

When it comes to bias with maps then there are two main types you need to consider. The first is evolutionary bias and our tendency to treat something in the wrong way e.g. to custom build that which is a commodity. By comparing multiple maps then you can help reduce this affect. The second broad and powerful group of biases are cognitive biases. Maps can help here but only through the action of allowing others to challenge your map. The most common and dangerous types of cognitive biases I have faced (and my description of these as “most common and dangerous” is another bias) are: -

Confirmation bias

A tendency to accept or interpret information in a manner that confirms existing preconceptions. For example, a group latching onto information that supports their use of some process being different from industry and hence justifying the way they’ve built it.

Loss aversion bias

The value of losing an object exceeds the value of acquiring it e.g. the sunk cost effect. Examples heard include “had we not invested this money we wouldn’t use this asset to do this”. Often a significant root cause of inertia.

Outcome bias

A tendency to look at the actual outcome and not the process by which the choice was made. Commonly appears in meme copying other companies when little to no situational awareness exists e.g. “we should be like Amazon”.