



Unconscious Bias Program Checklist for Franchise Systems

This checklist is designed to help members in the franchise system, whether in start-up or mature stages, address unconscious bias through clear, actionable steps. By following these guidelines, businesses can take meaningful action to promote inclusivity and equity for employees, franchisees, and suppliers.

1. Understand Unconscious Bias

- ❑ Research basics: Use free online resources or government guides to learn about unconscious bias and its impact on workplace decisions.
- ❑ Relate to franchising: Focus on how unconscious bias can affect employees, franchisee–franchisor relationships, supplier negotiations, and customer interactions.
- ❑ Example to follow: Look online for case studies or examples of unconscious bias policies from similar businesses.

2. Identify Areas of Concern

- ❑ Review processes: Check hiring practices, supplier selection, and customer service policies for potential bias.
- ❑ Survey stakeholders: Send a quick survey to stakeholders asking about their experiences with bias.
- ❑ Audit communications: Review recruitment ads, job descriptions, and marketing materials to ensure inclusive language.

3. Create an Unconscious Bias Policy

- ❑ Use a template: Start with a policy template from a trusted source (e.g., government or HR organizations) and customize it for your business.
- ❑ Include specific commitments: Examples might include “ensure all job postings are reviewed for bias” or “require annual training on unconscious bias.”
- ❑ Consult others: Share the draft with a few trusted employees or business partners for feedback before finalizing.

4. Provide Training

- ❑ Host short sessions: Arrange a workshop or webinar for employees to introduce unconscious bias concepts.

- ❑ Focus on scenarios: Use real-life examples from your franchise system (e.g., bias in customer service or supplier negotiations).
- ❑ Share resources: Provide a list of accessible learning materials, like articles or short videos, for ongoing education.

5. Standardize Practices

- ❑ Checklists for decisions: Use simple checklists for hiring or supplier selection to ensure decisions are fair and consistent.
- ❑ Use structured evaluations: Introduce standard rubrics for reviewing employee performance or franchisee applications.
- ❑ Rotate decision-makers: Include diverse voices in decision-making processes to reduce group bias.

6. Monitor Progress

- ❑ Track participation: Keep a record of who attends training sessions and reviews policies.
- ❑ Set simple goals: For example, “Audit 10 job postings this month to remove biased language” or “Survey employees annually about inclusivity.”
- ❑ Ask for feedback: Use anonymous surveys or one-on-one discussions to see if stakeholders notice improvements.

7. Refine and Communicate

- ❑ Revisit yearly: Update your policy and training every year based on feedback and new insights.
- ❑ Share updates widely: Include progress reports in newsletters, team meetings, or franchisee gatherings.
- ❑ Celebrate wins: Highlight positive outcomes, like a more diverse applicant pool or improved employee satisfaction, to encourage buy-in.