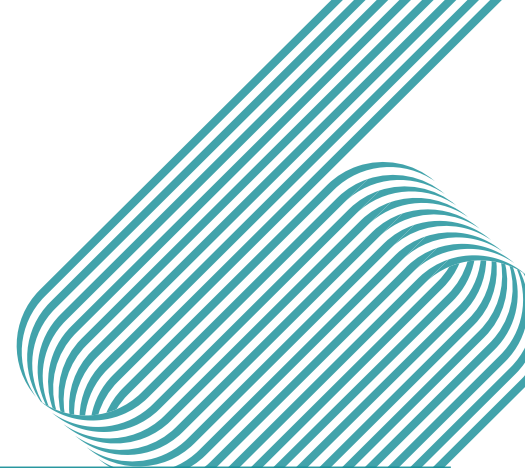


UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

NAVIGATOR TOPIC GUIDE

Naomi Nishi, Ph.D. (she, her, ella)



This educational module explores unconscious bias. Unconscious bias refers to the automatic assumptions and categorizations people make about other people based on an individual's experiences, beliefs, and societal stereotypes. Unconscious bias is formed outside of conscious awareness.

We recognize that a 15-minute meeting is not a ton of time to discuss unconscious bias. We hope that after the meeting, the team will be inspired to explore this topic in greater depth, either as a team or individually. We invite everyone to check out the recommended resources from Dr. Nishi listed at the end of this guide.

Refer to the [Navigator Handbook 1.0](#) and the steps below to help you lead and facilitate discussion about unconscious bias!

1 To begin the meeting, welcome everyone to the room by name.

2 Remind the group that the culture of a Journey for Teams meeting embodies engagement, open-mindedness, respect, and compassion.



ENGAGED



OPEN-MINDED



RESPECTFUL



COMPASSIONATE

3  Play the “Unconscious Bias” video.

4 Read aloud the 3 take-home messages from the 3-2-1 Discussion Guide:

We all have unconscious biases. These biases affect how we perceive and engage with other people.

Unconscious biases impact the veterinary profession. They have implications for:

- the client/veterinary professional relationship
- animal care
- the workplace's inclusive climate

Start with yourself. The first step is to explore our unconscious biases and how they impact our decisions and interactions.

5 Ask for 1-2 comments on the take-home messages. Try to keep it brief to respect the 15-minute time commitment. (You may have to schedule a future meeting for a more in-depth discussion.)

- 6** Read aloud the 2 questions from the 3-2-1 Discussion Guide.

Question for the team:

Why is it important to examine the unconscious biases that may be impacting our workplace?

Spend a maximum of 5 minutes discussing the team question.

Question for individual self-reflection:

No need to share answers or thoughts with anyone.

How have I misjudged someone in the past based on my unrecognized unconscious biases ... and am I making that same mistake with someone now?

The most important part of the meeting

- 7** As a team, decide on **1 actionable and measurable behavior change** to implement in your workplace. Consider 1 from the list below, or come up with your own idea.

- ☐ Agree to privately take one or more of the brief Implicit Association Tests at Project Implicit. <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>. The tests are eye-opening and quickly identify your own biases and stereotypes. You don't need to share your results. The research shows that just taking one test can lead to conscious behavior change.
- ☐ When you start a new project or initiative as a team, seek more diverse input than you typically ask for. This is a way of identifying unconscious biases, incorporating more diverse perspectives, and ultimately ending up with a more successful project
- ☐ Our actionable idea

- 8** Invite the team to self-reflect. Team members have the option to consider and commit to **1 personal behavior change** (no need to share them with anyone).

- ☐ Think about a person that you would call an acquaintance. What do you actually know about that person? Make a mental list of important things that you DO NOT know about that person. Does this acknowledgment change how you think about that person?
- ☐ Resist the urge to make a snap judgment—these are often a result of an unconscious bias. The next time you make a quick judgment about a person, stop and ask, “Why do I think that?”
- ☐ Start a journaling practice where you reflect on how you’ve developed unconscious biases about people with identities different than yourself. It’s sometimes helpful to reflect on childhood experiences.

- 9 Thank everyone for contributing, and congratulate yourselves on how much you accomplished in 15 minutes!**

RESOURCES

Implicit Association Tests at Project Implicit:
<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>

Marcelin, J.R., Siraj, D.S., Victor, R., Kotadia, S. & A., Maldonado, Y.A. (2019). The impact of unconscious bias in healthcare: How to recognize and mitigate it. *The Journal of Infectious Diseases*, 220(2), S62–S73.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/infdis/jiz214>

UCLA's Implicit Bias Online Training:
<https://equity.ucla.edu/know/implicit-bias/>

The inclusion of resources by this author does not imply or constitute an endorsement by the American Veterinary Medical Association or the Veterinary Medical Association Executives.