

INTERVIEW BIASES

We all are entering interviewing spaces with different backgrounds, skillsets, and knowledge. This lends itself to inherent biases, or an inclination in favor or against someone or something. Here are different types of biases and ways to navigate them.

Halo Effect

Forming an overall favorable impression of a candidate based upon their responses to only one or two questions.

Instead, keep asking questions to validate your first impressions. Use the interview as an opportunity to learn even more about the candidate and where you'll be able to help them grow.

Leniency Effect or Stringency Effect

The tendency to give all candidates a high or low rating.

What data can you gather during an interview that gives you the most holistic picture of the candidate? You'll likely see positives, negatives, and neutral points.

Central Tendency Effect

The tendency to rate all candidates in the middle of the rating scale.

If you're finding yourself neutral or in the middle on all of the candidates, think about the types of questions you're asking. Are you able to ask more specific questions to learn more about the candidate's skillsets and, in turn, boost your confidence in rating candidates in one direction or the other.

Warm Body Syndrome

The tendency to hire someone, anyone, as soon as possible.

Reach out to the Talent Acquisition team to boost the job description to cast a wider net of candidates. Then, you can make more skills-based decisions in your hiring.

Oversell

The tendency to enhance the realities of the job to snag a well-qualified candidate.

We really do hope all candidates are great! That said, there will be steeper learning curves and onboarding letdowns from your teammates and the candidate alike. We're all human and it's best to remain realistic so expectations are aligned across the board.

Friendship Factor

The tendency to rely heavily upon personal references of your friends.

While we believe that great people know great people, Friendship Factor can lead to teams of people who can only view a problem set through the same lens. People with different backgrounds and perspectives can enhance your team's innovation so it's best practice to consider all of the great talent available.

Memory Fade

Recollection of the first candidate and the rest seem like a blur.

Although you shouldn't make a snap judgement like the Halo Effect, we do want to make decisions in a timely manner. This keeps memory sharp regarding the interview and allows for a positive candidate experience by moving through interview stages quickly.

Unfairness to the First Up

Research by Robert Half International has shown that the first person interviewed is least likely to get the job.

To avoid this, use the same objective criteria for all candidates and begin your searches prepared. Identify what topics each interviewer will cover, what questions they should ask in each section, and what criteria you'll be measuring candidates against.

Talking Too Much (80/20 rule)

The tendency of the interviewer(s) to talk more than the candidate. The goal is to solicit information about the candidate.

As a general rule, the interviewer(s) should talk no more than 20% of the time; the candidate should talk at least 80% of the time.

Rescuing

Often, there will be periods of silence from a candidate. Interviewer(s) are tempted to "rescue" the candidate by filling the silence with conversation or trying to answer the question for the candidate.

In reality, the candidate may be using the silence to gather his thoughts and frame his answer. Be patient and resist the urge to talk.

Personal Bias

The tendency to allow non-job-related prejudices and attitudes about cultural stereotypes, lifestyles, personalities, appearances, or other irrelevant perceptions to affect the rating of candidate responses.

Instead, brush up on Pace's Affirmative Action Policy:

Pace University is committed to achieving full equal opportunity in all aspects of University life. Pursuant to this commitment, the University does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived sex, gender or gender identity; race; color; national origin; religion; creed; age; disability; citizenship; marital or domestic partnership status; sexual orientation or affectional status; genetic predisposition or carrier status; military or veteran status; status as a victim of domestic violence, sex offenses or stalking; or any other characteristic protected by law federal, state or local law, rule or regulation.

Attractive Person Bias

The tendency to select attractive people regardless of qualifications.

The goal is to hire the most qualified candidates and use the same hiring criteria for all candidates. Go into each interview with a set of questions you'll ask everyone to gather the most accurate data and make a decision accordingly.

Personal Similarity Bias

The tendency to rate individuals with interests, background, or experiences that are similar to the interviewer's more favorably than other applicants.

Similar to the Friendship Factor, you might lean towards candidates who have shared experiences to you. Diverse teams lead to innovative problem solving so keep an open mind and interview candidates based on role competencies.

Good Interview Bias

The tendency to hire someone who can express themselves well or interview well.

Yes, we want candidates to be prepared for their interviews. That said, a good interviewer can ask probing questions to get the information they need to make an informed decision. While you're going into an interview with a prepared set of questions, don't hesitate to ask follow-up questions along the way. "Tell me more about the challenges you faced along the way," "what were obstacles you navigated before reaching the end goal," etc.