

# Types of biases women experience:

## Performance bias

Based on deep-rooted ideals of men's and women's capabilities. While men are evaluated on performance, women are held to a higher, often unrealistic standard. Women's performance is underestimated, and women need to accomplish more to prove their competency.

Women are hired on past accomplishments whereas men are hired on their future potential.

### Impacts:

- Recruitment
- Performance reviews

### Leads to:

- Missed opportunities
- Lower performance ratings
- Negative impact on career progression
- Pay Gap

## Attribution bias

closely linked to performance bias, when it is perceived that women are less competent, we are less likely to recognize and give credit to accomplishments and are more likely to be blamed for errors. Women's contributions are less valued.

### Impacts:

- Performance reviews
- Promotions
- Teams

### Leads to:

- Lower performance ratings
- Missed opportunities
- Negative impact on career progression
- Disengagement in teams
- A Toxic work cultures
- Pay Gap

## Likability Bias

or the likability penalty, which is a penalty faced if a woman asserts herself and elicits an unfavorable reaction, being described as bossy, aggressive, or intimidating. Conversely, if women remain agreeable and nice, they are considered to be less competent. This balancing act makes it harder for women in the workplace.

### Impacts:

- Performance reviews
- Promotions
- Special projects

### Leads to:

- Lower performance ratings
- Negative impact on career progression
- Missed opportunities
- Pay Gap

## Likability Bias

The assumption that women or mothers, in particular, are less committed to their careers or are less competent. This intensifies other biases women already face. Which results in fewer opportunities and higher standards to prove themselves. It is assumed the mothers will not take on a challenging assignment or not be able to go on the business trip because they have to focus on their kids. This is the strongest type of gender bias. Often a woman may not be a mother but her relationship status is enough to cause this bias.

### Impacts:

- Penalized for small oversights or mistakes
- Performance reviews
- Promotions
- Special projects

### Leads to:

- Lower performance ratings
- Negative impact on career progression
- Missed opportunities
- Pay Gap

## Affinity bias

The tendency to gravitate to people like ourselves. This has a potentially negative effect on women and people of color, and is played out in recruitment, mentoring, and promotions to mention a few areas – leading to being overlooked or left out.

### Impacts:

- Talent pools
- Performance reviews
- Promotions
- Special projects

### Leads to:

- A valid candidate being overlooked and left out
- Organizations missing out on talent retention and development
- Negative impact on career progression
- Pay Gap

Know that these biases can be combined with other biases and compound the overall effect. We need to internalize that gender biases are harmful and learn to counteract them in real life.

### **A result of the above biases is the pay gap, here are some interesting statistics and factors for consideration:**

- Women are paid less than men. On average, women in the US earn 18% less than men, even in the same job.
- Women are often better educated but do not earn accordingly; in fact, the pay gap increases the higher a woman is educated.
- When women join an industry in large numbers, this causes the pay to drop substantially, as much as 57%.
- Women do negotiate for pay raises and apply for promotions but are less likely to receive them.
- A pay cap amounts to millions a woman loses out on, throughout her career.
- A pay gap widens the wealth gap, with more women or mothers being the breadwinners of more than 50% of the households in the US, which affects the quality of life for half the US population.

- If women were paid fairly, the poverty rate in the US would be halved.
- Sadly, the pay gap is a global problem, and factors like access to credit, workforce participation all hold women back.

## **Prevent gender bias at work:**

To ensure we don't compound biases we need to:

- Slow down and make more measured decisions (think before you speak or act)
- Speak up if you see biased behavior in others
- Commit to being a part of the solution

## **Employees of diverse teams are:**

- More committed
- Work harder
- Produce better business results

## **PRACTICAL SCENARIOS.**

### **How we act makes the most impact!**

**A manager schedules a virtual team meeting when a co-worker has blocked time off to care for young children.**

#### **Effects:**

- Work-life balance
- Creates maternal bias
- Stress and burnout

#### **You can:**

- Bring up your co-worker's schedule and suggest an alternate time
- Elaborate that time off will result in better productivity and commitment

**A colleague is advocating for a man with potential over a woman with experience.**

**Effects:**

- Organization misses out on wisdom, talent and skill
- Employee misses out on an opportunity for progression
- Creates performance and attribution bias.

**You can:**

- Highlight the experience your colleague poses
- Suggest an aligned documented criteria to evaluate job roles
- Explain the bias and the negative outcomes it poses.

**A colleague assumes the team lead to be a man.**

**Effects:**

- Reenforces the assumption that women are not leaders
- Undermines authority
- Creates affinity bias

**You can:**

- Correct the record
- Underscore your colleague's credibility and ability

**Your manager constantly questions your colleague's knowledge of her area of expertise.**

**Effects:**

- Moral
- Negatively impacts job satisfaction
- Creates performance bias

**You can:**

- Underscore your colleague's credibility and ability
- Seek your colleague's insight often to validate her qualifications

Your manager let's biased behavior go unchallenged.

**Effects:**

- Moral
- Teamwork
- The work culture

**You can:**

- Approach your manager about what you observe
- Elaborate on the importance of setting workplace norms
- Encourage your manager to set the right tone
  - Speak to the senior leadership
  - Understand that managers may have not received anti-bias training

## TEAM DISCUSSION PROMPTS

- **You're in a meeting and a woman colleague is spoken over or interrupted.**

When a woman gets interrupted, you might say, "I'd like to hear the rest of [Name's] thoughts. I'd like to consider it further before we move on."

- **Someone suggests that a woman on your team be given a big, high-profile project, and a colleague says, "I don't think this is a good time for her since she just had a baby."**

○ Remind your colleague that while it's nice for them to look out for the female colleague, this could be a career changing project for whoever gets it, so it's better to let the new mom decide for herself whether or not she wants to take it on.

- **A manager describes a woman who reports to her as "overly ambitious" when she asks for a promotion.**

Ask your colleague to explain their thinking. For example, you can say, "I believe as an organization we appreciate people who have ambitions and desire to help our company grow. Why does it bother you in this case? Would you feel the same way if a man on your team asked for a promotion?"