Mitigating Bias & Creating Balance in Performance Evaluations
Diversity & Inclusion @ SLAC

How bias affects performance evaluations

A recent study of 200+ performance reviews found significant differences in feedback by gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2x more references to their technical expertise and their vision</td>
<td>2x more references to their communal or nurturing style (e.g. &quot;helpful&quot; or &quot;dedicated.&quot;)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7x more manager feedback on communication style being “too soft”</td>
<td>2.5x more manager feedback on communication style being “too aggressive”</td>
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<td>3x more feedback related to business outcomes</td>
<td>2.5x more references to team accomplishments, as opposed to individual ones.</td>
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(2016) Stanford Clayman Institute for Gender Research

These findings also reflect common biases when evaluating people from other underrepresented minority groups. See SLAC's Bias Mitigating Reference Guide.

How to mitigate bias to balance performance evaluations

Clarify BEFORE writing your evaluation

- What will be accomplished is clearly defined and has been discussed with the employee (goals)
- How work will be accomplished is clearly defined and has been discussed with the employee (competencies)

Consider DURING writing your evaluation

- Be mindful of all diverse characteristics (race, age, gender, etc.) and how they may work for FOR and AGAINST employees
- Is a true “equitable bar” of achievement being applied for all employees?

Check AFTER writing your evaluation

- No references were made to personality, style or personal circumstances
- Review is focused on accomplishments and competencies
- Feedback is actionable / directly linked to relevant outcomes
- Success criteria are evenly applied across all employees

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Primary Sources:
Clayman Institute at Stanford University