

# BRINGING AWARENESS TO THE TOPIC OF UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

**Company name :** NTT LUXEMBOURG PSF SA

**Activity sector :** Autres activités de services

**Company category :** Grande Entreprise

## Description of the action

Understanding and identifying strategies to overcome personal bias

Bringing awareness to the topic of unconscious bias is one of the online mandatory trainings offered to our 28 managers in Luxembourg. This learning path is articulated in the frame of our global course entitled "Hello Management".

Hello Management is a learning pathway committed to empowering our managers to continue to advance their skills, enabling them to navigate the complexity that comes with leading within a large organization. Hello Management is hosted on the platform LinkedIn Learning and uses YouTube as a principal channel where series of learning videos are gathered and sorted by topic.

Within the course of Hello Management, an online training is dedicated to "Unconscious bias". Through a series of videos tackling "The basics of unconscious bias", "The impact of bias" and "Identifying Unconscious Bias", this online course's purpose is to help our collaborators recognize the negative effects of bias within an organization, as well as the benefits to be realized by uncovering bias in decision-making processes (such as recruitment interviews and day-to-day decisions). Finally, this course outlines strategies for overcoming personal and organizational bias enabling managers to make objective decisions favoring diversity within the company.

## Context

This online course implementation is part of NTT's global diversity and inclusion roadmap. Starting from their onboarding in the company, all managers are trained on the importance of becoming an inclusive leader. We respect that our employees hold diverse views and opinions, and we celebrate diversity in opinion and thought as long as they are shared in a respectful and considered manner.

At NTT, we want to create an environment that embraces each unique person on our team, no matter who they are. We want to ensure that everyone is treated with dignity and feels free to be themselves. Our collaborators have a vital role to play in helping us create an environment where everyone can thrive.

That's why in 2022, we proposed to every manager - promoted or joining us as newcomers - to benefit from this online course to overcome personal and organizational bias.

Unconscious bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our views, our actions, and our decision-making ability. The scientific research in this area demonstrates how unconscious bias is automatically activated and affects how each person daily thinks. It can impact hiring and evaluation processes and contributes to the lack of workforce diversity. The implementation of this online course helps preventing our managers from making calls based on biased viewpoints.

## Objectives

The objectives of this action are multiple:

- Bringing awareness towards unconscious bias
- Identifying strategies to counteract unconscious bias to help managers to take the best decisions within their daily work.
- Consolidating the importance of diversity and inclusion as core values
- Embracing cultural humility
- Assisting managers to build an inclusive leadership

## Approach

This online course dedicated to our managers is part of a continuous learning cycle offered to our collaborators. NTT is proud to be an equal opportunity employer with a global culture that embraces diversity. We are committed to providing an environment free of unfair discrimination and harassment. We do not discriminate based on age, race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, or another protected category. This online learning course is therefore integrated within the global Diversity and Inclusion roadmap of NTT.

When implementing this online course, the HR department and executive committee used diverse communication channels to support the action:

- The company's intranet website: to communicate widely on the importance of diversity and inclusion
- A HRIS- already existing -: to send reminders and to follow-up on the participation rate
- Mailing: to inform about the purposes and importance of this learning course.

From the executive committee, HR department, to the diversity committee and managers, each of the parties involved had a specific role towards this action.

The company, through its executive committee has as its heart to lead by example. Additionally, the top management has as main responsibilities to promote diversity as a one NTT's core value and ensure the concrete and proper implementation of this practice through a series of direct actions.

The HR department has a key role as well in the implementation of this online course. By supporting the executive committee through a series of communications towards the managers, the HR representatives enlightened the importance of raising awareness to unconscious bias. On top of this communicator role, the HR department have the necessary tool to follow-up on the completion of this online course to ensure a 100% participation rate. Thanks to a HRIS, they can track the participation of the managers and can, when needed, send reminders.

NTT Luxembourg has a diversity committee composed of local collaborators, a HR representative, and a diversity delegate from the staff delegation. This diversity committee takes place every 6 months, and its goals are to report questions from the staff and discuss how to better promote diversity. In this particular context, they have supported the action and relayed the information to the collaborators.

Managers on their side, after completing the online course, putted their recent knowledge in action to counteract unconscious bias in their daily work life. They were as well expected in turn to raise awareness towards their team to contribute to spread the information.

## Impact

Following the completion of this course, the HR department has seen a qualitative impact as they received numerous positive feedbacks from the managers regarding the topic and content of the course. Thanks to the HR department reports and follow-up, we have reached a 100% participation rate.

As one of the direct effects, we see a positive impact in our recruitment. Throughout our annual 30 to 40 recruitment processes, we notice a large increase of newcomers coming from outside the greater region. This is a direct positive impact regarding the diversity of our collaborator's origins. On top of this, seeking candidates outside the greater

region enables our company to warmly welcome collaborators who does not speak French as this is no longer a prerequisite to join the company.

In keeping with this action, as a major actor of the IT sector, NTT Luxembourg also decided to favor women applications for managerial positions to push forward diversity within the company's local board members. This action led to the promotions of women taking high-end positions within the company.

We also demonstrate our dedication to diversity by having a panel of interviewers dedicated to assessing the personal values of the candidates in the recruitment processes. This ensure that the candidates' ways of thinking regarding notably diversity fits with the company.

Moreover, a woman was recently nominated CEO of NTT Europe and has at her heart to promote gender equity and inclusion within the company. As an example, one of the recent campaigns echoing the promotion of gender diversity within NTT was "Bringing talented women to the company". As a new recruitment drive, we're aiming to fill 200 jobs worldwide with dynamic and powerful females who have great corporate experience but who've been out of the workplace, for a period of time.

As one of the top 5 global IT service providers worldwide, gender diversity is an everyday challenge. We must lead by example regarding diversity and inclusion and those actions contribute to make diversity evolve and grow within NTT.

## « To do »

As each person has its own personal bias, this online course easily spoke to each of the managers and favored their high interest regarding this topic. It encouraged self-questioning enabling the reassessment of their personal way of thinking. It also helped a cascade-type propagation of the information towards the managers' team and, therefore, helped spreading the information to each of the company's collaborator.

When implementing such an action, it is notably important to use the right tool and make it easily accessible for the collaborators to follow the training. In this context, the use of videos hosted on a renowned platform enabled a playful learning and was easily accessible notably on remote working.

An important thing to consider as well, is that an action must be led and integrated in a global plan with the will to make a long-term change. An independent action will not have as much positive impacts than multiple actions and efforts taken as part of a global will to change things.

To favor inclusive leaders, it is important for the company's executive committee to lead by example. It is also necessary to offer the adequate trainings and support to assist collaborators to make them evolve in a company they are proud to work in and that reflects its core values.

## « Not to do »