



The 50 – 30 Challenge



WHAT IS THE 50-30 CHALLENGE?

The goal of the program is to challenge Canadian organizations to increase the representation and inclusion of diverse groups within their workplaces, while highlighting the benefits of giving all Canadians a seat at the table.

The 50 – 30 Challenge asks that organizations aspire to two goals:

- Gender parity (50% women and/or non-binary people) in organizational leadership; and
- Significant representation (30%) in leadership of members of other equity-deserving groups.

WHY HAS SELKIRK COLLEGE SIGNED ON?

Organizations that are more diverse have¹²³⁴⁵⁶:

- A more extensive talent pool.
- Increased employee engagement and satisfaction.
- Higher retention and lower turnover.
- Better decision-making and problem-solving.
- Greater innovation.
- Enhanced financial performance.

¹ Boston Consulting Group (2018). How Diverse Leadership Teams Boost Innovation.

² Dixon-Fyle, S. Hunt V., Dolan K., & Prince S. (2020 May). Diversity Wins: How inclusion matters. McKinsey & Company.

³ Elias, H. (2020, January 16). Diversity is the bridge on which we can cross the skills gap. World Economic Forum (WE Forum).

⁴ Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (2023). The 50-30 Challenge: Your Diversity Advantage.

⁵ Levine, Stuart R. (2020, January 15). Diversity Confirmed to Boost Innovation and Financial Results. Forbes

⁶ Rock, D. and H. Grant. (2016, November 4). Why Diverse Teams Are Smarter (hbr.org).

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SELKIRK COLLEGE?

Selkirk College is committed to attracting, selecting and supporting marginalized candidates. Work will focus on removing the biases and barriers in the employment processes. This means we need to:

- Embed leading inclusive practices into our recruitment and selection processes.
- Do this at all levels of the organization – for the benefits of diversity and inclusion come not just from diverse leadership teams, but from a diverse employee population.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR MEMBERS OF SELECTION COMMITTEES AT SELKIRK COLLEGE?

- Because bias can interfere with our larger goals of cultivating and sustaining an equitable, diverse and inclusive organization, members of selection committees must take active steps to mitigate the negative impact of biases.
- See the next pages for more information about types of biases as well as bias-reduction tactics you can try.

MITIGATING UNCONSCIOUS BIAS⁷

Unconscious bias is a part of being human. Watch a video to learn more here: [Who, Me? Biased? - The New York Times](#) (nytimes.com). Understand that it is impossible to eliminate our unconscious bias, but it is possible to mitigate its negative impact.

START WITH ME

Be aware of my own biases and use tools to mitigate them.

Acknowledge bias	Acknowledge bias exists.
Avoid vulnerability	Watch out when you're tired, stressed, or under time pressure.
Implement structure	Pay attention to decisions made without enough information or no structured process.
Ask questions	Ask questions to seek understanding and avoid quick judgement.
Get feedback	Be open and ask for feedback from others. Use the KSS framework to get feedback (what should I Keep doing, Start doing, and Stop doing?)

REACH BEYOND

Support others to mitigate their biases.

Be an active bystander	Address bias when you see it – engage according to the situation.
Get support	Ask for support and guidance from others when needed.
Increase awareness	Increase awareness and knowledge about diversity, inclusion and unconscious bias.

On the next page there are definitions of some common biases, along with examples and tactics to mitigate them. These are borrowed from *Hiring for Diversity: The Guild to Building an Inclusive and Equitable Organization* by Arthur Woods and Susanna Tharakan.

⁷ Selkirk College & HRx. (2019). Mitigating Unconscious Bias and Building Inclusive Cultures.

Type of bias	Definition	Example	Tactics to address
Affinity bias	To favor those who share similar interests or background to you.	The candidate and I went to the same school. I like this candidate because we have XYZ in common.	Physically jot down any similarities you share with the candidate. Look for “culture add” versus “culture fit.”
Affect heuristics	Taking mental shortcuts, aka going with your gut feeling.	I have a gut feeling on this candidate. I glanced at the candidate’s profile and am concerned about XYZ.	Assess your gut – write down the reasons why you don’t like the candidate. Use an objective scorecard.
Attribution bias	Using an observation to determine a candidate is unfit for the job.	The candidate didn’t make a great first impression.	Don’t make assumptions and do ask clarifying questions.
Confirmation bias	Drawing conclusions based on your personal beliefs and prejudices rather than merit.	The candidate has a negative quality that is exactly what I’d expect from a New Yorker.	Create a list of predetermined, standardized, skill-based questions ahead of time.
Conformity bias	To act similar to the people around you regardless of your own beliefs – aka succumbing to peer pressure.	It looks like the group all prefers one candidate so I’ll hold off on sharing feedback.	Ask interviewers to submit their feedback immediately after the interview. Don’t allow interviewers to view feedback until they’re written their own.
Contrast effect	Comparing candidate to one another, instead of measuring their skills and potential for success.	I prefer this candidate over the one we just interviewed.	Space out your interviews and write down feedback as soon as you complete the interview.
Name bias	Favoring those with certain types of names – typically Anglo Canadian.	Choosing not to give interviews with ethnic-sounding names.	Anonymize profiles by removing names via software applications.

Type of bias	Definition	Example	Tactics to address
Beauty Bias	The belief that attractive people are more successful, competent, and qualified.	When you're more likely to choose the candidate you find more attractive regardless of their skills.	Stick to phone interview in the initial screening and first-round interviews.
Anti-immigrant bias	To view immigrants as unqualified due to language and cultural barriers.	Not moving forward with a candidate due to a perceived lack of Canadian workplace etiquette or social skills.	Evaluation criteria is especially important here so we don't let bias influence our perception of a candidate.
Stereotype bias	To filter information in a way that reinforces the stereotypes we unconsciously believe in.	Asking candidates questions only related to a community they appear to identify with.	Educate yourself on the most common stereotypes to actively avoid this way of thinking.
Halo effect	Using a positive trait to overshadow everything else.	Favoring a candidate of dubious qualifications because they are familiar with an important client of yours.	Assess the candidate without the one attribute that makes them a "unicorn" and see if you still feel the same way about them.
Horn effect	Using a negative trait to overshadow everything else.	Disqualifying a candidate because they are unfamiliar with software your company relies on.	Focus on the objective skills and qualifications of the candidate profile.
Anchor bias	Relying too heavily on one initial piece of information to make a decision.	Overlooking a candidate's flaw because you discovered early on that they interned at an impressive company.	Focus on the complete scorecard to assess the full candidate profile and how well they meet the requirements.