



# Psychological Explanations for Bias

There are several psychological explanations for bias, outlined below. However, just because these biases are identifiable in everyone, that does not mean they cannot be unlearned and corrected.

## Mental Shortcuts

Psychologists have identified dozens of systematic human biases. Unconscious beliefs can distort human perception. The brain unconsciously filters and categorizes incoming information, so we perceive reality according to our own expectations. These mental shortcuts extend to our interactions with people, which serve as the foundations for stereotypes and prejudice.

## Stereotypes

Stereotypes are widely held but fixed and oversimplified images or ideas about particular types of persons and things. They're cognitive shortcuts about people that we rely on which feed into bias against people from a variety of social groups. When people hold stereotypes are more likely to engage in prejudice & discrimination,

## Prejudice

Prejudice involves attitudes or feelings toward people because they belong to a certain group. While prejudice involves attitudes, discrimination involves behaviors. Discrimination can result directly from stereotypes and prejudice, which can contribute to a hostile work environment if not accounted for.

