Skills4Retail
Building sustainable growth



Leading with Integrity

Workshop 2: Equality, Diversion & Inclusion (EDI)

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Today

Topic	Additional Readings
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)	Retail Leadership is more diverse than ever before but inclusion is the 'tough nut to crack'. Available HERE Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Retail Trends in 2024, Available HERE 10 Ways to Improve Workplace Diversity and Inclusion, Available HERE

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Intended Session Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, you should be able to :

1. Demonstrate an appreciation for the importance of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) in the modern retail environment.



- Introduction to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)
- Benefits of an EDI workforce
- Illustrations from industry
- How to practically apply EDI, identify retail challenges
- Identifying common bias types in the workplace and addressing these.

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Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

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Firstly, Let's CHECK IN...

Please share your understanding of the following questions using the Mentimeter link below:

1. In your opinion, what are the primary advantages of promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace?
2. Can you identify and describe one common bias that may affect workplace dynamics, and suggest a strategy to mitigate its impact?





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Why EDI Matters Today

- **Diverse Customers, Diverse Workforce:** Retail serves increasingly diverse communities.
- **Shifting Consumer Values:** Customers prioritise brands aligned with ethical practices, fairness, and social responsibility.
- **Beyond Compliance:** EDI is not just HR or legal; it's a strategic imperative impacting:
  - Customer Loyalty & Brand Perception
  - Talent Attraction & Retention (critical in retail) – Employee Engagement & Retention
  - Innovation & Problem Solving
  - Bottom Line Performance

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EDI Definitions and Example in Retail

Term	Concise Definition	Retail Example
Equality	Ensuring fair treatment and equal access to opportunities and resources for all, preventing discrimination based on protected characteristics.	All employees having equal access to apply for internal promotions based on merit; standardised pay scales for roles.
Diversity	The presence and range of human differences (visible and non-visible) within a workforce or customer base; valuing the mix.	A sales team reflecting the community's demographics (age, ethnicity, language); offering products for diverse skin tones or cultural needs.
Inclusion	Actively creating an environment where everyone feels welcomed, respected, valued, safe, and empowered to fully participate and contribute.	Accessible store layouts (ramps, wide aisles); managers soliciting and acting on feedback from all team members; diverse representation in marketing; providing communication aids.

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EDI Definitions and Example in Retail (Continued)

Term	Concise Definition	Retail Example
Equity	Recognizing different starting points and providing tailored support or adjustments needed for individuals to achieve fair and equal outcomes.	Providing captioned training videos for hard-of-hearing employees; offering flexible schedules for caregivers; using blind resume screening in hiring.
Belonging	The feeling of security, support, acceptance, and identity that comes from being part of an inclusive group or organisation.	Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) providing community and support; managers actively valuing individual contributions and getting to know team members personally.

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Why is EDI good for Business?

- Better Customer Understanding & Reach
- Higher Employee Morale, Engagement and Retention
- Increased Innovation & Problem-Solving
- Stronger Brand Reputation & Customer Loyalty
- Improved Financial Performance
- The Trust Factor
  - Interconnected Benefits
  - Authenticity is Key

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Managing Diversity: Where are you From?



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Managing Diversity: What ingredients do you add to your soup?



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Video Critique: Diversity in Practice

THINK PAIR SHARE

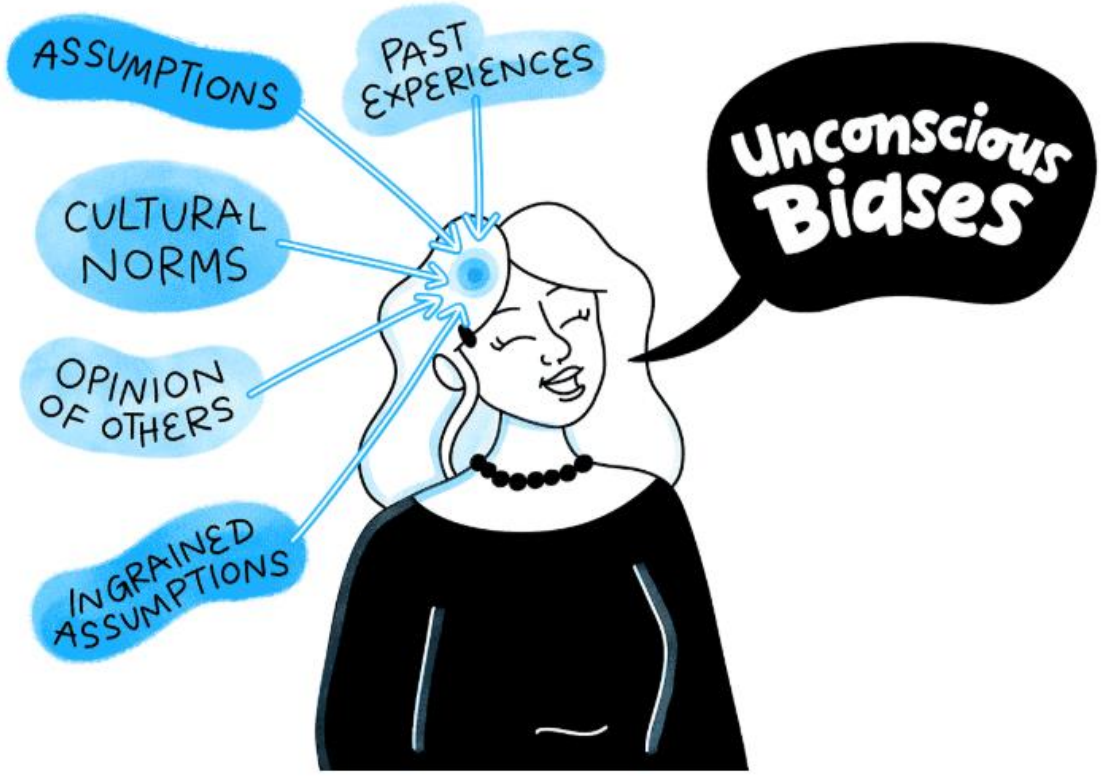
- What key message stood out after reviewing this Video?
- Can you recall a time a diverse perspective improved an outcome in your team?

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What is Unconscious Bias?

- **Unconscious Bias:** Mental shortcuts or automatic thought patterns, operating outside conscious awareness, often based on stereotypes or past experiences.
- **Universality:** Everyone has them – it's normal brain function.
- **Workplace Impact:** Can unintentionally influence hiring, promotions, feedback, task assignment, and daily interactions, undermining fairness.



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Common Biases in Retail

Gender bias

The tendency to prefer one gender over another.



Ageism

The tendency to judge an individual's ability based on their age.



Horns effect

When one bad thing clouds your opinion of an individual.



Halo effect

When one impressive thing affects your opinion of them.



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Bias Type	Definition	Retail-Specific Example	Mitigation Strategy
Affinity Bias	Favoring people similar to oneself.	Hiring someone because they "clicked" due to shared interests, overlooking skills gaps.	Use structured interviews with standardized questions; diverse interview panels; focus on skills/competencies needed for the role, not just "fit"; blind resume review.
Confirmation Bias	Seeking information that confirms existing beliefs.	Ignoring positive performance data for an employee perceived as "average."	Actively seek out disconfirming evidence; establish clear, objective criteria before evaluating; keep detailed performance logs over time; encourage diverse perspectives in decision-making.
Halo/Horns Effect	Letting one positive (Halo) or negative (Horns) trait dominate overall perception.	Rating an employee highly on all aspects because they are very charismatic, despite inconsistent sales.	Evaluate specific criteria independently; use multiple data points/examples; gather feedback from multiple sources (360-degree); focus on behaviors and outcomes over personality traits.

Bias Type	Definition	Retail-Specific Example	Mitigation Strategy
Gender Bias	Associating stereotypes with genders, impacting expectations/evaluations.	Assigning customer-facing tasks primarily to women and stockroom tasks primarily to men.	Use gender-neutral language in job descriptions/communications; blind resume review; standardized evaluation criteria; consciously question assumptions ("Flip it to test it"); ensure equitable distribution of tasks/opportunities.
Ageism (Age Bias)	Stereotyping or discriminating based on age.	Assuming an older worker is not tech-savy or a younger worker lacks leadership potential.	Remove age indicators (graduation dates) from resumes; focus on skills and experience regardless of age; provide equal training/development opportunities; challenge age-based assumptions in promotion/task allocation.

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Video Critique: Are you Biased?

This video offers a simple tool to check assumptions

- Let’s consider how you could use this technique in daily decisions (scheduling, tasks, customer interactions).

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Case Study : Retailer Jigsaw







- Let’s look at how leading retailers approach EDI.
  - Sephora & the 15% Pledge
  - Starbucks Integrated Approach
  - TJX’s

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Managers Toolkit: Applying EDI Principles

- **Inclusive Recruitment & Onboarding**
- **Fairness in Operations: Scheduling & Tasks**
- **Welcoming All Customers**
- **Leading Diverse Teams Effectively**
- **Handling Retail-Specific EDI Challenges**

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EDI: Human Bingo



See Activity Handout 2.1: Human Bingo

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Reflect as you go.... Your Personal Commitment

- Identify ONE specific, actionable step you commit to taking *this week* to apply an EDI principle in your role.





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Key Take Aways

Commitment & Action:

- EDI (Equality, Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, Belonging) are vital for retail success.
- EDI drives tangible business benefits (customers, employees, innovation, reputation, financials).
- Unconscious bias impacts decisions; awareness & mitigation are key.
- Leading retailers integrate EDI systemically.
- Managers have daily opportunities to apply EDI principles.
- It's an ongoing journey requiring commitment.

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