

# CULTURAL COMPETENCY CORNER

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF  
**RISE SERVICES, INC.**

## **Dear Rise Employee:**

In this edition of the Cultural Competency Corner, we will spend a little time discussing bias and unconscious (implicit) bias. We will also introduce our remaining Cultural Competency Ambassadors. We hope you enjoy this edition.



Steven Hunter,  
Diversity Officer

## RISE CORPORATE VALUES



ON APRIL 20, 2006, PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH PROCLAIMED THAT MAY WOULD BE JEWISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH. THIS MONTH WOULD RECOGNIZE THE MORE THAN 350-YEAR HISTORY OF JEWISH CONTRIBUTIONS TO AMERICAN CULTURE. THE RESOLUTIONS PASSED UNANIMOUSLY, FIRST IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES IN DECEMBER 2005 AND LATER IN THE SENATE IN FEBRUARY 2006.

IN 1977 FRANK HORTON OF NEW YORK INTRODUCED HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 540 TO PROCLAIM THE FIRST TEN DAYS IN MAY AS PACIFIC/ASIAN AMERICAN HERITAGE WEEK. ASIAN/PACIFIC INCLUDES ALL OF THE ASIAN CONTINENT AND THE PACIFIC ISLANDS OF MELANESIA (NEW GUINEA, NEW CALEDONIA, VANUATU, FIJI AND THE SOLOMON ISLANDS), MICRONESIA (MARIANAS, GUAM, WAKE ISLAND, PALAU, MARSHALL ISLANDS, KIRIBATI, NAURU AND THE FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA) AND POLYNESIA (NEW ZEALAND, HAWAIIAN ISLANDS, ROTUMA, MIDWAY ISLANDS, SAMOA, AMERICAN SAMOA, TONGA, TUVALU, COOK ISLANDS, FRENCH POLYNESIA AND EASTER ISLAND).



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This newsletter is designed with you in mind. If you have content ideas, cultural events, or cultural celebrations to share, please forward them to Steven Hunter for consideration.

# BIAS

**Bias** is prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another.

**Unconscious Bias** (or implicit bias) is often defined as prejudice or unsupported judgments in favor of or against one thing, person, or group as compared to another, in a way that is usually considered unfair.

Simply stated, bias is preferring a person, group, or thing over another. Every human who has ever lived has bias. Our brains are naturally wired to be biased (Wendt, 2019). Our biases are influenced by many factors. Some factors include our life experiences, familial upbringing, societal messages, and our religious or political doctrine. Bias allows us to simplify the information that we receive by helping us establish associations and patterns. These associations and patterns result in preferences.

Bias may be apparent as we consider characteristics such as language, age, weight, race, gender, etc. These preferences dictate many of the choices we make throughout the day. For example, if you need to choose a seat at a movie theater, you may opt to sit with people who appear to be closer to you in age, race, or ethnicity versus those who are not.

Bias is always with us. We demonstrate our biases everywhere we go. That includes the workplace.

Bias in the workplace is often expressed in implicit terms (Berger, 2018). Meaning, a person may not be conscious of how bias shapes the decisions they make or how they interact with others. When it comes to implicit or unconscious bias, the stereotypes we assign to others influence the judgments we make about them and how we relate to them. An example would be assuming all Traditionalists (born between 1925 and 1945) are technologically challenged. Another example would be assuming that all Millennials (born between 1981 and 1996) are great with technology. This bias minimizes the effectiveness of the organization and is prejudice. In terms of implicit bias, it is important to know that it is usually pervasive, can be unlearned, and is often a direct contradiction to your stated beliefs.

Our workplaces and customers are becoming more diverse. Embracing diverse communities requires a commitment to adjusting our paradigms, seeing another's perspective, recognizing stereotypes, and appreciating people for their uniqueness. We must be open to the idea that we have viewed others through a limiting lens.

Recognizing the bias we carry as individuals is not an easy thing. Depending on the bias, confronting it can be uncomfortable and even disheartening. But it is this very recognition that allows us to be productive and constructive team members. By allowing bias against people or groups of people to go unchecked, we risk harm against our coworkers and organization.

BERGER, L. (2018). UNCONSCIOUS BIAS IN THE WORKPLACE: YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO IGNORE IT. RETRIEVED FROM: [HTTPS://WWW.FORBES.COM/SITES/FORBESCOACHESCOUNCIL/2018/03/23/UNCONSCIOUS-BIAS-IN-THE-WORKPLACE-YOU-CANT-AFFORD-TO-IGNORE-IT/#6185dfbe7660](https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2018/03/23/unconscious-bias-in-the-workplace-you-cant-afford-to-ignore-it/#6185dfbe7660)

WENDT, L. (2019). OUR BRAINS ARE NATURALLY WIRED TO EXCLUDE-HOW DO WE CREATE AN INCLUSIVE WORK CULTURE ANYWAY? RETRIEVED FROM: [HTTPS://FORUMWORKPLACEINCLUSION.ORG/PRESENTERS/LAURA-](https://forumworkplaceinclusion.org/presenters/laura-)