



Interventions that May Debias Successfully*

Studies have shown that “instead of repressing one’s prejudices, if one openly acknowledges one’s biases, and directly challenges or refutes them, one can overcome them”. Successful strategies include:

Counter-stereotypic training:

- Train individuals to develop new associations
- Modify the situational context to influence racial attitudes
- Juxtapose ordinary people in counter-stereotypic situations

Exposure to counter-stereotypic individuals:

- Expose people to individuals who contradict widely-held stereotypes. Debiasing agents would include male nurses, elderly athletes, and female scientists who are viewed as not merely an exception but rather connect that individual to relevant categories. One individual may be inadequate to shift long-standing implicit racial associations
- Create environments that highlight admired members of various groups

Intergroup Contact:

- Optimal intergroup contact involves individuals of equal status
- Positive intergroup contact effects include sharing common goals, interacting in a cooperative rather than competitive setting, and being supported by authority figures, laws, or customs.

Accountability: The implicit or explicit expectation that one may be called on to justify one’s beliefs, feelings, and actions to others,” can be another powerful measure to combat bias

Fostering Egalitarian Motivations: “Egalitarian goals inhibit stereotypes by undermining and counteracting the implicit nature of stereotype activation before they are brought to mind”

Taking the Perspective of Others:

- Traction is gained when individuals take the perspective of someone who is different from them.
- Considering opposing perspectives and fostering recognition of multiple perspectives are good techniques for reducing automatic biases
- For example, in the realm of healthcare, studies have shown that encouraging practitioners to take the perspective of others cultivates empathy, which leads to positive outcomes for patient satisfaction and treatment

Deliberative Processing: Engaging in effortful, deliberative processing is particularly important for individuals who may be operating under time constraints or a weighty cognitive load, such as doctors and judges, because spontaneous judgments can provoke reliance on stereotypes

*Source: Staats, Cheryl (Research Associate), Patton, Charles (Graduate Research Associate (2013). KIRWAN INSTITUTE for the Study of Race and Ethnicity. *State of the Science of Implicit Bias Review 2013*; pp 54-62.