

## DELIVERABLES

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Recognise ways in which unconscious bias affects decision-making
- Develop or modify existing processes and practices to reduce unconscious biases in recruitment and talent management generally
- Challenge their own biases and behaviours and identify opportunities for workplace change.

## PRE-WORK

Uncovering unconscious bias through assessment and training is integral to personal and organisational change.

The Implicit Association Test (IAT) is regarded as the most effective tool to gain greater awareness about our own (unconscious) biases, preferences and beliefs. We encourage you to take 5-10 minutes to work through of the online tests by clicking on the link below.

A consortium of researchers from Harvard, Yale, the University of Virginia and the University of Washington developed the test. Your IAT results are confidential and unattributable, i.e. they are not shared or recorded.

Click here for the Australian tests: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/australia/> <<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/australia/>>

You may also like to read this recently published article from Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2015/05/outsmart-your-own-biases>

## ABOUT US

Diversity Partners is a highly respected consulting firm helping businesses develop a more diverse workforce, and more inclusive and flexible workplace. We have worked with thousands of leaders in more than 100 firms in recent years to support their diversity and inclusion progress.

**For more information:** please call our office on 1800 571 999 or email [info@diversitypartners.com.au](mailto:info@diversitypartners.com.au)

## WHAT OUR CLIENTS ARE SAYING

“Diversity Partners facilitated high-impact ‘Unconscious Bias’ workshops for 250 leaders. Self-awareness levels for these leaders have been heightened and their confidence to lead their teams with an even more inclusive mindset has increased.”

**Paul Pfitzner, Head of Organisation Development, Bendigo & Adelaide Bank**

“Diversity Partners facilitated a very practical and engaging session for our executive team. We came away with a much deeper understanding of the business case for diversity and the ways in which unconscious bias can limit diversity and our decision-making more generally.

The combined professionalism and expertise of the facilitators helped us to acknowledge and address a range of biases, both individually and collectively.”

**Jane Sherlock, Executive General Manager, People, Leighton Contractors**

“Diversity Partners has provided expert guidance to help us meet our objectives. They’ve worked hard to understand our business and engage leaders along the way on the importance of inclusive leadership. I recommend them to other organisations looking to take the next step on diversity.”

**Kristen Richardson, Manager of People, Golder Associates**