



10 BIASES YOU NEED TO KNOW

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REVIEWING RESUMES THE RIGHT WAY

In an ideal world, only qualified candidates would apply for your position. But as you've probably experienced, this is rarely if ever the case.

Therefore, how do you evaluate a resume while giving each candidate a fair and thorough assessment?

You think this is easy? You can identify a good resume? Absolutely, especially if you have identified what you are looking for at the beginning of the process. However, there are some common mistakes that can cause you to miss out on excellent candidates.

In this module, we will look at how to properly review a resume and the pitfalls to avoid.

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OUR PRO-TIPS

1

First of all, the question that you should be asking yourself during the resume review is not "Would I hire this person?" but rather "Is this candidate interesting enough to meet in an interview?" It's a whole different mindset that will allow you to be open to different profiles.

2

Don't make the mistake of comparing candidates against each other. Instead, compare your candidates against your criteria. You may receive resumes piecemeal, especially in a labor shortage situation, so you need to position yourself on a candidate without having a comparable.

3

Be open to different types of profiles. There are more and more people who change careers, for example, or whose experience is not linear. They are called atypical profiles. Try to identify the so-called transferable skills. What are transferable skills? It is a set of skills and abilities that go beyond a job and can be used in any other type of project or activity. In other words, don't look for a copy and paste of your job description.

4

It is also important to look beyond our first impressions. We sometimes have certain preconceived notions about certain types of experience or statements on a resume.

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RECOGNIZING UNCONSCIOUS BIASES



The human brain makes about 35,000 decisions per day. Yet, one study showed that only 0.26% of the decisions made by individuals are made consciously.

Source Study carried out by Lightspeed Research for the Huawei firm in November 2017

As human beings, we are genetically designed to make quick decisions. The decisions we make automatically and quickly are often based on prejudices or **unconscious biases**.

Our upbringing, our socialization process, our membership of certain social groups, our exposure to diversity, our access to information and the media in general are all aspects that feed into our decision-making process and influence our judgment throughout our lives. We all have these blind spots, and we've all, at one time or another, expressed or experienced these prejudices.

Unfortunately, unconscious biases often manifest themselves during the recruitment process, not least when we rely on our instincts during interviews. We then make **a decision based on intuition** rather than facts. Recognizing your unconscious biases will lead you to be more open when analyzing applications, and ultimately, to make the best hiring decision and recruit a more diverse workforce... and it will also reduce the risk of discrimination!

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1. FIRST IMPRESSIONS

This bias leads us to make quick and incomplete observations about candidates based on the first information we perceive. This can have a considerable influence on the way you handle applications. For example, asking easy questions of those we like, and harder questions of those we don't like. To counteract this, take the time to recognize your first impression and leave it aside. Ask open-ended questions and avoid making decisions during the interview.

2. CONFIRMATION BIAS

This is when you only consider information that confirms your beliefs and ignore everything else. We do this because we want to believe that our instincts are right and that our assessment of the candidate is well-founded. This bias reinforces the blind spots that can prevent you from making informed decisions. To counter it, create a structured process: define your recruitment needs (see previous module) and create interview questions based on these needs (see below). Resist the urge to start a conversation, as it's easy to get sidetracked from the questions you need to ask. Concentrate on the question in hand and evaluate each answer independently.

3. CONTRAST EFFECT

The contrast effect is a cognitive bias that distorts our perception of one thing when we compare it to another, accentuating the differences between the two. In an interview, for example, we'll tend to evaluate a candidate more favorably if we meet them right after a poorly-performing candidate, and vice versa. To avoid this, keep your needs in mind, don't compare applications against each other but against the criteria, and evaluate applications immediately after each stage.

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4. ANCHORING BIAS

Anchoring bias occurs when using information as a reference. This is the case, for example, when we refuse to believe that a profile that is not a replica of the person who previously held the position can do the job properly, or when we allow ourselves to be impressed by a prestigious school. To avoid anchoring bias, dissect the CV point by point, without focusing on a single piece of information. Use multiple, factual data to assess skills. In interviews, remain aware of your biases and give equal attention to all the information presented, without allowing yourself to be influenced by previous information.

5. HALO EFFECT

This is a cognitive bias in which a positive first impression of a candidate unconsciously influences our perception of them as a whole. As a result, we have high expectations of the candidate's performance, and we ignore red flags or fail to dig deeper, because we've already reached our conclusion. To avoid this trap, let's concentrate on assessing the specific skills and abilities of each profile, taking care not to let any single characteristic dominate our judgment.

6. HORN EFFECT

This is the opposite of the halo effect, when something negative about a candidate catches our attention and we can't concentrate on anything else. We let it cloud our judgment. It may be a character flaw or an aspect of their personality that irritates us, and we let this influence our decision not to hire them.

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7. OVERCONFIDENCE BIAS

Overconfidence bias occurs when the interviewer is so confident in his or her own ability to select a good candidate, or eliminate the supposedly bad ones, that he or she allows a confirmation bias to creep in to justify his or her decisions. She lets her subjective confidence cloud her objectivity, and tends to rely on her so-called intuition. The trick: make a decision based on the facts!

8. AFFINITY BIAS

This is the tendency we may have to be more favorable to individuals with whom we feel an ease of contact, communication and sharing. Conversely, when the connection is more difficult, our perception and actions may be more negative or resistant. Watch out for the warning signs: "I'd get on well with this person" or "he or she isn't a good fit". Build a diverse recruitment team and clearly define "cultural fit" to avoid this pitfall.

9. NON-VERBAL LANGUAGE BIAS

This is when non-verbal communication attributes, such as a person's body language or appearance, are analyzed and given more weight than they should. Examples include mannerisms, posture, eye contact and facial expressions. Beware: non-verbal language can be affected by a number of factors, including your own attitude! So be vigilant. You can conduct an initial telephone interview and use assessment tools during the selection process.

10. CONFORMITY BIAS

This bias means that, if you have a different opinion from the rest of the group, you're more likely to change your mind to agree with them. This can be seen as the idea of "majority rule", which occurs when a group of people form an idea and it takes hold even if not everyone agrees with it. Keep this in mind when you conduct your debriefing session, which we'll look at later.