

Department of the Air Force

Diversity & Inclusion Education & Training

Unconscious Bias Mitigation Training Architecture

31 August 2020

According to AFI 36-7001, Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) education should be linked into an Airman’s lifecycle training. Beginning with accessions to our senior leaders, D&I education must be weaved into all major career touchpoints (Table 1). Air Force Diversity and Inclusion training is intended to meet the requirements set forth in Executive Order 13583, *Establishing a Coordinated Government-wide Initiative to Promote Diversity and Inclusion in the Federal Workforce*. Delivering consistent and coherent diversity and inclusion education and training supports the development and sustainment of an inclusive culture that attracts, recruits, develops, and retains the best of the nation’s diverse talent pool. The Air Force aims to develop all Airmen with an understanding of the value of diversity and inclusion for strategic advantage in Air Force operations.

Table 1– Diversity & Inclusion Education & Training Lifecycle Touchpoints

D&I Education & Training Lifecycle Touchpoints (AFI 36-7001)		
Enlisted	Officer	Civilian
BMT	OTS ROTC USAFA Prep USAFA	Eaker Center New Employee Orientation
FTAC	SOS	Eaker Center New Supervisor Training
ALS	ACSC	Eaker Center Experienced Supervisor Training
NCOA	Leadership Development Course	Eaker Center New Manager Course
SNCOA	AWC	Eaker Center Manager Course
Leadership Courses (Command Chief)	Group & Wing Leadership Courses	Eaker Center Senior Manager Course
First Sergeant Academy		
Chief Leadership Course		
Air Force Recruiting School		
MTI Training School		

Diversity and Inclusion curriculum is built on a continuum of education and training throughout an Airman's career progression. This tailored approach fosters learning experiences that increase understanding and cultivate the inclusive environment we need. In addition to prescribed curriculum, multiple MAJCOM, FOAs, and DRUs are dispatching tailored and targeted D&I education and training to complement the outcomes of this architecture.



D&I Education & Training Pyramid

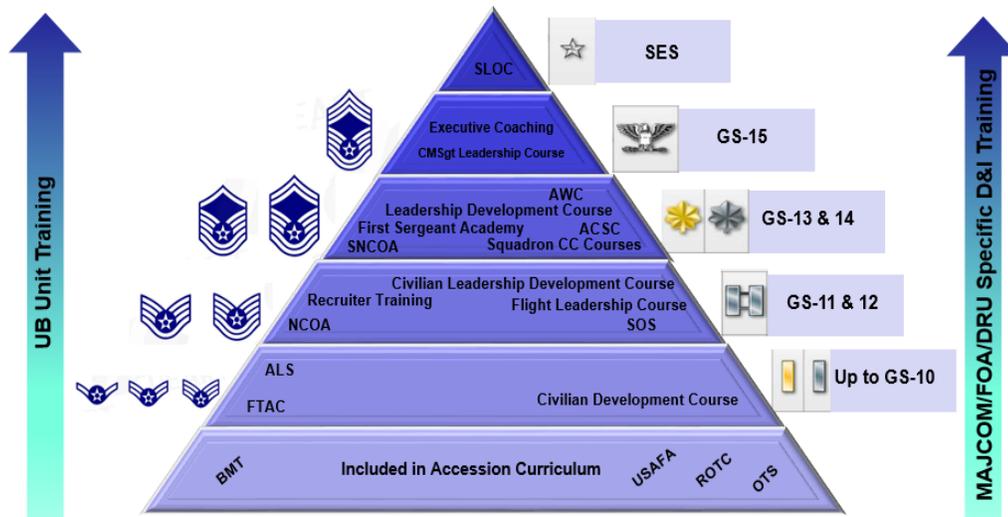


Figure 1 – Diversity & Inclusion Education & Training Pyramid

As noted above (Figure 1), this diversity and inclusion education and training structure allows Unconscious Bias Mitigation Training (UBMT) to be implemented within the existing lifecycle training, as part of a phased approach. In some cases, MAJCOMs, DRUs, and FOAs have already integrated unconscious bias content at key developmental opportunities, such as MAJCOM-specific Squadron Commander and Superintendent Courses.

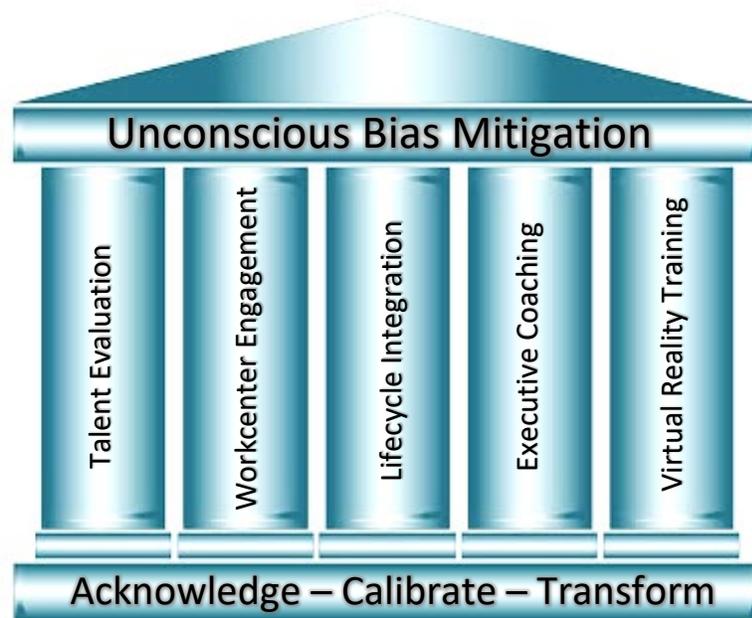
The Unconscious Bias Mitigation Training (UBMT) architecture (Figure 2) provides a consistent, comprehensive framework that synchronizes a tailored approach toward building the necessary acumen required to mitigate the impacts of unconscious bias and enhance workforce effectiveness and workplace inclusion. Execution of UBMT supports diversity and inclusion as a warfighting imperative and enhances readiness and lethality.

VISION: Airmen acknowledge unconscious bias, calibrate their thinking and transform their approach to create the inclusive and innovative culture we need to remain the world's most lethal Air Force.

- Regardless of rank, position, or organizational level, all Airmen should be inclusive and seek other perspectives in decision-making particularly when it impacts a member's opportunity to progress professionally.

- Leadership engagement is the “center of gravity” to the effectiveness of cultural change. As such, leaders at all levels will play an essential role in promoting unconscious bias awareness and mitigation strategies.

Figure 2 – Unconscious Bias Mitigation Training Architecture Model



Talent Evaluation

Unconscious bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. It is persistent, unavoidable and...human. It informs our perceptions of people and social groups which influences how we evaluate talent and performance potential. However, cognitive science also suggests that we have the ability to reshape our thinking. The unconscious mind is malleable, and we can rewire and enhance our approach to becoming more inclusive.

This specific effort aims to leverage unconscious bias training to create “just-in-time” priming to foster self and corporate awareness during a talent evaluation event. This training is currently employed during developmental team (DT) sessions (April 2019) and non-Title 10 selection boards/panels (May 2020). During these sessions, DT and board/panel chairs lead an unconscious bias presentation that includes a stage-setting video with associated talking points. This timely training session connects specific examples of bias to talent evaluation situations, builds a common acknowledgement and understanding of bias, and promotes a conversation on mitigating its impacts.

Workcenter Engagement

Inclusive leaders are key to shaping a culture where all Total Force Airmen acknowledge bias and actively engage to empathize with others and build an environment of belonging. The objective of this training is for each participant to: 1) understand the concepts of unconscious bias; 2) recognize individual mitigation strategies; and 3) value how individual awareness and action leads to an inclusive culture that enables mission readiness.

Commanders/Directors, across the Total Force, will receive unconscious bias education and training tools to spark an impactful conversation within their organizations at large and within facilitated small-group workcenter discussions. Leaders may use the following tools accordingly:

1) Profession of Arms Center of Excellence (PACE) “Unconscious Bias” video:

Leaders may use this video as a “stage-setter” in mass forums such as Commander’s/Director’s Calls. This messaging video can serve as a lead-in to more detailed training using the “*Neurons & Narratives*” video/guide.

2) Headquarters Air Force “Neurons & Narratives” video/facilitation guide: Leaders may direct workcenter small group discussions to gain further insight and perspective on unconscious bias concepts and mitigation strategies. To enable a productive dialogue, commanders/directors are highly encouraged to designate members with facilitation skills experience.

The HAF D&I office and MAJCOM CDIOs will provide updated education and training products to sustain leadership engagement and workcenter conversations.

Lifecycle Integration

On July 14, 2020, the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) issued a memorandum directing a DoD-wide review of diversity and inclusion and equal opportunity policy and related initiatives. One specific task aims to effectively educate the DoD workforce concerning the impacts of bias as part of the military and civilian developmental lifecycle.

Designated OSD leads will develop requirements for Common Military Training including terminal learning objectives, enabling learning objectives, purpose of learning, and desired outcomes that are targeted to Service members, tailored to their place within the military lifecycle (e.g., new recruits, newly appointed leaders, senior officers), and deployable enterprise-wide through existing training and professional military education programs. These requirements will include clear and concise definitions of key and relevant terms. OSD will provide a plan of action and milestones, including timelines, for the development and implementation of these requirements no later than October 1, 2020.

The UBMT architecture supports the SECDEF directive by ensuring Air Force education and training institutions integrate tailored, unconscious bias learning objectives into course curriculum. The HAF D&I Office will collaborate with AETC and other key stakeholders to fortify an implementation plan that fully aligns with the OSD guidance.

Executive Coaching

This UBMT line of effort seeks to build a culture of inclusion through a strong executive coaching program. This deliberate development platform partners senior leaders with coaches in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential. This leadership tool has been utilized in the private sector for over three decades and will be leveraged to exploit areas of growth such as unconscious bias mitigation. In addition, a coaching culture is an integral part of the AF/A1 initiative: *Building Leaders of Character and Competence*. Coaching, particularly if paired with a 180 or 360 leadership assessment, fosters new insights, deeper thinking, and exposure to blindspots. Through coaching, leaders can identify ways to mitigate or close the gaps to create a more inclusive workplace.

The Air Force is currently executing a 6-month coaching pilot for 26 uniformed and civilian leaders -- General Officers (7); SESs (4); Colonels (4); GS15s (4); Command Chiefs (7). Upon completion of the pilot, leadership assessments and surveys will be deployed to measure effectiveness and return on investment. Program results will be presented to the Officer/Enlisted/Civilian Force Development Panel in March 2021.

Virtual Mixed Reality Training

Virtual-Mixed Reality Unconscious Bias (UB) Training provides a customizable, interactive platform that is used to deploy human relations scenario-based training. Training contact hours will be allocated to MAJCOMs and other organizations for “on-demand” use and deliberate integration into forums such as leadership courses. This program concept has been submitted for approval in the Program Objective Memorandum (POM) for FY22-26.

This training delivers a consistent developmental opportunity in a scenario that the target audience is unlikely to have experienced, with the goal of acquiring familiarity in the situation and improving skills to navigate challenging human relations situations.

The objective of this training is for each participant to: 1) understand the concepts of unconscious bias; 2) recognize individual mitigation strategies; 2) apply emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management) within the given simulation scenario and 3) value how individual awareness and action leads to an inclusive culture that enables mission readiness.

Facilitators will utilize the *Mixed Reality Live Simulation Facilitator Debrief Guide* produced in partnership between the HAF D&I Office and Air University. The window for Total Force military and civilians (appropriated and non-appropriated) to commence training is slated to occur in the following phased approach:

- FY22 – MAJCOMs execution of UBMT simulation in certain leadership courses
- FY23 – MAJCOMs and Professional Military Education (PME)
- FY24 – MAJCOMs, PME, and Basic Military Training (BMT) and Officer Training School (OTS)

- FY25 – MAJCOMs, PME, BMT, OTS, and Air Force Academy (AFA) and Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC)
- FY26 – MAJCOMs, PME, BMT, OTS, AFA, ROTC, and Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC)

In an effort to sustain a quality program, small group facilitators will be identified, screened and appointed by respective commanders/directors. Leaders will oversee scheduling sessions and consider factors such as work shifts while meeting mission requirements. The following mixed reality simulation flow will use three types of simulation formats based on the needs of the organization:

1. Basic: One-hour UBMT simulation session
 - a. UBMT simulation session will consist of a one-hour simulation session
 - i. Four scenarios will be executed within the one-hour session
 - ii. Each scenario will last 10-15 minutes
 - b. The facilitator will conduct a debrief session for approximately one hour

2. Intermediate: Two-hour simulation session
 - a. Execute first simulation scenario (10-15 minutes)
 - b. Debrief first simulation scenario (15 minutes)
 - c. Execute second simulation scenario (10-15 minutes)
 - d. Debrief second simulation scenario (15 minutes)
 - e. Break (5 minutes)
 - f. Execute third simulation scenario (10-15 minutes)
 - g. Debrief third simulation scenario (15 minutes)
 - h. Execute fourth simulation scenario (10-15 minutes)
 - i. Debrief fourth simulation scenario (15 minutes)

3. Advanced: Three-hour simulation session
 - a. Execute first simulation scenario (10-15 minutes)
 - b. Debrief first simulation scenario (30 minutes)
 - c. Execute second simulation scenario (10-15 minutes)
 - d. Debrief second simulation scenario (30 minutes)
 - e. Break (5 minutes)
 - f. Execute third simulation scenario (10-15 minutes)
 - g. Debrief third simulation scenario (30 minutes)
 - h. Execute fourth simulation scenario (10-15 minutes)
 - i. Debrief fourth simulation scenario (30 minutes)

The HAF D&I Office will partner with Air University to develop updated scenarios to promote continued dialogue and education on unconscious bias. A program office within Air University and the Air Force Leadership Institute will serve as a conduit to ensuring simulation scheduling, scenario development, and overall operational execution.