



Training for Regenerative Leadership

Module 4

Bias Awareness and Inclusive Decision-Making

Developed by Wisamar | 2026

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4. Bias Awareness and Inclusive Decision-Making

Reflecting on personal values, assumptions, and unconscious biases.

by Wisamar

4.1 Introduction

Topics and Key Concepts

This module approaches the reflection on and handling of unconscious bias from an intersectional perspective and applies it to the context of decision-making by leaders, managers and educators in the workplace.

Topic of the Module:

This module focuses on how personal values, assumptions, and unconscious biases influence decision-making in leadership and everyday professional interactions. In contrast to the previous modules, which focus on the organization as a whole, this module places the emphasis on individuals within the organization—particularly leaders—and their personal role in shaping inclusive practices. It is relevant because leaders, managers and educators regularly make decisions that affect hiring, feedback, delegation, collaboration, and inclusion, often under time pressure and with incomplete information. Working from an intersectional perspective, the module invites participants to critically reflect on bias and privilege through guided reflection exercises. These are designed to help participants recognize and understand their own patterns of thinking and behavior, and to use these insights to make more conscious, equitable decisions. The concept is strongly practice-oriented and supports participants in applying their learning directly to their everyday work context.

Key Concepts:

Unconscious Bias: Unconscious bias refers to automatic attitudes, stereotypes, or mental shortcuts that influence how we perceive, interpret, and judge people and situations without being fully aware of it. These biases can affect decisions even when a person consciously values fairness and inclusion.

Intersectionality: Intersectionality refers to an analytical framework that examines how multiple social categories—such as gender, race, class, sexuality, and others—interact and overlap to shape individuals' experiences of privilege and disadvantage within systems of power and inequality.

Awareness: Awareness refers to the conscious recognition and understanding of one's own perceptions, assumptions, biases, and behaviors, as well as their impact on others and on decision-making processes, particularly within social and professional contexts.

Privilege: Privilege refers to unearned advantages that some people have because of social positions or identities such as gender, race, class, ability, age, or education. Recognizing privilege helps leaders understand that not everyone starts from the same position.

Inclusion: Inclusion means creating environments where diverse people feel respected, valued, and able to contribute fully. It goes beyond representation and focuses on participation, belonging, and influence.

Inclusive Decision Making: Inclusive decision making is a process in which different perspectives are actively considered and hidden barriers are reduced. It aims to make decisions that are more equitable, transparent, and effective.

Reflection: Reflection is the process of examining one's own thoughts, reactions, and patterns of behavior. In this module, reflection helps participants notice how their own bias may influence leadership choices.

Positionality: Positionality describes how a person's social identities, experiences, values, and position within society shape the way they perceive, understand, and interact with the world. It is connected to power and privilege, as factors such as gender, race, class, education, or age can influence perspectives, opportunities, and access to resources in different contexts.

Overall Goals

The overall goals of this module are to raise awareness of unconscious bias and its impact on leadership and decision-making, to encourage critical reflection on personal values, assumptions, and privilege, and to strengthen inclusive and equitable leadership practices. Furthermore, the module aims to support participants in applying bias-aware strategies in real workplace situations and to promote sustainable and responsible leadership in diverse teams and organizations.

Learning Objectives

Upon completing this module, participants will be able to:

Knowledge

- Describe the concept of unconscious bias and explain its relevance in leadership contexts.
- Identify common forms of bias in everyday decision-making situations.
- Explain the importance of inclusive decision-making for diverse and sustainable organizations.

Skills

- Reflect on their own perspectives, reactions, and decision-making patterns.
- Analyse how bias may influence leadership practices such as hiring, feedback, delegation, and conflict resolution.
- Apply practical strategies to reduce the influence of bias in professional contexts.
- Evaluate the inclusiveness of their own decision-making processes.

Attitudes

- Demonstrate openness toward diverse perspectives and experiences.
- Develop a critical awareness of their own assumptions and potential biases.
- Commit to concrete actions to strengthen inclusive leadership practices.

Resources

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4.2 Activities

Activity 1: Bingo

Learning Objectives:

- Get to know each other in an informal and interactive way
- Identify shared experiences and hidden strengths within the group
- Reflect on different forms of leadership, collaboration, and self-awareness
- Recognize diverse perspectives, skills, and professional pathways
- Build trust and connection within the learning environment

Procedure and methods:

Procedure	Group format	Materials	Time
Facilitator distributes the Bingo sheets and explains how to play: The goal is to complete a line of five (horizontally, vertically, or diagonally). Participants move around the room and ask each other questions based on the statements written in the bingo boxes. Each box contains a statement that can be answered with “yes” or “no”. If a person answers “yes” to a statement, their name can be written in the corresponding box. Each name may only be used once per line. The first person to complete a full line of five boxes calls out “Bingo”.	Group work	Bingo cards	2 min
Participants move freely around the room, approach each other, and ask questions to find matches for the statements on their sheet. The facilitator keeps energy up by circulating, encouraging participants to keep moving if they stay with the same person too long.			8 min

GETTING-TO-KNOW-YOU BINGO



...has led a team through uncertainty or change.	...has questioned traditional ideas of leadership.	...genuinely enjoys moderating group discussions.	...enjoys giving constructive feedback.	...has a strength that is often overlooked in professional settings.
...has said "no" to an opportunity to protect their wellbeing.	...has a creative practice outside of work.	...speaks more than 3 languages.	...needs quiet or rest to do their best work.	...has started a project before feeling fully ready.
...feels energized after spending time alone.	...has experience holding emotional space for others at work.	...prefers listening over speaking in groups.	...has facilitated a workshop before.	...would rather collaborate than compete.
...has changed careers or professional directions at least once.	...finds it difficult to celebrate their own achievements.	...has mentored or supported another woman professionally.	...has difficulty asking for help.	...has intentionally slowed down their pace of work.
...has learned an important leadership lesson from failure.	...has a talent or skill that most colleagues don't know about.	...is currently redefining what success means to them.	...has turned a personal challenge into a strength.	...has taught something to others professionally or informally.



GETTING-TO-KNOW-YOU BINGO



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Activity 2: Flash Questionnaire

Learning Objectives:

- Reflect spontaneously on current levels of bias awareness
- Identify personal patterns in decision-making and inclusion
- Summarize first impressions and assumptions about oneself
- Establish a personal baseline for later reflection
- Compare individual perspectives through peer exchange

Procedure and methods:

Procedure	Group format	Materials	Time
The facilitator explains that participants will begin by completing a brief questionnaire individually. The questionnaire is intended for personal reflection, and there are no right or wrong answers. Following this, participants can share any aspects they wish with a partner. No responses need to be reported back to the plenary.			1 min
Each person fills in the questionnaire individually.	Individual work	Questionnaire (printed or digital), pen	5 min
Participants find a partner. Brief exchange with partner: <i>What surprises you about your answers?</i>	Pair work		5 min

FLASH QUESTIONNAIRE



Not at all true

Completely true

I feel uncomfortable in discussions about sexist behaviour in the workplace.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5

I am unsure how to challenge biased comments in professional settings.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5

I feel uncertain about how to address people who use gender-neutral pronouns such as “they”.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5

I sometimes wonder whether I expect the same level of workload from colleagues with caregiving responsibilities as from others.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5

I think I may judge people differently depending on their social background or class.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5

I am unsure whether language proficiency or accent influences how I perceive someone’s professionalism.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5

I feel uncertain whether I give equal space to all voices in group discussions.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5

I think I may unintentionally overlook perspectives that are different from my own.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5

I feel uncomfortable when I realise I may have acted based on assumptions about gender or identity.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5

I feel open but unsure how to respond when my own behaviour is questioned.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5

I think inclusive decision-making requires questioning my own assumptions, but I am not always sure how to do this.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5

Activity 3: Wheel of Privilege

Learning Objectives:

- Identify personal social positionings and experiences
- Reflect on how privilege and marginalisation shape perspectives
- Recognize that privilege is contextual and relational
- Develop awareness of intersectionality and positionality
- Examine how social structures influence leadership and decision-making

Procedure and methods:

Procedure	Group format	Materials	Time
The facilitator introduces the activity by inviting participants to reflect on the different social positions and experiences that shape how people perceive the world and make decisions. The facilitator then provides a brief explanation of the Wheel of Privilege. The different axes (e.g., ethnicity, gender, education, socioeconomic status, language, age, and ability) represent social dimensions that can influence a person's access to opportunities, resources and social power. Participants are encouraged to approach the exercise as an opportunity for self-reflection and awareness. The purpose is not to compare experiences or assign guilt, but to better understand how social identities and circumstances can shape perspectives and interactions.		To learn (more) about the use of the wheel of Power and Privilege: https://rachelcottam.com/2024/06/27/what-is-the-wheel-of-privilege-and-power/	3 min
Participants fill in the wheel individually and in silence.		Wheel of Privilege and Power (printed), pen	5 min
Silent contemplation: Participants look at their completed wheel. Facilitator poses some reflection questions (not for plenary)		Reflection Questions (printed or digital)	5 min

WHEEL OF PRIVILEGE



Own adaptation based on the original “Wheel of Privilege & Power” by Sylvia Duckworth (<https://sylvia Duckworth.com/>) and the explanation by Cottam (2024).

WHEEL OF POWER AND PRIVILEGE: REFLECTION QUESTIONS



How close or far from the centre am I on each axis?

About what axis have I (never) thought before?

How has my career been impacted by my privileges?

Which identities have been roadblocks in my life?

Which identities or privileges am I mostly unaware of?

Did any segments of the wheel make me feel uncomfortable or defensive?

Are there any assumptions or stereotypes associated with segments of the circle?

Is marginalization always a bad thing?

How have my marginalized identities impacted my life for good?

How does this wheel help me to rethink what success looks like for myself and others?

How can I use my power and influence to build bridges for others?



Notes to myself:

Activity 4: Activating Bias: Fast Decisions

Learning Objectives:

- Experience how unconscious bias emerges under time pressure
- Identify automatic reactions and intuitive judgments
- Reflect on the origins of assumptions and quick decisions
- Recognize emotional responses connected to bias
- Examine how bias can affect leadership and workplace interactions

Procedure and methods:

Procedure	Group format	Materials	Time
The facilitator explains that each group will receive a set of cards describing different situations. For each situation, participants are asked to decide on an action or response. To simulate real-life decision-making, participants should respond quickly and avoid overanalyzing the scenarios. Each decision should be made within 30 seconds, following their first impulse rather than engaging in lengthy deliberation.	Plenary session		2 min
Participants find groups (3-4 people) and make fast decisions. After each card, groups briefly discuss: <i>What was my first impulse? Where might that come from?</i>	Group work	Scenario cards	10 min
Facilitator invites a quick pulse check in plenary: <i>What surprised you? What felt uncomfortable?</i> (no obligation to disclose) Connection to the previous input: “These are the moments when unconscious bias is most powerful.”	Plenary session		5 min

1

Policy Change

Your organisation is introducing a new hybrid work policy: a four-day working week with fixed office hours from 8:00 to 16:00. You are part of the decision-making group that is implementing this policy. Most team members live close to the office and have flexible personal schedules.

One of your team members approaches you and explains that it is difficult for them to be in the office by 8:00 because they need to take their child to school in the morning.

What do you do?

2

Team Scheduling

You are planning a full-day team retreat and set the date without consulting the team. A team member approaches you and tells you that the retreat falls on a religious holiday they observe. They explain that they can attend the morning but will need to leave in the early afternoon. You feel slightly inconvenienced, as you had planned the most important discussions for the afternoon.

What do you do?

3

Idea Ownership

You are facilitating a brainstorming session. A colleague whose first language is not the team's working language shares an idea cautiously, and it is not immediately picked up by the group. About ten minutes later, a fluent speaker articulates a very similar idea more confidently, and the room responds enthusiastically and builds on it.

What do you do?

4

Flexible Work Policy

You are part of a team designing a new in-office attendance policy. The policy requires everyone to be in the office on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 08:00 to 16:30. Most people involved in the planning live nearby and commute by car. After the policy is introduced, a team member approaches you and explains that working in the office is very exhausting for them and that they are significantly more productive when working from home.

What do you do?

5

Performance Review

You are responsible for assigning a high-priority project within your team. One team member lives with a chronic illness and has had several absences this year, sometimes also working reduced hours. When present, their output is consistently strong and high quality. Another team member has had fewer absences and consistently performs to a satisfactory standard.

You are now deciding whom to assign the high-priority project to.

What do you do?

6

Team Dynamics

A non-binary colleague uses they/them pronouns. You notice that several team members consistently misgender them in meetings, apparently without noticing. The colleague has not raised it explicitly with you. You are about to run the next team meeting.

What do you do?

7

Leadership Opportunity

You are responsible for recommending team members for a new stretch leadership opportunity. One team member who has been open about managing depression has been performing strongly over the past year. In this context, depression may mean that the person sometimes needs more time for recovery or may occasionally be absent for longer periods.

What do you do?

8

Digital Transformation

Your organisation is rolling out a new digital tool. In the planning meeting, someone jokes that “the older staff will struggle with this”. You notice that the training schedule allocates extra sessions specifically for employees over 55.

An IT colleague over the age of 55 approaches you afterwards and asks why this assumption has been made.

What do you do?

9

Overtime Expectation

A high-stakes project requires extra hours over the next three weeks. You notice that team members without children volunteer immediately. Two parents and one person caring for an elderly relative stay quiet. Afterwards, you hear them described informally as 'less committed'.

What do you do?

10

Decision-Making Process

You are moderating a strategy meeting. The youngest member of your team – 24 years old and six months into the role – raises a well-researched point that challenges an established practice. A senior colleague responds with: “You’ll understand how things work here once you’ve been around longer.” The discussion moves on, and you notice that the younger team member does not speak again for the rest of the meeting.

What do you do?



Activity 5: Jigsaw

Learning Objectives:

- Summarize key concepts related to unconscious bias, positionality, and intersectionality
- Explain connections between bias and leadership decisions
- Identify strategies for recognising and interrupting bias
- Construct shared understanding through collaborative learning
- Reflect on the relevance of inclusive leadership practices

Procedure and methods:

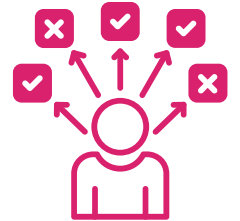
Procedure	Group format	Materials	Time
The facilitator divides the full group into smaller groups (4–5 people each). Each group receives a different section of the text. The facilitator explains that there will now be an input on strategies for addressing unconscious bias, which will be explored through group work.	Group work	Section 1: “Strategies for Confronting Unconscious Bias” by Kathleen Nalty, S. 45-47(ending before <i>Awareness</i>) Section 2: “Strategies for Confronting Unconscious Bias” by Kathleen Nalty, S. 48-50 (ending before <i>Structural Changes</i>) Section 3: “Strategies for Confronting Unconscious Bias” by Kathleen Nalty, S. https://kathleennaltyconsulting.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Str	3 min



		ategies-for-Confronting-Unconscious-Bias-The-Colorado-Lawyer-May-2016.pdf	
Phase 1: Expert groups: Everyone reads and works through their section using the guiding questions. Goal: I can explain my section in 2–3 sentences.	Group work	Guiding questions	15 min
Phase 2: Jigsaw rounds: New groups are formed so that each new group contains one person from each home group. Each person explains their section to their new group. The group works together to construct an overall picture.	Group work		10 min
Phase 3: Each new group writes down their most important insight on a post-it and sticks it on a shared visualisation (whiteboard / flipchart).	Group work	Post-it, pen, Whiteboard/Flipchart	5 min
Phase 4: Participants return to the plenary session and consolidate the insights gained during the group discussions. The facilitator invites reflection on the topics exchanged, the observations that stood out, and the ways in which unconscious biases can be recognized, understood, and addressed through alternative decision-making approaches. In a short round, each group shares one key insight from their discussion (approximately one minute per group), including what participants have taken away for themselves or how the learning could be applied within their own organisation. The facilitator captures and visually summarises the main themes and learnings by clustering post-its or noting keywords on a flipchart.	Plenary Session		10 min

JIGSAW ON INTERSECTIONALITY, POSITIONALITY AND UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

What are the key ideas or concepts in your text?



How is this your text relevant to unconscious bias in everyday or professional decision-making?

My section in 5 bullet points:

-
-
-
-
-

Activity 6: Inclusive Decision-Making: Pause & Perspective-Taking

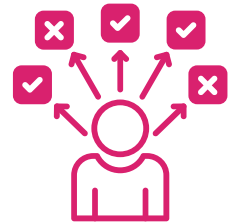
Learning Objectives:

- Apply inclusive decision-making strategies to workplace situations
- Practice perspective-taking and reflective questioning
- Compare intuitive and deliberate decision-making processes
- Identify ways to interrupt automatic bias responses
- Develop practical tools for more inclusive leadership decisions

Procedure and methods:

Procedure	Group format	Materials	Time
The facilitator explains that the groups will revisit the scenario cards from the previous activity. This time, participants will focus on a smaller number of scenarios and explore them in greater depth. Rather than responding quickly, participants are encouraged to take time to discuss each case, consider different perspectives, and reflect on the factors that may influence their decisions. To support the discussion, three guiding questions are provided, which can be used to structure the conversation and deepen the analysis. The aim is to move beyond first impressions and engage in a more deliberate examination of the situations.			1 min
Participants are working through the situation. (Group of 2-3 people)	Group work/Pair Work	Scenario Cards, Guiding questions	10 min
Brief debrief in plenary: <i>What changed when you took more time? What did the perspective shift bring about?</i>	Plenary Session		5 min

INCLUSIVE DECISION-MAKING: PAUSE & PERSPECTIVE-TAKING



Which parts of my judgment are based on facts, and which are interpretations?

Would I judge the situation differently if the person had a different background, gender, age, or communication style?

What else could also be true? Are there alternative explanations or perspectives?



Notes



Activity 7: Closing Reflection

Learning Objectives:

- Summarize the key insights and lessons from the module.
- Identify concrete actions they can take personally in their mindset, behaviour, or daily work.
- Recognize opportunities to initiate or contribute to changes at team or organisational level.

Procedure and methods:

Procedure	Group format	Materials	Time
The trainer hands out the worksheet and explains it to the participants. Participants fill out the worksheet.	Individual work	Worksheet: Reflection	10 minutes

REFLECTION



Name:

Module:

- **Key Takeaways**

What are the main insights or lessons you gained from this module?

- **Immediate Personal Actions**

Which concrete changes can you start making in your own behaviour, mindset or way of working within your organisation?

- **Structural or Long-Term Actions**

Which changes could you initiate or contribute to in your team, department or organisation over time to create lasting impact?

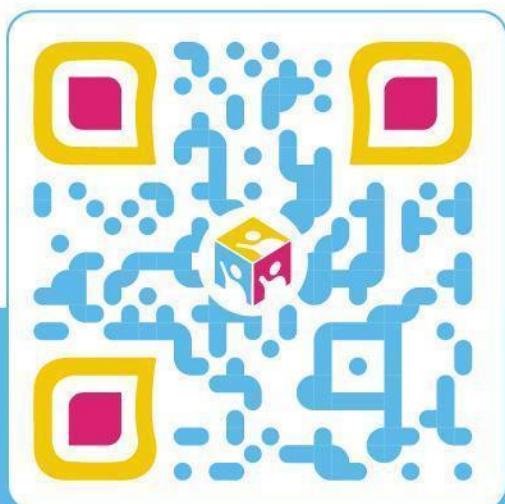


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