

# How flexibility contributes to creating and maintaining a diverse workforce

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# The Content

- Bias
- Flexible working
- Biases towards flexible working
- Challenging conscious and unconscious biases for flexible working



**"Diversity is being invited to the party; inclusion is being asked to dance"**

**Verna Myers**



# Biases



# Unconscious biases can be defined as

Warwick University [defines unconscious bias](#) as:  
'a bias that we are *unaware of*, and which happens outside of our control. It is a bias that happens automatically and is triggered by our brain making quick judgements and assessments of people and situations, influenced by our **background, cultural environment** and **personal experiences**'





Everyone has unconscious biases

All of us.....

And most bias and stereotypes don't come  
from a place of bad intent





- We are more attuned to evidence we are comfortable with and that supports our points of view
- We don't even know we are doing this

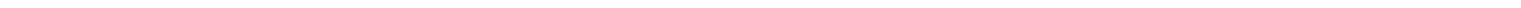


# Biases affect everything you do




Your view of the world works its way into every decision you make.

If you know your biases, you can minimise reactive thinking and actions, leading to better and fairer decision making and enhanced problem solving, and fairer treatment of others.







# Influences of Bias




Place of Work



Beliefs



Media



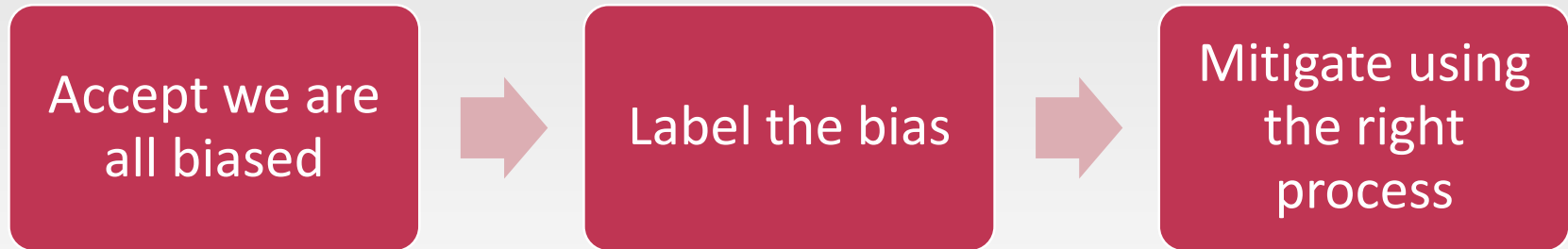
Education



Friends and Family



# Understanding Biases





What are some of the biases towards flexible working?

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# Flexible Working Biases

- Flexible working is for carers who need to work less hours.
- If one team member works flexibly others will have to “pick up the slack”.
- We’ll never find someone to cover the other half of the job-share/one or two days per week that you’re not working.
- I can’t trust my staff to work productively if I can’t see what they’re doing.
- This job simply cannot be worked flexibly/is too senior to be worked on a flexible basis.
- Our clients/customers won’t like it/will suffer.
- New employees shouldn’t ask for flexible working.





Which groups of employees would flexible working benefit?



Diversity and  
inclusion  
considerations  
for flexible  
working

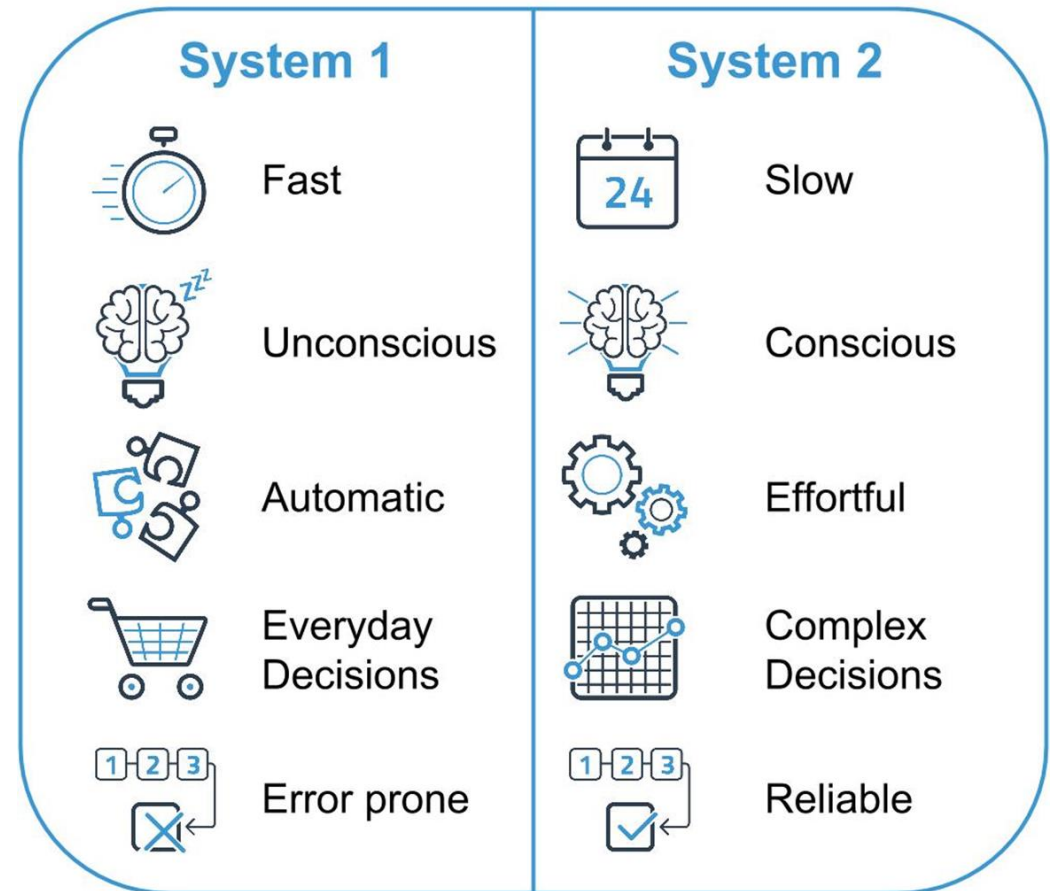
- Age diversity
- Geographical locations
- Talent pools
- Career trends
- Multicultural workforces
- Physical disability
- Mental health
- Individual differences
- Gender Balance



# Flexible Working – reducing bias



# System 1 vs System 2 thinking





# Nudge Theory



- Nudge Theory was created and popularised by the 2008 book, 'Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth, and Happiness', written by American academics Richard H Thaler and Cass R Sunstein
- It is a modern theory that can help us understand how people think and make decisions
- By understanding nudge theory we can then help people improve their decisions





..this allows us to access the whole system of thinking - both the **conscious** and unconscious.





## Examples of Inclusive Nudges

- Feel the need inclusion nudge
- Process Inclusion nudges
- Framing inclusion nudge



# 'Feel the Need' Inclusion Nudges

- These nudges can motivate people to make behaviour change by feeling the need for change rather than having to understand a rational argument for the change
- Use of 'a-ha' moments can be used to show evidence of bias thinking



# 'Process' Inclusion Nudges

- This type of nudges alters the systems and processes to help make better decisions
- Aim is to make it easier to be inclusive by using unconscious decision making processes to make choices – such as opt out rather than opt in





**The right place,  
at the right time,  
for the right task**



# 'Framing' Inclusion Nudges

- These nudges help prime specific associations and inclusive behaviours by altering the frame or change anchors
- Aim is to nudge so the inclusivity and diversity is primed with positive or neutral associations



# Framing inclusion nudge example



An organisation wanted to improve the perception and take up of flexible working. They asked all hiring managers when creating new job specification to now argue why the job **could not** be managed flexibly rather than assume all would be full time.





# System 2 - Mitigating your biases

- Self reflect
- Be aware of non verbal behaviour
- Observe the behaviour of others
- Actively listen
- Take a moment when making decisions about others
- Create a culture where challenges are encouraged





# **FLEXIBLE WORKING**





What one  
thing can  
you do?





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