

## Don't let unconscious bias hold you back

The strength of any organisation is in its people. Leaders in the public and private sectors stand or fall on the shoulders of those they choose to be around them and now, more than ever, it is vital to ensure you get the right mix of talent at board and managerial level to help you achieve your goals.

So what gets in the way?

Well, the traditional criticism levelled at a failing leadership team has been 'lack of succession planning' but in 2021 that, as an explanation, is too narrow.



Recruiters, business owners, board members and even HR consultants are still suffering from unconscious bias. Also known as 'implicit bias' this refers to subconscious forms of discrimination, normally based on preconceptions of race, gender, sexuality, ethnicity or age.

With the concept of 'jobs for the boys' almost consigned to history, interview panels evolved their thinking through a process of competency based interviewing; but even pre-set questions asking for evidence of skills, achievements and experience did little or nothing to remove unconscious biases.

Falling for unconscious bias limits our options dramatically and unless we tackle it, we can't assemble that top team we yearn for. And away from the workplace we can miss out too if we simply assume that 'someone' can't do 'that'.

Here at the Housing Diversity Network we've recently added **Unconscious Bias training** to our portfolio of services, which has been enjoyed by boards, staff teams and residents who have taken part in our two-hour zoom sessions. And we are about to start training the entire 700 staff of one organisation.

If you want to book training or know more about Unconscious Bias contact: [mushtaq@housingdiversitynetwork.co.uk](mailto:mushtaq@housingdiversitynetwork.co.uk)

## Welcome to our new members

**Warrington  
Housing  
Association**

**London Borough  
of Hackney**

**The Pioneer  
Group**

### Bridging the gap

We have thriving Diversity Groups up in the North and down in London, with regular meetings well attended and outcomes helping our members back in the workplace.



We have decided to combine our other groups to ensure members elsewhere can have a vibrant forum where they can discuss and solve issues.

So we are setting up a new **Midlands East and South Regional Diversity Group** with quarterly meetings chaired by Ben Wilesmith of Greatwell Homes.

To find out more contact:  
[mushtaq@housingdiversitynetwork.co.uk](mailto:mushtaq@housingdiversitynetwork.co.uk)

## 2021/2022 Staff Mentoring Programme



**The new programme opens on 12th April.**

If you're not already booked in, or you know someone who would like to join the programme speak to your employer or colleague to discuss applying; or for more information contact:

[mentoring@housingdiversitynetwork.co.uk](mailto:mentoring@housingdiversitynetwork.co.uk)

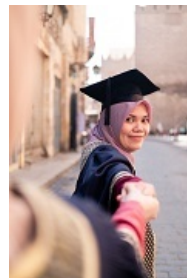
And if you haven't yet booked for our **Annual Mentoring celebration** this year, virtual again on **10th June**, check your diary and we hope to see you there.

We are also offering sponsorship opportunities for this event and if you are interested in seeing the options on our **sponsorship package** please contact: [stuart@housingdiversitynetwork.co.uk](mailto:stuart@housingdiversitynetwork.co.uk)

For past and present mentors and mentees we are gradually growing our database of **alumni contacts**, and the next steps will include a bespoke page on our website and then we intend to hold an event in 2022.

If you have any queries or information to pass on to us please contact:

[mentoring@housingdiversitynetwork.co.uk](mailto:mentoring@housingdiversitynetwork.co.uk)



## New Online Events

**Webinar: How to be a Board Member by 35.  
Tuesday 13th April  
11am to 12:30pm**

Learn how you can bring your skills and enthusiasm to a board near you; free event for members, and tickets are selling fast.

[Find out more and BOOK a place HERE](#)

[For details of all our events CLICK HERE](#)

**What We Do at HDN**  
Contact us to see if we can help

We work with organisations on a range of equality, diversity and inclusion issues. These include management and leadership training, board and executive team discussions on Black Lives Matter and/or the pandemic, and reviewing and helping on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plans and Strategies.

Contact [Mushtaq Khan](#) for further details.

## What's the team been talking about?

Our big question this week is: "*How do you manage being true to yourself, and authentic, when you're climbing the ladder to success?*" Maybe we're going full circle to the unconscious bias arena but, if you're climbing, show confidence and be comfortable in yourself; and if you're a leader...don't, don't, don't stereotype people...you won't get the best from anybody.

And if anyone comes across Mushtaq this week, please be kind to him. Over the weekend he was absolutely gutted to learn that the five-a-side football venue which he has missed so badly over the past 12 months...has closed!

**Housing Diversity Network**  
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