**STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH BIAS IN DECISION-MAKING**

**Anchoring**

► Don’t be blinded by first impressions or statements.  
► Encourage everyone to be engaged in the discussion.  
► Seek advice from independent sources.  
► Drop your own anchor, purposefully introduce an alternative anchor.

► Acknowledge the bias and ask to delay the decision.

**Sunk Cost Fallacy**

► What are the risks if we continue to support this?  
► Ask, “If we hadn’t already made this investment, would we still make it today?”  
► Ask what and why questions, see the big picture and get the facts, not hearsay or guesses.  
► Understand that past decisions can’t correct the past, admit that it didn’t work out and move on. ► Emphasize it is inefficient because it misallocates our limited resources.

**Unanimous Decision**► Discuss the pros and cons of having to reach a unanimous decision.  
► Conduct a straw poll.  
► Try fist-to-five voting.  
► Utilize secret ballots.  
► Emphasize that the board can show unanimous support without a unanimous vote.

**Peer Pressure**

► Ask “what” and “why” questions.  
► Move from “that’s how we’ve always done it” to “let’s give this a try.”

► Have someone play the role of Devil’s Advocate.  
► Encourage individual thinking.

**Rushing to Solve**

► Use a sound judgment process, reference the Professional Judgment Process discussed on page 4.

► Encourage discussion and healthy debate to avoid an early consensus.

► Ask yourself what information the recommendation or decision is based on, how was the information gathered and is the information fact-based.

► Avoid self-imposed deadlines, outcome is more important than speed.

**Emotional Attachment**

► Leave your emotions at the door.

► Separate facts from emotions.

► Ask “what” and “why” questions.

**Narrow Framing**

► Don’t get caught up in the initial perspective that is presented.  
► Purposefully think of a view that is contrary to the initial framing.  
► Challenge the group to look at the issue using a different view or analogy.

► Ask what and why questions.  
► Encourage someone to play the role of Devil’s Advocate.

**Confirmation**

► Ask what facts support a position or viewpoint.  
► Avoid the tendency to interpret information as confirmation of your position.

► Challenge your own pre-existing viewpoint, be open to changing your mind.

► Actively seek out opposing views.  
► Ask what and why questions.  
► Encourage someone to play the role of Devil’s Advocate.

**Zero Risk**

► Emphasize that there is some risk in every decision.

► Have more than one option.  
► There is risk in NOT making a decision.

**Conflict of Interest**

► Have a conflict of interest policy in place and assure it is followed.

► If you believe a conflict of interest exists, make sure it is addressed and discussed.

► The annual Form 990 requires directors to list potential conflicts of interest. This provides another opportunity to address and discuss conflicts of interest.

**Status Quo Bias**

► Oftentimes tied to an emotional bias, keep emotions out of the decision.

► Ask “what” and “why” questions.  
► Encourage Devil’s Advocate .

**Ostrich Effect**  
► Don’t hide from unpleasant facts.  
► Stress that ignoring the problem will only make it worse.  
► Emphasize that the truth doesn’t change just because we ignore it.

► Seek outside expert advice.  
► Encourage Devil’s Advocate.

**Overconfidence**

► Is the information we are relying on fact-based?

► Challenge assumptions and data.  
► Seek outside expert advice.  
► Ask what and why questions.