

Thoughtful Drill: Am I Biased?

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For each of the following scenarios, call out the potential biases in the proposed experiment. Do your best to try to discover not only the bias, but the initial design. There is plenty of room for interpretation here, so make sure to state what assumptions you're making.

- You're testing advertising emails for a bathing suit company and you test one version of the email in February and the other in May.

May is closer to the Summer than February. During February, people will be working on putting off their winter weight, so won't view swimwear websites as much.

- You open a clinic to treat anxiety and find that the people who visit show a higher rate of anxiety than the general population.

This can be observer bias. The patients clearly may have anxiety, which is why they visited the clinic in the first place.

- You launch a new ad billboard based campaign and see an increase in website visits in the first week.

This may be contextual bias. People were visiting the website because maybe external factors caused them to need the product or service.

- You launch a loyalty program but see no change in visits in the first week.

This could be a bias from the people waiting for the initial group to cross the chasm, and not because the loyalty program did not work.