

# **What is Unconscious Bias; considerations and top tips.**

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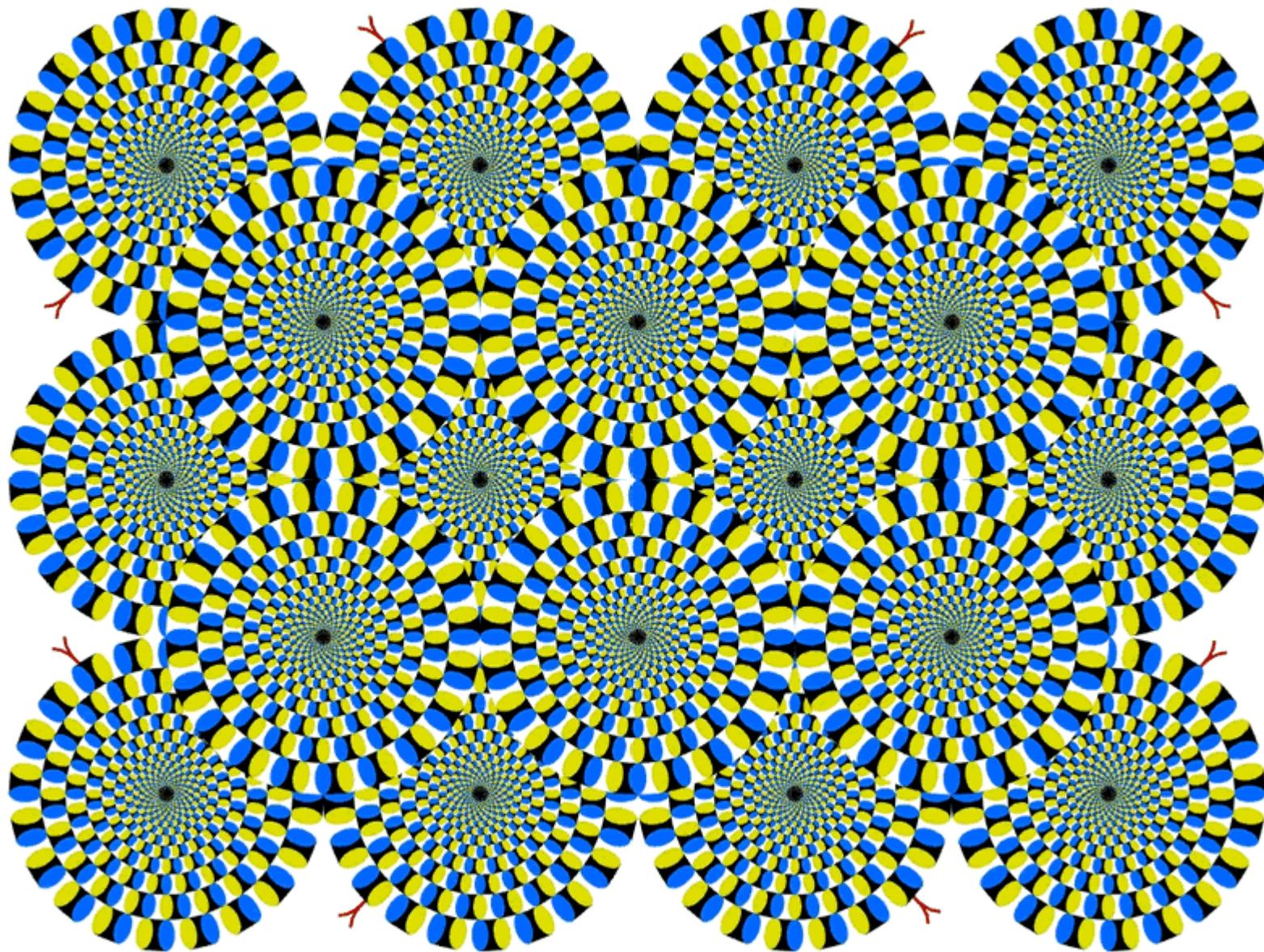
**15 April 2014**

# Outline of session

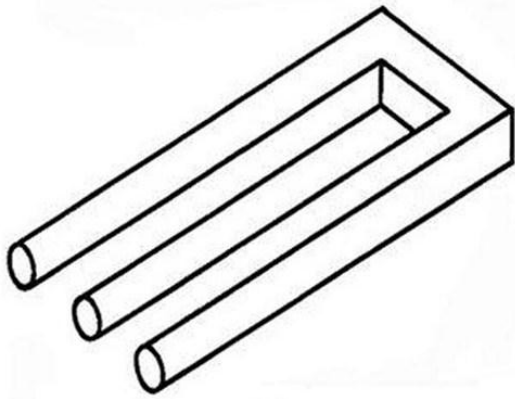
What is Unconscious Bias; considerations and top tips.

- Overview – What is Unconscious Bias
- Examples
- Mitigate / what can you do

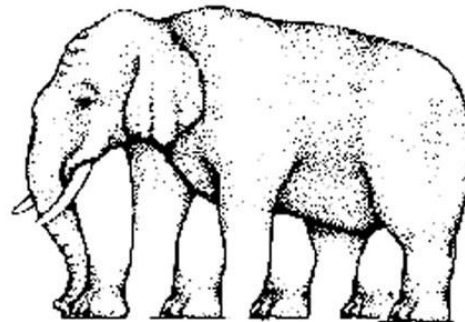




WARWICK



IMPOSSIBLE TRIDENT! HOW PRO?



HOW MANY LEGS DOES THIS ELEPHANT HAVE?

# What is Unconscious Bias?

**Unconscious bias** refers to a bias that we are *unaware of*, and which happens outside of our control. It is a bias that happens automatically and is triggered by our brain making quick judgments and assessments of people and situations, influenced by our **background, cultural environment and personal experiences**

(ECU: 2013 *Unconscious bias in higher education*)

**What examples of unconscious bias have you experienced or demonstrated**

# Examples

- Name
- Foreign v local qualifications
- Location / address
- Interview panel representation
- Selection of candidates / single gender
- Research project – advisory or steering group composition
- Teaching case studies
- Recruitment & Selection for students
- Recruitment & Selection for staff
- Staff appraisal
- Student attainment/ grading or marks
- Job adverts
- Marketing
- Website



# Mitigate

Mitigate the impact / increased awareness of strategies to manage our brain shortcuts

- Micro v macro situations
- In-group v out-group
- Confirmation bias

# What you can do/ Mitigate

- Be awareness/ conscious
- Considerations
- Small changes
- Pragmatic
- Improving processes, policies & procedures

# What you can do

- Challenging stereotypes and counter stereotypical information
- Using context to explain a situation
- Changing perception and relationship with out-group members
- Being an active bystander

# Practical examples

- Reduce levels of bias – males & females on panel, cultural diversity on interview / selection panel, have criteria & use them
- Policies & procedures eg Physics example
- Diversity of guest speakers & lectures
- Timings / scheduling of meetings
- If an organisation's performance management systems were stereotype-free; if they reflected attributes, characteristics, and behaviours of all talent – women and men– then the workplace would truly be inclusive.

# Summary

- We all have unconscious biases and we are all affected by bias
- We can take action to manage the impact on our behaviour and decision making
- It's up to individuals to decide what action to take

# Resources

ECU link <http://www.ecu.ac.uk/>

Unconscious bias in HE Literature review

<http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/unconscious-bias-in-higher-education/>