

Recognizing and Managing Unconscious Assumptions

When you walk into a meeting room, you usually bring with you some unconscious assumptions: there will be electricity, a table and chairs, maybe coffee. What unconscious assumptions might you be holding about people you work with?

Below is a list of occupations. Read through the list and quickly write down three words that come to mind to describe each person. They can be anything: Age, gender, ethnicity, weight, sexual orientation, educational level, language, disability, etc.

	Word 1	Word 2	Word 3
Cook			
Pilot			
Mountain climber			
Caretaker			
Politician			
Clinical researcher			
K-scholar			

Surprised at your word choices? Don't be. We all carry unconscious assumptions and they need not be a source of guilt or embarrassment.

What's important is to be aware of how those unconscious assumptions could be influencing our behavior.