

Do Something Different  
**Embracing Diversity**  
Programme

Winner in the 'Google Outstanding Use of Technology in the Field of Diversity' category, European Diversity Awards.



[www.dsd.me](http://www.dsd.me)

# Theoretical background to the Embracing Diversity programme

Cognitive biases are part of human nature – they are mental shortcuts that have helped us survive, by being able to categorise people quickly, form in-groups, spot enemies and protect our own. At an evolutionary level bias has been essential for survival. Unfortunately, even in the modern business world we still sometimes operate with a Neanderthal brain.

Bias is unconscious – people unknowingly discriminate against one group and favour another, without realising that they are doing it. In fact, most people would assert that they are fair and unbiased in their decision-making. Not surprisingly then, there can be resistance to the idea that discriminatory behavior is occurring, particularly if it is implied that it is intentional. It is important to make people aware that we all operate with unconscious biases every day. But because these biases leak out in the micro-behaviours we barely notice, knowing about them is not enough.

## Knowing is not enough

The widely-used Implicit Association Test (IAT), based on the work of social psychologists Greenwald & Banaji (1997), demonstrates that we all have biases and prejudices against groups that are different to us. It is a common belief that by making people aware of implicit bias, and how it can influence decisions, they may be able to prevent the bias influencing their own behaviour. This is where the IAT does not go far enough. It identifies bias. It raises awareness. But that alone does not change behaviour. The focus needs to shift from understanding bias to changing the micro-behaviours that it gives rise to in a host of every day situations in every workplace.

Learning interventions are often treated as an event (a half-day seminar, a two-day workshop, etc) and based on the assumption that successful implementation will follow. Yet post-training adoption rates in the workplace are found to be very low. Bias training does not eliminate bias (Kalev, Dobbin et al 2006). One reason for this is the knowing-doing gap. In other words, knowing about something does not in itself lead to behaviour change. Do Something Different is an action-oriented approach that works around people's cognitive biases by helping them act in new, more inclusive ways every single day.

## How the Do Something Different Inclusion and Diversity programme works

### 1. The pillars behind the programme

Not everyone treats the 'outsider' unfairly. We all have different, selective biases. The Do Something Different diagnostic process measures how individuals' biases manifest in their behaviour, such as:

- AFFINITY BIAS: Showing affinity for people like ourselves, sometimes called the LIKE-ME BIAS
- CONFIRMATION BIAS: once we've formed an opinion about something, we look for and give weight to evidence that confirms our beliefs, and pay less attention to evidence that contradicts them
- ATTRIBUTION BIAS: self-defensive biases/attributing our own successes to hard work and others' to luck
- THE BANDWAGON EFFECT; adopting the consensus/popular view
- PERCEPTUAL BIAS: believing that everyone see the world as you do
- THE STATUS QUO BIAS: preferring things to stay the same/resisting change
- THE HALO EFFECT: overgeneralising/assuming that because someone is good at A they will be good at doing B or C
- THE OPTIMISM BIAS: believing that negative events are more likely to befall others and positive events our self.
- LINGUISTIC AND NON-LINGUISTIC BIAS: mispronouncing names, using language that demeans, jargon that excludes or non-verbal communication that excludes or demeans another

## 2. Benchmarking and profiling every individual at sign-up

A simple sign-up process on-line takes just 10-15 minutes. During this time the individual answers questions about their general wellbeing, undertakes behavioural profiling and answers questions relating to their existing habits and inclusive behaviours. Engaging animations/ videos introduce the person to the background behind Do Something Different, informing about the programme they will be doing and how it all works.

### Example diagnostic questions:

#### How often do you...

- Mix with people from a very different background to yourself(age/race/religion)?
- Seek out the views of people with different values to yours?
- Acknowledge other people's contributions to a successful outcome/publicly affirm the work that another person has done?
- Invite a diverse range of opinions on how you are performing at work?
- Offer unsolicited help to others who are under pressure?
- Switch off when certain people voice their views or opinions about a work matter?
- Make an effort to find out about the roles of others in your organisation
- Change your opinion or view about something?
- Go along with the group view because it's easier?
- Make an effort to acknowledge everyone in the group or meeting?
- Make an effort to find different people to work with, or bring in new people, when you have new projects or challenges?

These questions are answered online using a slider that can be moved from Never to A Lot. (see example screenshot below). A personal report shows them where they are.

The screenshot shows a web interface for a diagnostic questionnaire. At the top, there is a blue header with the 'NixonMcInnes' logo and 'Something Different' branding. Below the header, a navigation bar includes 'Welcome', 'About You', 'Behaviours', 'Habits', 'Wellbeing', and 'Your DSD'. The main content area is titled 'How often do you...?' and contains instructions: 'Move each slider to indicate how often you do the following things. Please be honest, there are no wrong or right answers - just tell us how it is for you.' Below this, there are eight questions, each with a horizontal slider ranging from 'Never' to 'A lot'. The questions are: 'Challenge the status quo in an attempt to make improvements?', 'Proactively look for ways to improve yourself?', 'Go out of your way to make others feel good?', 'Keep your feelings under control when faced with challenging people or situations?', 'Expect a positive outcome when faced with a new challenge?', 'Make a real effort to tune into how others are feeling?', 'Adjust your behaviour depending on who you are with?', and 'Experience surprise at how you react to certain situations?'. At the bottom of the form, there are 'Back' and 'Next' buttons.

### 3. The unique programme of behavioural prompts (Do's) based on the person's answers to the diagnostic questions

After completing the diagnostic questions each person's unique programme is created by our system. For each question there are three alternative 'Do's' tailored to the development needs of the individual. These are delivered over the course of three weeks by email and/or text.

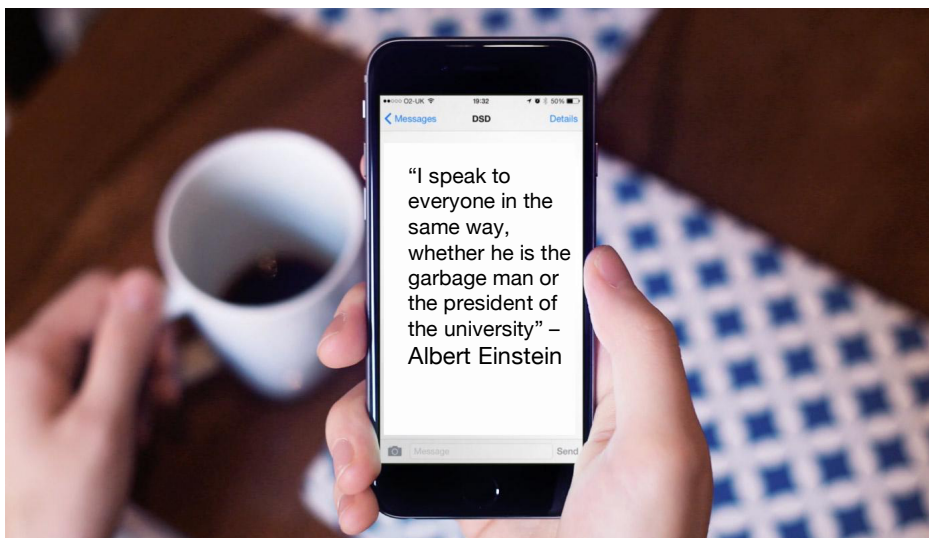
For example:

How often do you:	NEVER	SOMETIMES	A LOT
<b>Seek out the views of people with different values to yours?</b>	<b>LOOK OUTSIDE.</b> Selecting who to work with or consult? Don't go for the usual suspects today, choose someone completely different.	<b>LOOK FOR THE GOOD DAY.</b> Someone you don't see eye-to-eye with or whose views you dismiss? Go and talk to them today; find some common ground.	<b>LIFT UP DAY.</b> Help make someone who is overlooked more visible today. Introduce them to an influencer, share their success around or talk positively about them to others.

Do's are also sent based on the individual's personality profile, targeting where they need to expand their behavioural flexibility.

### 4. On-going motivational messages and support

Throughout their programme, as well as Do's, the person receives regular motivational messages, as well as links to useful resources and downloads.



## 5. An online sharing community

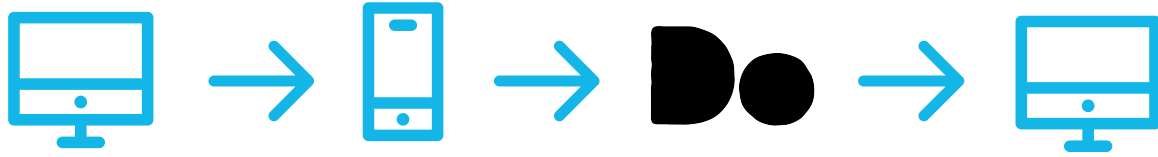
In the Do Zone (via app or online) the person can see all of their Do's, report on them, leave comments, share and get support from others on the programme.



This is why we do what we do:

<p><b>"The Open Mind Do Something Different training was something we hadn't done before and it has affected the PwC Experience on a level which I thought was really spectacular."</b></p> <p>Ian Powell, Senior Partner of PwC</p> 	<p><b>"I made a decision regarding the direction of my career which I've been delaying/putting off due to anxieties of the unknown."</b></p> <p>Project Manager, Growth Mindset programme</p> 	<p><b>"I chaired the KPI review meeting on behalf of my boss. It's a review of our performance. Lots of preparation required to answer lots of questions. I did it! Now I know I can do it again."</b></p> <p>Production Manager, Agility programme, Mondelez</p> 	<p><b>"I relinquished control and allowed my team members to come up with the deadlines."</b></p> <p>Marketing Director, SAS, Leadership programme</p> 
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## The simple steps to doing something different



Complete diagnostic  
Online so programme  
Is tailored to you

Get texts to  
help you do  
things differently

Share in Do Zone  
your experience with  
others on your  
Programme

Complete diagnostic  
again, see what's  
changed

Do Something Different was developed by psychologists Professor Ben (C) Fletcher and Professor Karen Pine, whose research shows that most people's everyday behaviours are automatic, driven by habit and context, not by rational decisions. In attempting to understand and resolve the barriers that prevent people changing Do Something Different takes account of the limitations of the human mind revealed by behavioural science. This involves understanding how to influence people's automatic choices and break habits to produce beneficial outcomes, both for the individual and for society generally.

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