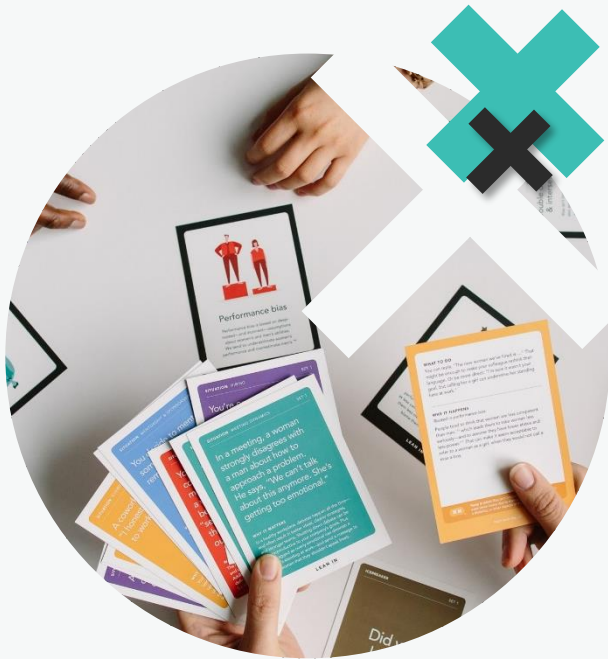


Bias at Work

Stacey Coleman



-[Lecture Content]-

- Introduction to bias
- Bias in the workplace
- Introduction to the Equality Act (2010)

Broad types of bias



Conscious

- Bias that we are aware of, have control over
- Bias that is intentional
- Bias that is responsive
- Significant improvements have been made in identifying and addressing conscious bias in the workplace
- Laws and policies
 - E.g., Equality act; Dignity at work

Broad types of bias



Unconscious

- Unconscious refers to being unaware, or performing something without realizing
- Bias = *stereotypes*?
- **Allport (1954):** we naturally form stereotypes, particularly in regard to gender, age, race, etc
- Stereotypes **can be** good or bad
- Not wholly intent on causing harm/offence

Stereotypes are not inherently bad and not always intent on causing offence

Allport (1958):

- A pre-judgement conceptualized as a feeling towards something

Brewer and Brown (1998):

- Cognitive shortcuts
- Attitudes we have towards people **because** they are a member of a specific (social) group

Nelson (2006):

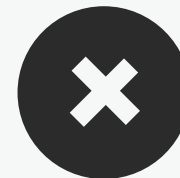
- The act of behaving negatively towards someone based on their group membership



Stereotypes



Prejudice



Discrimination

Organisational Discrimination

Practices of, or within, an organisation which may be discriminatory

E.g.,

Hiring policies

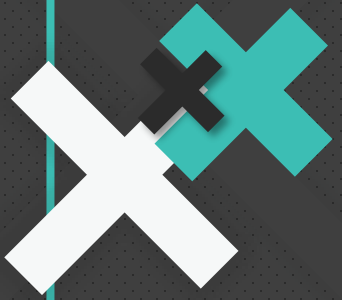
Not employing someone
because of race

BUT ALSO

Employing someone
because they are of a
minority race

E.g.,

Paying lower wages
for women than
men



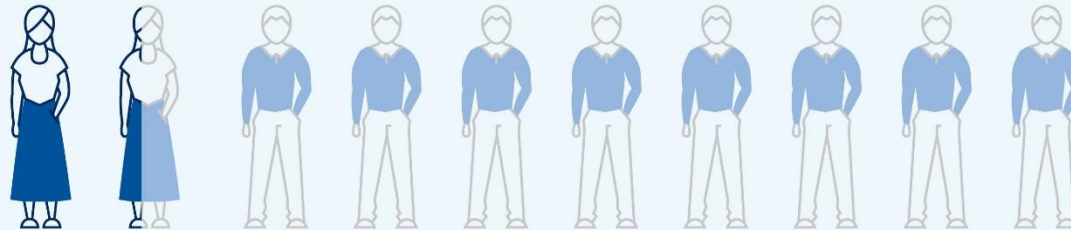
**Prejudice or pre-judgement
DOES NOT equal
discrimination**



GENDER BIAS

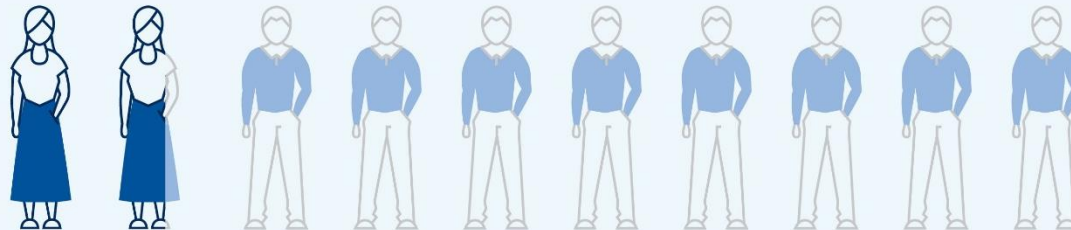
Workplace gap

Percent of firms with
majority female ownership*



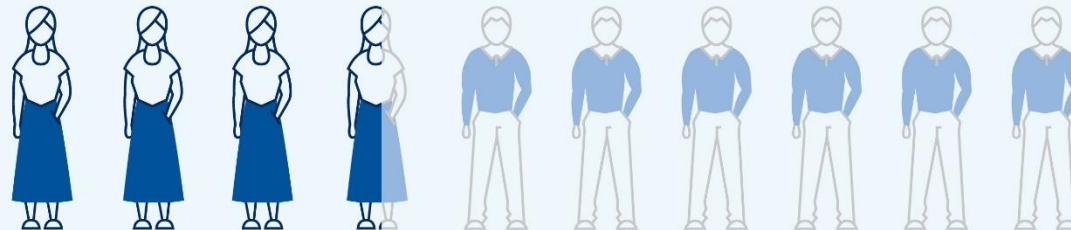
14%

Percent of firms with
a female top manager*



18%

Percentage of
females in senior roles**



36%

*Based on the sample of countries where the Enterprise survey is conducted **Senior roles, are those who plan, direct, coordinate and evaluate the overall activities of enterprises, governments and other organizations, or of organizational units within them, and formulate and review their policies, laws, rules and regulations. Corresponds to ILO Major Group 1, (ISCO-08)



- Research suggests that the scarcity of women in upper levels of organisations is a consequence of gender bias in evaluations

- Based on two types of gender bias (Heilman,);
DESCRIPTIVE and PRESCRIPTIVE

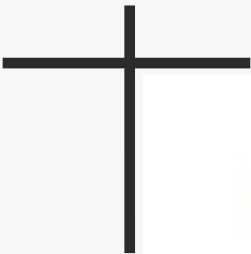
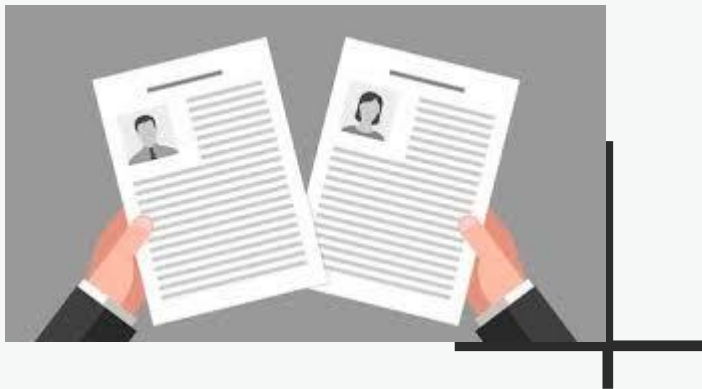
What women are *like*

How women are
expected to *behave*

Heilman (2002): gender stereotypes influence evaluation of performance, denial of credit and penalization for competence

GENDER BIAS

Broverman et al (1972)



Women	Men
Gentle / passive	Aggressive
Polite	Independent
Emotional	Non-emotional
Nurturing	Confident
Compassionate	Rough
Indecisive	Decisive
Quiet	Loud
Concerned with appearance	Sloppy



- [Gender Bias?] -

- Gender stereotypes still play a significant role in gender bias in the workplace
- Realistic Conflict Theory?
 - LeVine and Campbell (1972): Prejudice arises as an inevitable consequence of competition among groups for resources or power





- [Gender Bias?] -

- Limited resources in organisations = vacancies, progression opportunities, promotion, training and development
- This competition can inhibit organisations efforts to establish successful organisational diversity



Gender Bias

- Gender bias / discrimination has become less overt
- But research shows that there is still much covert bias related to gender
- Implications:
 - Huge setback for diversity and inclusivity
 - Increased likelihood for unintentional discrimination and can result in poor decision making

Moss-Racusin, Dovidio, Brescoll, Graham,
and Handelsman (2012)
Grogan (2018)
MacNell, Driscoll and Hunt (2015)



Murray (1999)

- Males in particular jobs are viewed with suspicion if the roles associated do not fit with gender stereotypes
- e.g., male care workers
 - Overt hostility
 - Effeminate
 - Perverted



Cuddy et al. (2004)

When working women become mothers:

- Perceived as losing competence,
- Increase in warmth

When males become fathers:

- Also perceived as increasing in warmth
- But do **not** lose perceived competence



Moss-Racusin et al. (2012)

- Gender bias still present?
- Women are starkly underrepresented across fields of science
- Proportion of females with science related degree is increasing, but still gap in the amount of these that pursue higher professional / PhD level routes.
- Bias related to repeated exposure to pervasive cultural stereotypes – are women still viewed as less competent than men?



Moss-Racusin et al. (2012)

Explored whether faculty members would hire a male or female candidate

- Applications were identical



1.

- Males rated significantly more competent and hireable...
- than the (identical) female applicant



2.

- More career mentoring offered to male applicants



3.

- Gender of faculty member had no impact
- Both males and females were equally as likely to exhibit bias against female applicants



Grogan (2018)

- There are still structural barriers to women in STEM fields
- This results in lack of diversity but also, arguably, reduced profitability and performance?
- Women submit fewer grants – but are equally as likely to be successful



Schmader, Whitehead and Wysocki (2007)

- Explored letters of recommendation (LOR) written for males and females
- Females less likely to receive an 'excellent' LOR irrespective of gender of the letter writer
 - Less inclusion of excellent adjectives; 'outstanding', 'extraordinary'



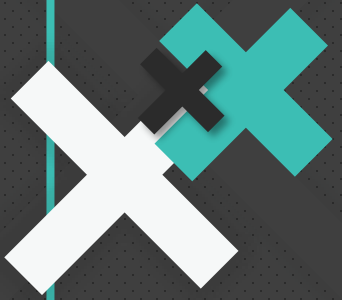
MacNell, Driscoll and Hunt (2015)

- *What's in a name?*
- Males rated significantly higher in competence and professionalism
- Implications?
 - Student ratings often have a great impact on progression/ promotion opportunities for teachers
- Concluded that males and females are still held accountable to typical gender appropriate behaviours
 - Males viewed as professional and objective
 - Females as warm and accessible



MacNell, Driscoll and Hunt (2015)

- *Massive implications of this study...*
 - The bias shown here was nothing to do with the instructor and was, in fact, everything to do with the bias of the students
 - Female instructors were rated significantly more harshly
 - Females must work even harder to achieve **comparable** ratings.
- If females are continually receiving lower evaluations for being female, then this inequality should be taken into account during review for promotion.



**Why is gender diversity
important?**

**Is it important across all
work sectors and
occupations?**



Hunt, Prince, Dixon-Fyle and Yee (2018)

- Gender bias, even at recruitment stage, hampers attempt at achieving diversity
- A diverse workplace is a more effective and higher performing workplace
 - Gender diversity in management increases profitability
 - Companies in the top 25th percentile for gender diversity on executive teams were 21% more likely (+6% from 2015) to experience above-average profits



Hunt, Prince, Dixon-Fyle and Yee (2018)

- The highest performing companies (profitability and diversity) had more women in higher level roles than in staff roles
- Increasing gender diversity is predicted to be beneficial in a competitive, globalised economy



Types of interview bias

(Implicit / Unconscious)



- [Interviews] -

- The interview is an important source of information and remains, by far, the most frequently used employment selection and decision-making device in organisations
 - E.g., Posthuma et al. (2002)
- The effects of various interviewer and applicant characteristics have been explored in depth
 - Focus on non-subtle demographics in the most part



Types of interview bias

Halo effect

Horns effect

Leniency effect

Contrast effect

Confirmation bias

Conformity bias

Beauty bias

Affinity bias



Halo Effect (Thorndike, 1920)

- Cognitive bias
- Largely effected by our first impressions
- Results in the inability to differentiate between characteristics being evaluated but this is automatic / below conscious information processing
 - E.g., if a candidate is nice, friendly and outgoing they may be perceived as being clever, smart or good at the job



Halo Effect (Thorndike, 1920)

- Fleenor et al. (2010) – we attribute positive characteristics to those who are similar to us in their appearance / demographic grouping
- Can be important when considering relationships with line manager:
 - Potential that less high-quality relationships can result in fewer opportunities offered for role assignment, progression, training, etc



Halo Effect (Thorndike, 1920)

- Lewis and Zibarras (2013) – performance feedback
- Managers who see an employee as similar to them are more likely to notice when things are done well
- Also attribution of success is placed on competence
 - As opposed to luck/chance
- Report that employees who perceive being dissimilar to line manager work harder
 - Cognitive dissonance



Horns Effect

- Opposite to halo effect – negative unconscious bias
- First impressions create a negative perception
 - E.g., if a candidate is loud or very shy, they may be perceived as being unintelligent, or not good at the job



Leniency Effect

- Thorndike (1949); Glickman (1955)
- Occurs when applicants are rated highly due to interviewer's own context
 - E.g., female mother interviewer can relate to female mother applicant



Contrast Effect

- Where previous interviewees have an impact on the evaluations of the next applicant
 - E.g., if a candidate seems better than the person interviewed before them, they may be rated more highly than normal simply because the previous candidate was bad, and not based upon the 2nd candidates own merit/suitability
 - Likelihood of comparing candidates in a non-objective manner



Confirmation bias

- The tendency to search for information that confirms your pre-judgements
- Could be information provided in initial recruitment or previous selection procedures
 - CV; application form; etc
- Ceci and Bruck (1995): confirmation bias is observed when an interviewer asks a question that include/presume details that have not been mentioned by the interviewee



Affinity bias

- Similar to the halo effect
- We favour people who are similar to us
- Form of attribution of good personality traits to people we can relate to
- Often an issue / comes into play in organisations that have a general ethos of finding people who are a good 'culture fit'



Conformity bias

- The tendency of people to behave like those around them rather than using own personal judgement
- Asch (1956): bias caused by peer pressure
 - E.g., if an individual on an interview panel feels the group are leaning towards/away from a certain candidate, they will tend to go along with what the group thinks



Beauty bias

- “what is beautiful is good” stereotype (Dion, Berscheid, & Walster, 1972)
 - Premise that attractiveness is related to being more qualified and competent
- “beauty is beastly” effect (Heilman & Saruwatari, 1979)
 - The exploration of the idea that attractiveness of women hinders career opportunities



Beauty Bias

What is Beautiful is Good

Dion, Berscheid and Walster (1972)

- Attractiveness is related to being more qualified and competent
- Beauty associated with goodness or intelligence
- Statistics demonstrate that people in high visibility jobs (e.g., news anchors) tend to be more attractive than average (McElroy & DeCarol, 1999)
- But – attractive people get hired more **in general**

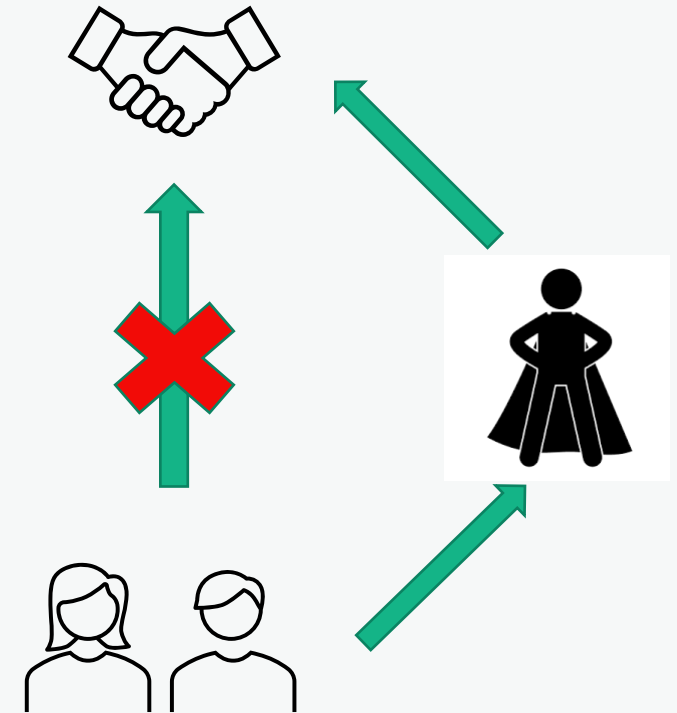


Beauty Bias

What is Beautiful is Good

Dion, Berscheid and Walster (1972)

- In performance evaluations, the same pattern emerges
 - Attractive employees get higher marks / more recognition for the same work
- Tu, Gilbert and Bono (2021):
 - Agree that a 'beauty premium' exists across professions, but state that the reason is because of ***the development of distinct traits*** rather than just their level of attractiveness
 - E.g., sense of power, non-verbal communication skills





Beauty Bias

What is Beautiful is Good

Dion, Berscheid and Walster (1972)

- Tu, Gilbert and Bono (2021) Study 2:
 - 'non-attractive' candidates can *level the playing field* by adopting a power pose prior to interview
- Results demonstrate that some effects most commonly attribute to beauty bias can be explained by performance-relevant behaviours



- Less attractive candidates can exude a similar level of NV presence after adopting the power pose



Beauty Bias

Beauty is Beastly

Heilman and Saruwatari (1979)

- Beauty can sometimes backfire; attractive people who fail are more likely to be deemed personally at fault, whereas unattractive people are likely to have the failure attributed to bad luck (Shahani & Plumitallo, 1993)
- Beauty is Beastly effect explored, specifically, in relation to gender bias
 - The attractiveness of women hinders career opportunities rather than helps them

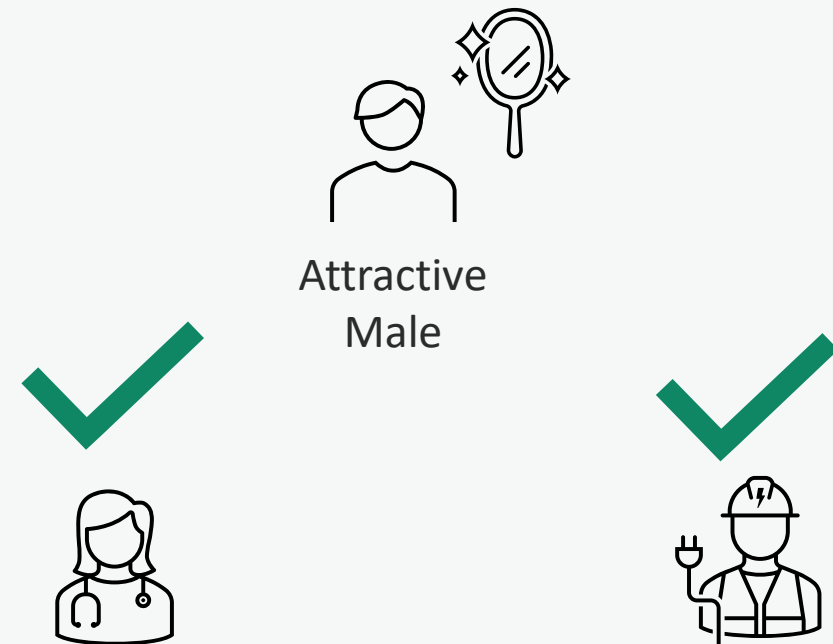
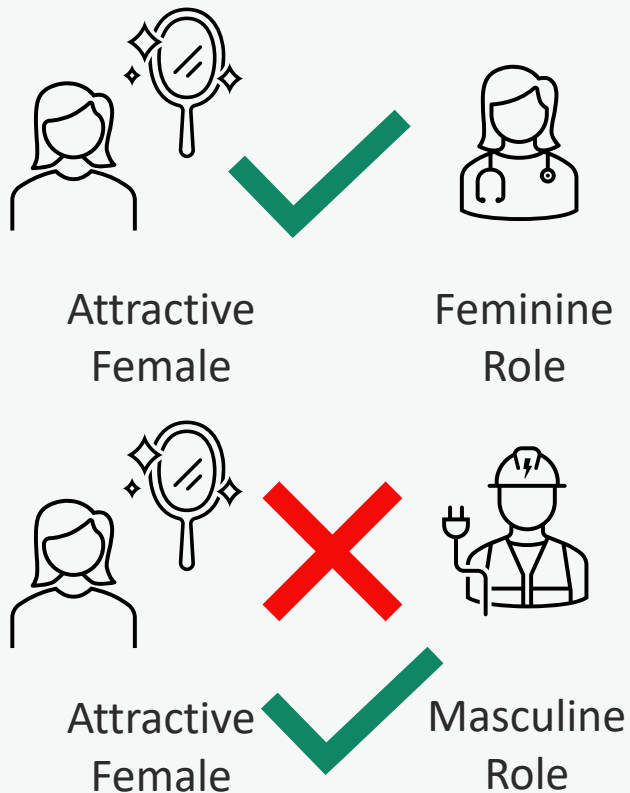


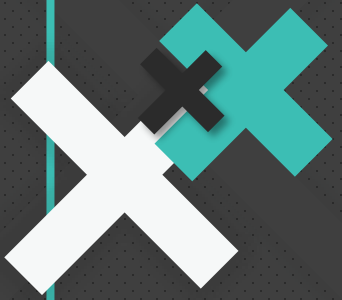
Beauty Bias

Beauty is Beastly

Heilman and Saruwatari (1979)

- Previously more pronounced when considering 'feminine' and 'masculine' jobs





Gender x Beauty?



Braun, Peus and Frey (2012) Is beauty beastly?

- Explored how gender and attractiveness interact in leadership positions
- In a nutshell...
 - Attractiveness **negatively** impacts the selection of female leaders
 - Followers' ratings of loyalty and trust not as clear cut



Braun, Peus and Frey (2012) Is beauty beastly?

Study hypothesis:

- When displaying a TF leadership style, attractive female leaders elicit lower levels of followers' trust/loyalty than unattractive female leaders. This devaluation effect does not occur in TA leadership.



Braun, Peus and Frey (2012)

Is beauty beastly?

Study methods:

- Experimental study using 253 undergraduate students
- 2x2x2 between-subjects
 - Leader gender (male / female)
 - Leader attractiveness (attractive / unattractive)
 - Leadership style (TF / TA)

Outcome
measures:
Trust and
loyalty



Braun, Peus and Frey (2012) Is beauty beastly?

Significant two-way
interaction

Significant three-way
interaction

Study findings:

- Females rated significantly lower overall when exhibiting a TF leadership style
- TF leaders;
 - Attractive female leaders rated significantly LOWER on trust and loyalty compared to unattractive female leaders
 - Attractive male leaders rated significantly HIGHER on trust and loyalty than unattractive male leaders
- TA leaders:
 - No difference in trust or loyalty ratings for attractiveness for males or females

Significant three-way
interaction



Braun, Peus and Frey (2012)

Is beauty beastly?

Study conclusions:

- Attractiveness may be a disadvantage for female leaders who show a TF leadership style
- There is likely an interaction between gender and attractiveness for leadership positions; attractive females are 'not trusted' whilst attractive males are the most trusted leaders



Inclusivity, Diversity and Equality in the Workplace



Inclusion, Diversity and Equality

INCLUSION / INCLUSIVITY:

- Where people's differences are valued and used to enable everyone to thrive at work
- An inclusive workplace would be one where no one feels that they have to conform to belong.

DIVERSITY:

- Diversity is about recognising difference and acknowledging the benefit of having a range of perspectives in decision-making



Inclusion, Diversity and Equality

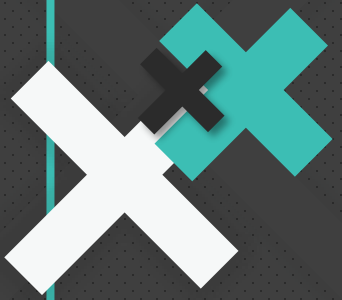
EQUALITY:

- A lack of discrimination
- Fair treatment of people regardless of any protected characteristics

The Equality Act (2010)

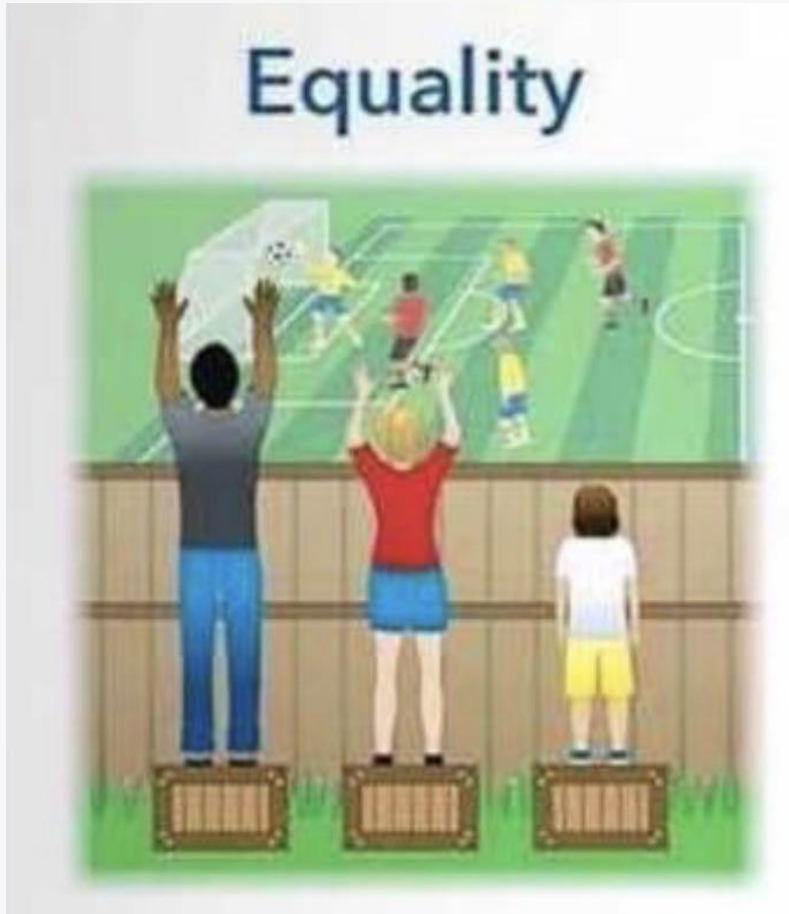
- Explicitly states that it is against the law to treat any person unfairly or less favourably than someone else because of a personal characteristic

- Protected characteristics
 - Age
 - Sex
 - Race
 - Religion
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Disability
 - Sexual orientation



**Inclusion, diversity
and equality...**

**But what about
equity and justice?!**



Everyone receives the same supports

The assumption of equality is that all individuals benefit from this

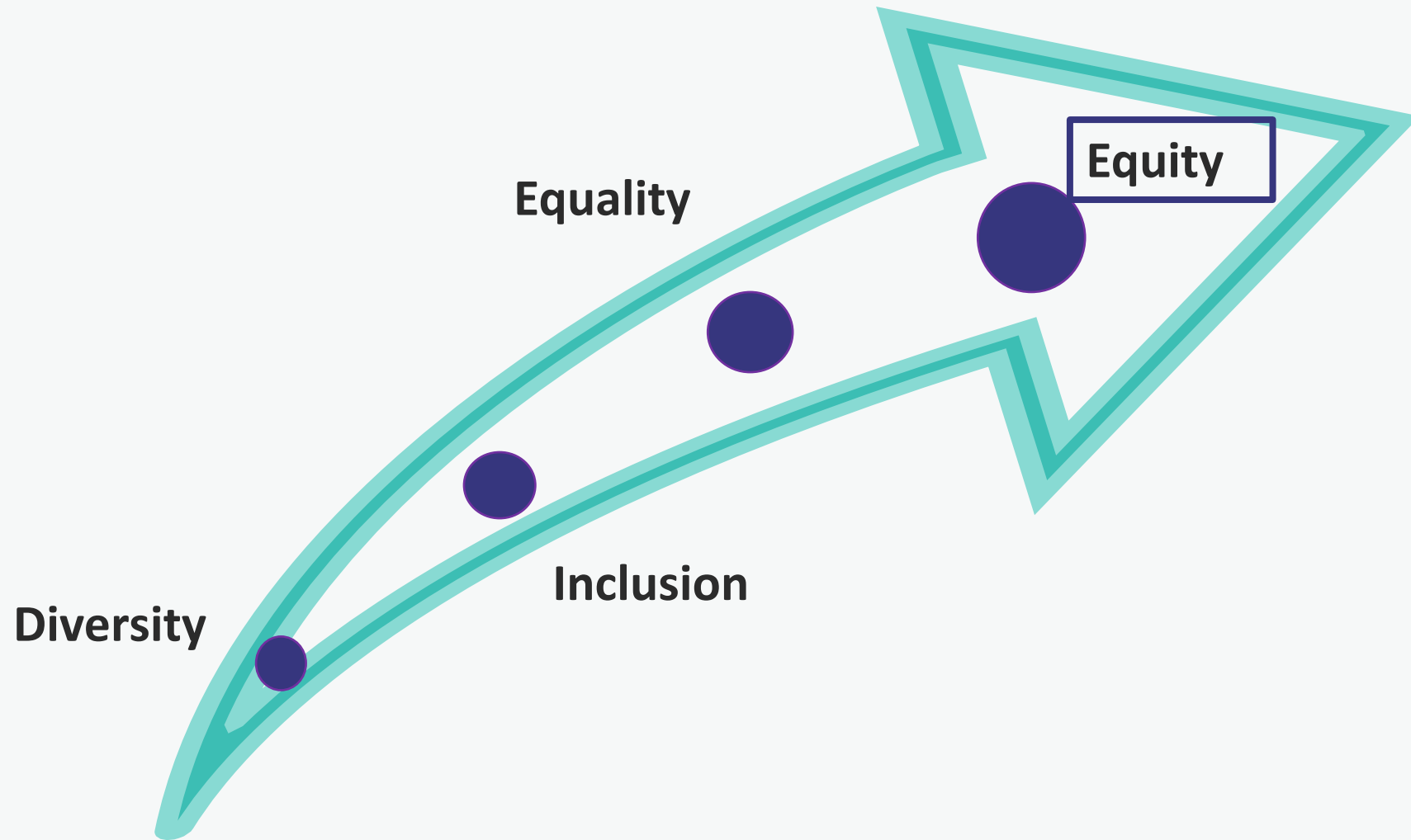
This is **equal treatment**

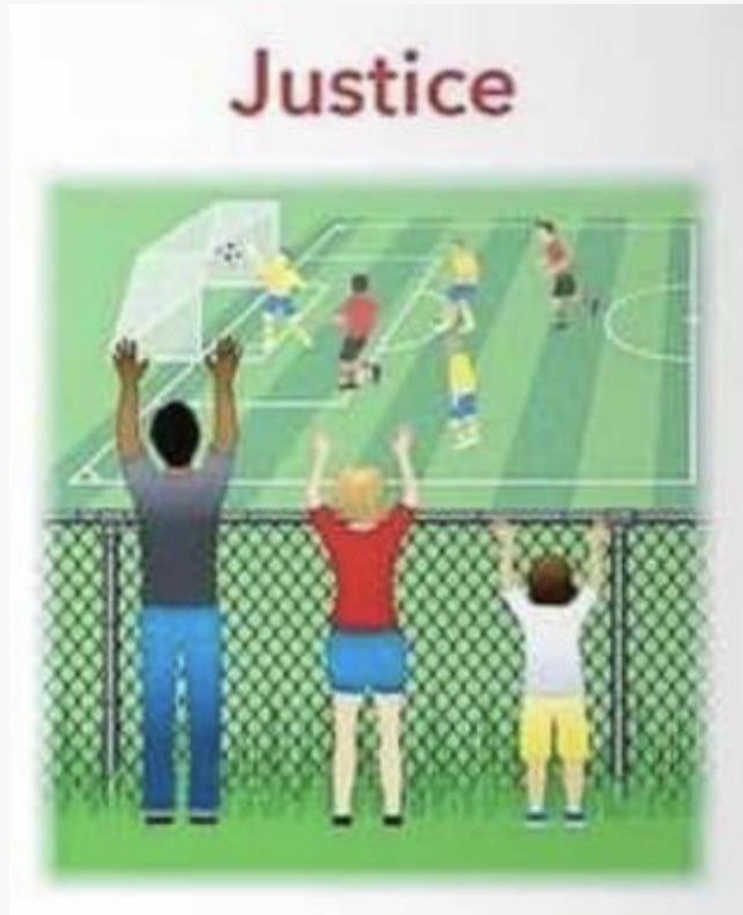
Equity



Everyone receives the support that they **need**

All people have been given what they need, thus producing equity





The cause of inequity (any barriers) is addressed and no person needs additional support or accommodation

This is **justice**



Summary

- There are a number of benefits of organisations increasing diversity and inclusivity in the workplace
- Gender bias is still present – research continues to explore impacts of perceived gender on evaluations of competence
- Equity can be achieved through employing a diverse range of workers, ensuring inclusivity and equality for all.