



EDMONTON POLICE SERVICE

REPORT TO THE EDMONTON POLICE COMMISSION

DATE: January 8, 2021

SUBJECT: Managing Unconscious Bias eLearning Module

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That this report be received for information.

BACKGROUND:

Bias is the unconscious tendency to be in favour of or against an idea or thing, usually formed without reasonable justification. The purpose of bias is to assist the brain with processing large volumes of information by prioritizing, categorizing, and summarizing our respective surroundings. This influences our feelings, thoughts, and actions, and allows for quick decision-making which can promote appropriate and safe reactions in dangerous situations with limited information.

The challenge with bias, particularly in policing, occurs when our unconscious behaviours are not recognized, causing errors in judgement. Such errors are based on our perceptions, preferences, and assumptions about a situation, an individual, or a group of people. In some workplace contexts, bias can potentially affect an applicant's perceived suitability, influence what information or sources are deemed credible, and impact other common day-to-day interactions.

While the EPS has been delivering bias awareness training to recruits since 2012, community input from recent engagement initiatives has suggested the need for training to be extended to all civilian and sworn employees.

The Equity, Inclusion, and Human Rights Branch recommends that the membership participates in an introductory eLearning course on bias awareness training. This unique curriculum will provide participants with the opportunity to reflect and examine their own thoughts and behaviours and allow them to better manage the effects of bias on decision-making.

The LMS eLearning module was developed in-house by the Equity, Inclusion, and Human Rights Branch in consultation with community members and is ready for delivery to all EPS employees. The module is requested to be made mandatory and tracked for compliance. The module includes a series of slides consisting of background information, videos, and learning activities (including knowledge checks) and should take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete.

This eLearning module is introductory and is related to ongoing employee development within the EPS' Community Policing curriculum. The Community Policing curriculum provides education on issues related to historical trauma, police legitimacy, and procedural justice. Participation in this training will enable members of EPS to better understand and equitably respond to the needs of the diverse communities in Edmonton, particularly those who are marginalized and underserved.

Continuing Education Unit has been consulted with and they have the ability and capacity to deliver this training to the membership through the LMS.

Written By:

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Equity and Inclusion Branch**

Fair & Impartial Policing: Managing Unconscious Bias Training Strategy

January 21, 2020
Insp. Mitch Flaman
Matthew Cheung



Topics

- Introductions
- Roundup: Bias Explained
- Why Does it Matter?
- Training Rationale for EPS
- Approach
- Next Steps



MENU NOTES

1. Managing Bias

1.1. Welcome

1.2. Navigation Instructions

1.3. Learning Objectives

2. Part 1

2.1. An Introduction to Bias

2.2. Warm-up: Late for your Flight

2.3. In your mental image...

2.4. Recap: Late for your Flight

2.5. So... What is Unconscious Bias?

2.6. We All Have Unconscious Bias

2.7. Setting the Tone

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- ✓ **Explain** what unconscious bias is
- ✓ **Describe** how unconscious bias can negatively influence decision-making and your perceptions of people
- ✓ **Apply** strategies to manage and interrupt bias



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Roundup: Bias Explained

Unconscious Bias:

- A tendency to be in favour of or against an idea or thing, usually formed without reasonable justification.

Scientists believe bias helps us navigate the world and thereby prevent the brain from being overwhelmed by information.

- **Bias tends to manifest as attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understandings, actions, and decisions without an individual's awareness or intentional control.**
- When we don't recognize our unconscious bias and subsequent behaviours, we can make errors in judgement that can negatively impact others.

Warm-up: Can you read this?

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Why does it matter? Training Rationale for EPS

Although unintentional, because we tend to see people as representatives of a particular group rather than individuals, our biases can cause errors in judgement that negatively impact decision-making.

- As such, it is essential that our membership understands the implications of bias in policing; the impact of bias exists on a spectrum and can drastically alter split-second decision-making and/or disrupt day-to-day operations and investigations.

Since police are entrusted with power and discretion, it is essential for them to understand the potential effects of bias on decision-making and behaviour.

Our Approach

The Managing Unconscious Bias eLearning module is the first of new and upcoming training opportunities related to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at the EPS.

While the eLearning module alone will not immediately change behaviours, we believe in the value of promoting awareness and encouraging self-reflection.

- This is done by creating a safe learning environment that allows participants to meaningfully engage with potentially sensitive or emotional topics without the compromise of content or key messaging..

The goal of this training was to better facilitate productive dialogue and understanding on bias in a way that is non-punitive, domineering, or overwhelming, on a topic that adversely impacts everyone.

Next Steps

Upcoming Opportunities:

- Education
 - Inclusive Language Guide – Glossary of Terms
 - EIHR: Centralized Training Resources on EPS Intranet
 - Training Considerations for General Membership and Senior Leadership
 - Equity and Inclusive Leadership
 - Anti-Discrimination; Anti-Racism
 - Allyship; Peer Intervention
 - Gender-Based Analysis
- Initiatives
 - Assessment of Promotion Process for Potential Barriers
 - Parental Leave Equity Project

THANK YOU

Questions?

