

Common Types of Bias

Affect Bias

The emotional impact contaminates your ability to assess a threat, often fearing the threat more than the info or the decision.

Anchoring Bias

Leaning too much on the first piece of research.

Availability Bias

The things which come immediately to mind are best (see Recency Bias).

Bandwagon Bias

Because everyone is doing it, so should we (aka Group Think)

Confirmation Bias

You only look at info that proves you're right. You only see what you want to see.

Decision Bias

Once decision is made, refusing to look at flaws (aka Sunk Cost Bias).

Emotional Bias

You only believe positive things, especially to ignore negative things

Framing Bias

You are influenced by how options are presented. You minimise risk when framed positively. You focus on risk for negative frames.

Historical Bias

Refusing to consider how history shapes our perspective.

Overconfidence Bias

You are excessively confident in your own abilities or past successes.

Precision Bias

Refusing to consider information which is not tangible (confusing accuracy with precision).

Recency Bias

Information that came last is remembered better and more clearly than older detail.

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Representative Bias

You like patterns, esp those which fit or conform to your narrative or story.

Status Quo Bias

You prefer to maintain the current state of affairs or to resist change generally.

Zero-Risk Bias

Preference for decision or information which has no harm.

Various Ways to Address Bias

- Ask (you/others) how a piece of information – either a ‘fact,’ an opinion, situation – has relevance to the situation
- Compare and contrast one piece of information against a secondary item, such an opposing or differing point of view
 - Make sure you compare apples to apples, not apples to oranges
 - Make sure the secondary item is **valid** – that is, it comes from an expert (or more than one), it’s accurate, it’s relevant, it’s current, etc.
- If someone proposes a specific way of thinking, ask why their position/way of thinking is preferable to them, and why?
- Break down large arguments into smaller pieces and examine each point ...
 - **Separately** to determine relevance
 - **Sequentially** to determine leaps of logic or missing links
- Separate fact, truth and reality from speculation, innuendo and emotion
- Use formal tools – such as a SWOT Analysis – to bring clarity to a discussion
- Challenge assumptions, especially your own
- Ask: Is there any value in looking at Situation X from a different perspective?
- Be wary if asked to make a snap decision: **Don’t** if the responsibility lands on your shoulder
- If your conclusion isn’t accepted, ask yourself if there’s a Plan B in case something goes wrong

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