Stereotypes, Bias and Prejudice – Be aware

**Important definitions:**

**Stereotype:** A conventional; formulaic and usually oversimplified conception, opinion or belief.

**Bias:** A preference or inclination, especially one that inhibits impartial judgment; prejudice.

**Prejudice:** An adverse judgment or opinion formed beforehand or without knowledge or examination of facts. A preconceived preference or idea; bias.

**Discriminate:** To make a clear distinction, distinguish; differentiate. To act on the basis of prejudice.

**How do these terms relate to discrimination in the hiring process?**

- Stereotypes and biases have an impact on incidents of discrimination in the hiring process.
- Personal stereotypes, biases, and prejudices directly effect interactions and attitudes towards other people in the hiring process. Application of personal stereotypes, biases, and prejudices can lead to offenses of discrimination.
- Discrimination happens when people are treated differently because of their association with a group.
  - Example: Treating a person differently because of their color, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, age, disability, veteran status, or any other protected status.

**What is a stereotype?** A stereotype is typically a distorted definition or image of a group or person – can be negative or positive.

**Where do stereotypes come from?** Stereotypes may come from parental influences, the media, friends or other sources.

**Where does prejudice come from?** Prejudice comes about when a person forms an adverse opinion or judgment about a person or group before any information is evaluated to determine if the opinion or belief is true. Prejudice can come from ignorance, fear, or hatred.

**Relationship to Discrimination.** Stereotypes, biases and prejudices have caused numerous incidents of discrimination against minority and underrepresented groups. People use their personal stereotypes, biases and prejudices, which are deep seeded in the mind, to categorize and evaluate people. It is in the categorization and evaluation of people based on these stereotypes, biases and prejudices people hold, that people may find themselves discriminating against others.