



IMPLICIT BIAS:

Understanding Its Impact on Actions & Decisions

Implicit Bias is a very misinterpreted term. Often used to describe unconscious racism, implicit biases are, in actuality, much more than a singularly held prejudice. They are much more complex in scope. They are possessed by all human beings, and they exist for a purpose. The key questions regarding biases we hold unconsciously are: Why do we have them? Where do they come from? What are mine? And perhaps most importantly: Are they helpful or maladaptive when it comes to assessing, deciding and behaving during interactions with others?

In this program we discuss these questions and much more. We look at all biases, whether implicit or explicit, and examine whether we have any that are illicit in nature, particularly as they relate to race and cultural diversity. Biases that could cause officers to unconsciously view certain people as inherently dangerous resulting in inaccurate assessments, flawed decisions, unprofessional behavior and unnecessary uses of force.

We address topics that include, but are not limited to the following:

- 1) **The Current State of Law Enforcement & Community Relations:** The relationship between police and their multi-cultural communities will be examined. Myths, facts and perception are explored in reality and then discussed by students with an eye towards bridging the gap that currently exists.
- 2) **Examine the Relationship Between the Unconscious & Implicit Bias:** Human beings of all races prejudge constantly. It is impossible for a person to be free of bias and preconceived notions and beliefs. The differences between implicit, explicit and illicit biases, especially when it comes to race, will be examined.
- 3) **Illicit Racial Bias and Decision Making:** While prejudice and racism are not synonymous implicit bias can cause illicit behavior if it's not understood and controlled. Students will study how to manage their perceptions and prejudgments when assessing and evaluating others. In addition, they will learn how to articulate reasonable suspicion on a conscious level beyond race, gender, etc.
- 4) **Complete Communication:** Communication is one of the most overlooked and under trained skills in law enforcement. Effective communication begins with understanding obstacles born from the unconscious and then learning necessary skills on a conscious level.

This 2 1/2 hour course is designed for officers of all ranks and assignments, and focuses on presenting students with simple yet realistic and effective techniques that will assist in overcoming maladaptive bias, utilize productive bias, and improve verbal and nonverbal communication skills immediately.