Unconscious Biases

Unconscious biases can inadvertently influence how we evaluate candidates. Recognizing these patterns allows us to focus on objective, qualification-based criteria and ensure an equitable search process.

Bias Type	Definition
Negative Stereotypes	Assuming certain groups are incompetent and must prove themselves more. Research shows women and underrepresented minorities are scrutinized much more than other groups.
Positive Stereotypes	Dominant group members are automatically presumed to be competent. Such a member received the benefit of the doubt, negative attributes are glossed over and success is assumed.
Elitism	Increasing expectations for marginalized groups because competency may not be trusted.
Conformity Bias & Snap Judgements	Only considering evidence that supports our first impression of an applicant and disregarding evidence that does not fit our narrative.
Comparisons, Fit & Euphemized Bias	Tendency to compare candidates to one another too early in the process and/or a tendency to compare them to prior admitted individuals, positively or negatively.
Motivations	Guessing about the candidates' motivation rather than letting the candidates speak for themselves about why they are interested.
Affinity Bias & Cloning	A desire to continue replicating the current department demographics as that is what we perceive as the "best fit."
Wishful Thinking	Insisting racism, sexism and other forms of prejudice no longer exist.