



Microlearning Strategy Helps Wipro Scale Inclusion Across 65 Countries

Wipro

Best Learning Program for Unconscious Bias Awareness

December 2024



Company Background



Company-at-a-Glance	
Headquarters	Bengaluru, India
Year Founded	1945
Revenue	USD 11.3 BN (FY'23)
Employees	220,000+
Global Scale	65 countries
Customers/Output, etc. (Key customers and services offered)	Consulting, Design, Engineering & Operations
Industry	IT
Stock Symbol	WIT (NYSE)
Website	https://www.wipro.com/



Business Conditions and Business

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion is a way of life at Wipro, evidenced by their steadfast commitment to integrating these into all aspects of work and encouraging all Wiproites to always be their authentic selves. For Wipro, inclusion has been about recognizing individual differences, varying life experiences, and perspectives that associates can draw on to create a space that openly supports everyone.

The agenda for DEI ties with the overall culture change agenda that Wipro took on in 2020 when Wipro's Executive Chairman Rishad Premji took the reins in 2019. He felt that the company's performance did not reflect its true potential. Premji's strong belief that the people & culture of a company determine a company's success & failure as much as its strategy, led him on a journey to make Wipro "a high performing organization that has a soul, that is empathetic, vulnerable, collaborative & decent." Instead of using complicated messaging to communicate - & implement – an elusive concept like culture, Premji chose five simple, commonplace habits to promote this change.

While Wipro had developed the strong, traditional ingredients that help become an organization successful – things like people, strategy, investments & purpose – Premji candidly shared his opinion on how Wipro was still unable to produce a decent dish, which is Wipro's performance. The organization had struggled through the decade of 2010 to 2020 as a company which led Premji to the genesis & architecture of Wipro's cultural transformation. Premji, who had always been a big believer of how people experience a company's values through behaviors, wanted to look at the way things were happening implicitly & explicitly, inside Wipro. This for him meant defining the "smell of the place" – the culture of the organization.

The business environment that got revealed through this Premji led culture initiative to understand why Wipro was unable to live up to its potential as a company, led him to make the discovery that the challenge was Wipro's own way of being to some extent –Wipro's way of working, collaborating, the silos in the organization, the trust factor & the willingness to work across aisles. It became an evident business need then that to transform the way Wipro worked, the only way forward was to come together & unlock Wipro's collective potential which is how the culture transformation journey began.



Under Premji's leadership, the top 15 company leaders came together to set up four task forces – on collaboration, non-negotiable behaviors, stewardship & metrics. These teams spent enormous amounts of time among themselves, meeting alumni, people across the organization & in some cases talking to customers to figure out what needed to be done to improve Wipro's performance. When these 15 leaders were debriefed later, it was learnt that the task forces were hearing a lot of the same things in different words which is how it got decided to demystify & bring everything together. The one thing that the leaders were clear on was to focus on behaviors, things people could control as individuals. There was nothing 'aha' about these habits. They were powerful in their simplicity & the focus was on ensuring that they should be universally applicable & not get lost in language, local culture & nuances.

The five habits are:

1. Being Respectful - this is about being inclusive, communicating transparently and authentically, even when it comes to feedback.
2. Being Responsive - both to Wipro's clients as well as inside the organization and making decisions at speed while taking risks.
3. Always Communicating - with stakeholders inside the organization and with customers, including sharing bad news quicker and faster.
4. Demonstrating Stewardship – This one is about having a strong mindset, having a “can do” attitude as opposed to a cynical attitude, and sharing one's best people to help support other parts of the organization, even if there is no benefit to oneself.
5. Building Trust – This is about building trust across the aisles. In an organization where 100,000 new people joined within 2.5 years post the pandemic hit, the element of trusting people before one knows them became incredibly important to getting things done in a collaborative manner.



Premji led from the top & personally conducted 89 sessions over 300 hours, meeting 28000 employees in big & small groups across the world where he focused only 30 minutes of the two-hour conversation using a PowerPoint presentation. The rest of the conversation focused on telling stories from inside & outside the organization.

The habits of Being Respectful & Building Trust are the foundational elements that play a crucial role in driving DEI initiatives at Wipro. Being Respectful is a fundamental aspect of creating an inclusive environment. At Wipro, being respectful means valuing & appreciating the unique perspectives, experiences and contributions of individuals from diverse backgrounds. This habit translates into DEI initiatives by promoting a culture where all employees feel respected and included, regardless of their race, gender, ethnicity, or any other characteristic. It involves treating everyone with dignity, actively listening to their ideas, and creating space for open dialogue and collaboration. Further, Building Trust is fostered through transparent communication, accountability, and creating opportunities for employees to engage in decision-making processes related to diversity and inclusion. Since the leadership team knows & trusts that Wipro is genuinely committed to propagating the five habits & DEI, they continue to be active patrons for all culture & DEI related practices, decisions, processes & initiatives.

As Wipro continues to build a high-performance culture, driven by objectives & outcomes – these habits provide a very strong foundation for it to be achieved. To further sustain this outcome driven culture with the Five Habits as guiding principles, stems Wipro's commitment to Diversity, Inclusion & Equity towards creating true business value through its engaged, inclusive, high performing talent.

The ethos of building an inclusive culture is led from the front by Wipro's DEI council, with the CEO as its executive sponsor. This provides the required strategic focus, with Business Unit DEI Councils & Inclusion Champions helping drive broader organizational change. Wipro has deeply embedded governance & accountability measures – such as companywide DEI reviews, monthly & quarterly scorecards – which help measure, monitor & track the effectiveness of Wipro's DEI strategies & actions. Wipro's representation, performance reviews, promotion, succession, retention, compensation & other vital metrics are regularly viewed to identify gaps, shape its strategy & goals & evaluate progress.



Additionally, Wipro has a Culture Council with 15 leaders from diverse backgrounds. Wipro's Chief Culture Officer is a Senior Vice President who spends 60 per cent of her time leading this effort. Wipro has about 75 Habit Champions in different parts of the world, who are passionate about driving change & are the face & energy behind the effort.

Wipro's journey over the years in the space of DEI has involved consistent steps towards building a stronger, diverse & more equitable global enterprise. Wipro continues to ensure that it's practices, policies & processes help create a world where everyone feels welcomed, valued & respected. The focus continues to be on breaking stereotypes, overcoming unconscious bias, spreading awareness about inclusive language & enabling Wiproites to become active allies for each other & the customers they serve.

Overview

Unconscious bias awareness learning programs at Wipro adopt a multipronged approach with multiple levels of interventions to improve equity, inclusion & belongingness.

They focus on:

1. **Awareness Building:** Educating our associates about different biases, experiences, privileges.
2. **Skill Development:** Equipping our associates with the tools to communicate effectively & empathetically with a diverse workforce.
3. **Behavioral Change:** Encouraging a shift in attitudes & behaviors to support a more inclusive workplace.



To influence behavioral change, Wipro utilized the AIDA model as follows:



The AIDA model, typically used in the world of sales & marketing, is a proven framework for influencing buyer behavior. Wipro has used it in the context of influencing associate behavior to grow more self-aware, empathetic & inclusive as an organization.

Wipro’s Holistic Unconscious Bias Learning Program: AIDA Model

AWARENESS UNCONSCIOUS BIAS – E MODULE Focus: Recognize & minimize unconscious bias in typical workplace scenarios Duration: 60 mins Total Uptake: 182,500+ associates (>80% of Total Workforce)		INTEREST UNCONSCIOUS BIAS BASICS – VILT Focus: Conscious Awareness of Unconscious Biases through reflection, self observation & question oneself Duration: 60 mins	
DESIRE & ACTION UNCONSCIOUS BIAS: VILT FIVE PART SERIES (60 mins each) Focus: Different nuances of Unconscious Bias are addressed with each offering built upon the previous one in terms of complexity & understanding.			
Part 1: Decoding Microaggressions	Part 2: Practising Microaffirmations	Part 3: Embracing Generational Diversity	Part 4: Becoming Better Allies
UNCONSCIOUS BIAS SPECIALIZED E MODULES		Duration: 60 mins	Total Uptake of E-learning: 6000+ associates
Championing LGBTQ+ Inclusion at the Workplace	9 months & more (Associate & Manager Tracks)		Total Uptake of VILT training programs: 11,000+ associates in FY23-24

VILT: Virtual, instructor led classroom sessions

The following sections elaborate on each component of the AIDA model of behavioral change.

Attention: The first step was to capture the attention of employees and stakeholders and nudge them to think about Unconscious Bias and how it hampers Inclusion in the workplace. This is achieved by providing information & addressing anxieties around less discussed & sensitive topics.



The first attempt at creating awareness about Unconscious Bias began way back in 2018 with a short e-learning module called ‘Overcoming Unconscious Bias’. In a concerted bid to increase the overall understanding & awareness of Unconscious Bias amongst its associates, a refreshed e module called ‘Unconscious Bias - Recognize & Rewire’ was launched in 2023 & offered in 7 global languages. The module was created with the objective of creating a compelling positive narrative on the importance & urgent need for all associates to become self-aware. It was also designed to increase the associates’ confidence to engage in honest conversations about bias at work. The module had refreshed content with new workplace scenarios, empowering Wipro’s associates to recognize & manage biases that may exist in the workplace. It also puts the spotlight on what can be some individual actions to consciously check, combat & minimize unconscious bias at work.

The e-learning module, with a run time of 30 mins, also focused on the appreciation of the potential adverse impact Unconscious Biases have on individuals & organizations as well as encouraged the associates to reflect on their own personal biases.

Wipro’s commitment to overcoming Unconscious Bias is often echoed publicly by its leaders. Communication channels such as company-wide emails, town hall meetings, leadership coffee connects/ fireside chats, media press releases and internal newsletters continue to be used to raise awareness and speak about their efforts to overcome Unconscious Biases to create an inclusive work environment.

The screenshot shows a course card for 'UNCONSCIOUS BIAS - RECOGNIZE AND REWIRE'. The card features a dark blue header with the text 'How Unconscious Is Your Bias?' and a '29m' duration indicator. Below the header, it says 'COURSE' and 'UNCONSCIOUS BIAS - RECOGNIZE AND REWIRE' in a box, followed by 'ATTENDED'. There are five stars for rating, a heart icon, and a share icon, with '(34126)' next to the stars. A 'START' button is in the bottom right corner. Below the card, there's a section for 'Attempt History' with a blue bar for 'Unconscious Bias - Recognize and Rewire'. Underneath, there are tabs for 'DETAILS', 'ACTIVITIES', and 'SIMILAR ACTIVITIES'. The 'Full Description' is expanded, showing the title 'Unconscious Bias - Recognize and Rewire' and a paragraph: 'This e-learning module helps us recognize unconscious biases and its impact through diverse workplace scenarios. Understanding these biases will make us more aware, support better decision-making and encourage a more inclusive work environment. The module also offers other relevant resources that you could refer for further reading.'

Interest: The next step in the behavioral change process was to generate interest and engagement. This was done by creating safe spaces & opportunities



to talk about Unconscious Biases in oneself & others. These were set up as learning sessions to create psychological safety for associates to get more involved & ask questions they would otherwise hesitate to ask. This was done through classroom based, virtual instructor led training programs on **'Unconscious Bias Basics'**, a step up from the e-learning module.

The **'Unconscious Bias Basics'** training sessions essentially focus on Conscious Awareness of Unconscious Biases. These sessions focus on detailed deliberations on first impressions & automatic associations that individuals tend to make & how this information gets processed through one's personal mental models - based on what one considers successful, likeable, safe & trustworthy. The purpose of these trainings is to leave the associates with the understanding that Conscious Awareness is for them to create for themselves by continuously asking themselves 'Why?', to get to the root cause of where their bias may be coming from. The tools to create conscious awareness through reflection, self-observation, pausing & taking a breath before jumping to conclusions & the desire to question their standard way of thinking & being are what the associates are left with at the end of the Unconscious Bias Basics sessions.

Desire & Action: Once Awareness has been created & Interest has been kindled, the next steps are enabling the associates' Desire for change & taking concrete Action to bring about that change. While the above steps ensured learner involvement & internalization of the basic concepts related to Unconscious Bias, the will/desire to take action & actual action to be taken are addressed through specific training interventions.

Wipro's Unconscious Bias classroom-based awareness series comprises of five unique subparts, each built upon the previous one in terms of complexity & understanding.

Upon attending these sessions in the recommended order below, the associates gain valuable insights into different aspects of Unconscious Bias & also delve deeper into a proactive commitment towards Conscious Inclusion. These sessions are a step up from the 'Unconscious Bias Basics' sessions that enable the associates to move away from avoidance of bias towards more consciously inclusive thoughts, behaviors & actions.

These training programs result in the creation of safe spaces for associates to have open dialogues about the idea that they were just as likely to be prejudiced themselves as they were likely to be receivers of Unconscious Bias from others. By addressing these various aspects of unconscious bias, Wipro's learning



program seeks to create a culture of inclusivity, respect, and fairness within the organization. These action-oriented interventions continue to provide the right resources & tools to Wipro associates in the implementation of inclusive thoughts, beliefs & practices in their day-to-day work. For all associates aspiring to become people managers, the Unconscious Bias Basics module forms a mandatory segment of all managerial capability building trainings as well.

Wipro also recognizes the need to address the diverse aspects of the impact of Unconscious Bias for different groups of associates belonging to different minority groups.

By applying the AIDA model to drive Behavioral Change for DEI initiatives, Wipro is able to effectively enable associates to recognize and overcome Unconscious Bias in themselves & others. What started with capturing attention, generating interest & creating a desire for change ultimately resulted in inspiring associates to take action & actively participate in fostering a Diverse, Inclusive & Equitable workplace culture.

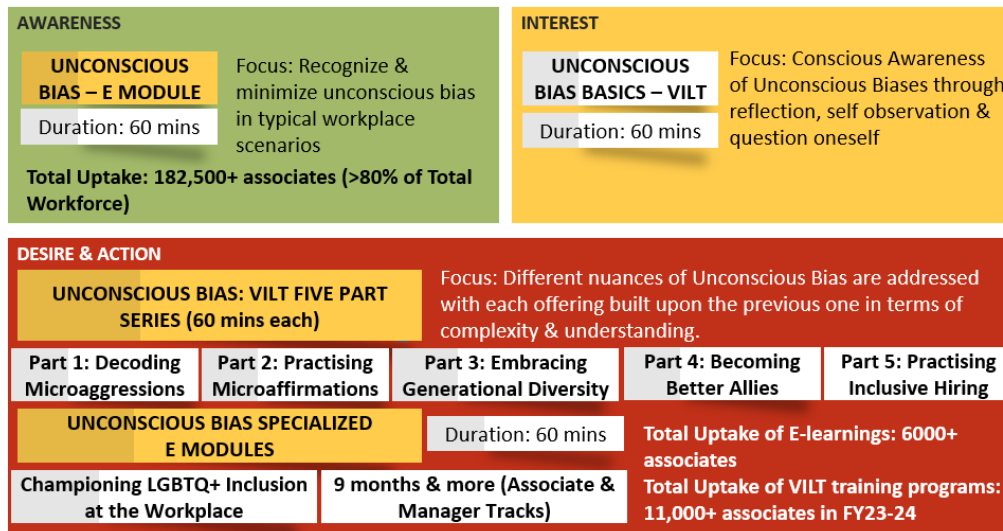


Design

Wipro’s Unconscious Bias learning intervention is designed to do more than increase awareness of biases & their impact. It helps the associates learn how to manage their biases, check their behavior & encourages them to share their stories & connect with people whose experiences are different from theirs. It also gives them tools to observe biases at the workplace and step in to take corrective action and be true allies (also known as ‘the Bystander Intervention’ in leading DEI research & studies).

The most important aspect kept in mind by Wipro’s DEI & Learning & Development teams in designing all e-modules & learning conversations, has been to give the associates concrete tools to recognize and overcome Unconscious Bias through a combination of strategies & to call out Biases when they spot them at the workplace.

Wipro’s Holistic Unconscious Bias Learning Program: AIDA Model



VILT: Virtual, instructor led classroom sessions

At the Awareness stage, the Unconscious Bias e learning module begins the journey of giving Wipro associates a broad understanding of what is Unconscious Bias.

It gives the associates a broad overview of the different types of bias, their impact on individuals, teams & the organization at large as well as tips to keep in



mind for fostering self-awareness, empathy & recognizing unconscious bias at the workplace.

At the Interest stage, there needs to be more active involvement from both the learner and the facilitator and hence the Unconscious Bias Basics connects are classroom based or virtual instructor led connects purposely positioned as Conversations & not Sessions as they are ongoing dialogues to enable safe spaces for Wipro's associates. Here they build on their new knowledge, ask questions & receive inputs, not just from the facilitator but from each other. These conversations are structured around scenarios encountered by associates in their daily interactions at work within their teams/ with other stakeholders. The focus is on emphasizing techniques & strategies to recognize & spot Unconscious Biases in oneself & others.

These conversations are tailored to include scenarios where leaders & associates may subtly exclude others or downplay their contributions – which, as multiple leading studies & recent research suggest, is one of the most widespread & insidious forms of workplace bias. The other important aspect these conversations focus on, is to share examples of how to change one's behavior including simple ways of prompting associates through situational cues, to counteract biases when for eg – hiring, assigning projects or other workplace situations. The attempt is to reframe and widen their thinking about a person or a situation.

At the Desire & Action stage, further classroom based and virtual instructor led learning conversations are arranged that delve deeper than the first layer of awareness & interest around Unconscious Bias to unpack specific, nuanced & practical Unconscious Bias related topics in focused groups.

These exclusive unconscious bias training programs are focused interventions on topics which form a part of the Unconscious Bias series at Wipro –

- 1. Unconscious Bias Basics** - Identifying & overcoming unconscious biases.
- 2. Decoding Microaggressions** - Spotting, challenging & minimizing microaggressions at the workplace along with practicing active intervention when encountered.
- 3. Practicing Microaffirmations** - Recognizing the impact of microaffirmations at work & combating unconscious bias through actively practicing microaffirmations.



4. **Understanding Generational Diversity** - Fostering a workplace environment that is inclusive towards all generations by busting myths & being an ally.
5. **Inclusive Hiring Practices** - Understanding inclusive practices to be bias free & equitable while hiring associates for Wipro.
6. **Becoming Better Allies** – To learn, unlearn & grow as allies through a deep understanding of what allyship truly means & delving into the DIY Allyship Toolkit.

which enable Wipro associates to act on their awareness of bias.

These conversations extend the focus on the potential for growth – all learning conversations are designed in a way that teach participants that bias is normal but not acceptable or unavoidable in workplace situations that they are likely to encounter.

These learning dialogues encourage breaking stereotypes that the associates hold about themselves & others which profoundly influence their behavior.

The exposure to different colleagues swapping anecdotes & sharing preconceived notions held by them ensures that there are numerous interpersonal interactions as a part of these learning conversations which enable the associates to become vulnerable & examine their own biases.

Wipro also recognizes the need to address the diverse aspects of the impact of Unconscious Bias for different groups of associates belonging to different minority groups.



Delivery

As mentioned in the above ‘Overview’ & ‘Design’ sections, Wipro’s Unconscious Bias learning assets are a thoughtful mix of VILT sessions & e-learning modules.

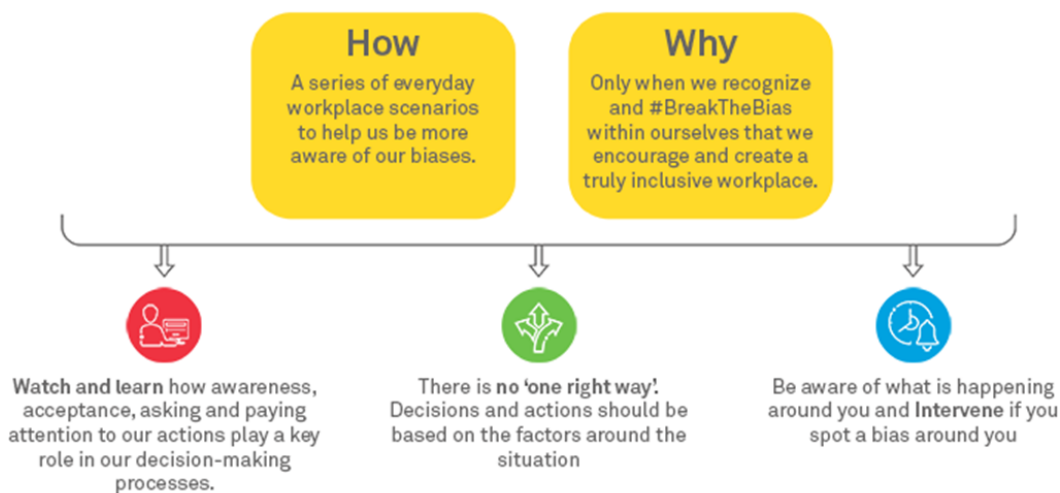
VILT (Virtual Instructor Led Trainings):

All training programs are designed as learning conversations in a way that teach participants that bias is normal but not acceptable or unavoidable in workplace situations that they are likely to encounter. These learning dialogues encourage breaking stereotypes that the associates hold about themselves & others which profoundly influence their behavior.

The learning conversations around specific, narrow topics relevant to different aspects of Unconscious Bias are focused on shifting behaviors from a framework of avoiding Unconscious Bias to a mindset of building Conscious Inclusion:

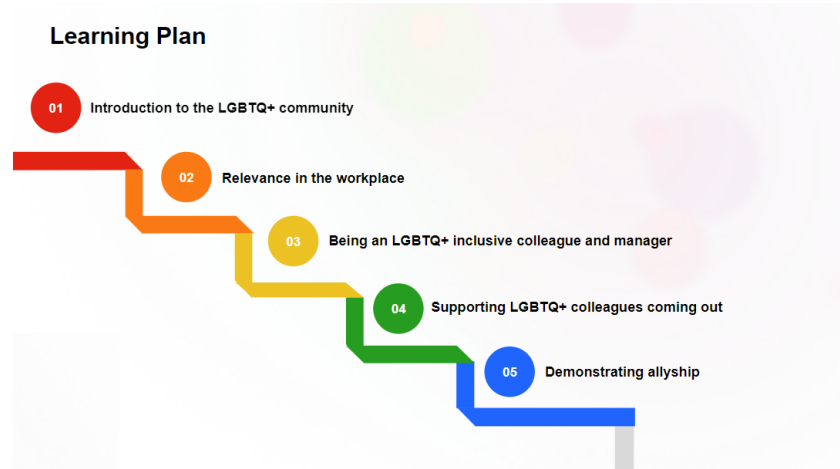
E-Learning Modules:

1. Wipro’s Unconscious Bias e learning module titled ‘Unconscious Bias: Recognize & Rewire’ focuses on how awareness, asking, acceptance & paying attention to one’s actions play a key role in one’s decision-making process. The module focuses on being open to feedback, the notion that there is no ‘one right way’ to be & on how to intervene if one spots a bias around them.



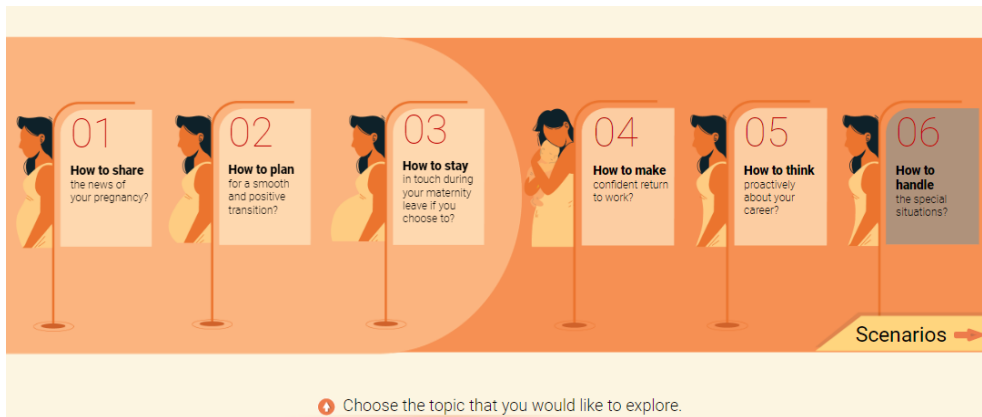


2. Championing LGBTQ+ Inclusion in the Workplace:



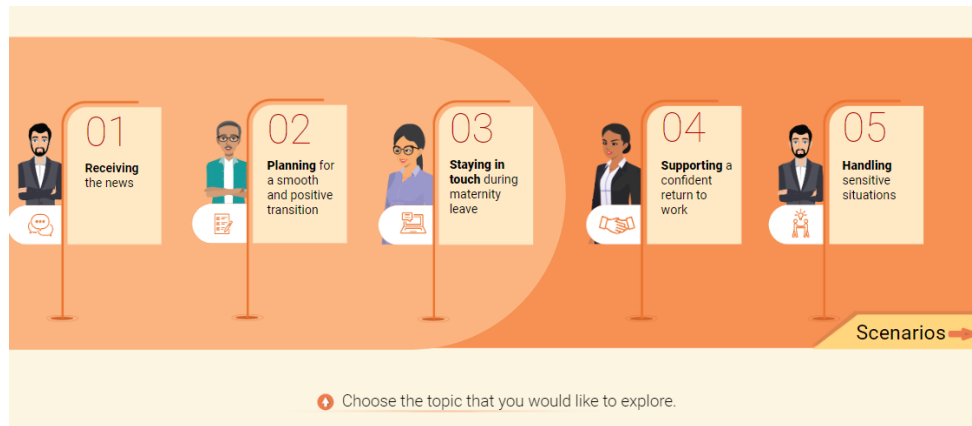
9 Months & More (Associate Track) - Screen Grab from the module giving the overview

(For pregnant women proceeding on/returning from maternity leave)



9 Months & More (Manager Track) – Screen Grab from the module giving the overview

(For managers of pregnant women associates going on/returning from maternity leave)



Measurable Benefits

Awareness levels continue to increase & shape guiding principles around which associates & leaders can unify & contribute. It's hard to draw a straight line from any individual Unconscious Bias learning/awareness effort to a specific impact or change; however, like many complex, global enterprises there are a variety of factors that contribute to Wipro's overall stellar inclusion metrics, some of which are:

- In Wipro's people leadership processes specifically the talent review planning cycle & the 360-degree feedback process, the spirit of inclusive leadership, culture & respect are important parameters of assessment.
- In terms of informal mechanisms, Wipro has a strong rewards & recognition philosophy which as of 2021 has formalized a specific focus on culture through five habits to drive positive reinforcement.



Overall

Use this section to provide a summary of the overall impact of the unconscious bias awareness program. What lessons did you learn? What are the next steps/future outlook?

Details:

Lessons:

1. **Balancing Unconscious Bias between normalizing it & portraying it as unacceptable -**

In VILT sessions & scenario-based discussions, the messaging to colleagues was tailored around how stereotypes can be easily absorbed even by good, well-intentioned folk, with an emphasis on individual responsibility to take action. Incorporating this approach led to more open discussions with the participants about the idea that they were likely to be prejudiced themselves just as they were likely to be receivers of unconscious bias from others. While normalizing unconscious bias, it was also important to balance the learning conversations by making clear the importance of managing biases, actions to challenge them & to communicate the importance of how these biases continue to not be acceptable or unavoidable.

2. **Structuring content around Wipro's workplace situations –**

While the VILT sessions, conversations, discussions & e-modules draw on social science research & studies, to make Wipro's trainings more relatable, appropriate & memorable, it was found that having dialogues over specific workplace situations that the colleagues were likely to experience made the conversations more interesting & relevant for everyone. These situations were explicit everyday scenarios that colleagues encounter like hiring, team dynamics, performance feedback discussions etc.

Next Steps/ Future Outlook

1. **Continue Leveraging Internal Network of Inclusion Champs & DEI Councils:** Inclusion Champs & Wipro wide/regional DEI councils will continue to be the extended arm for all learning & awareness efforts related to Overcoming Unconscious Bias across Wipro. They will continue to be



strong advocates, anchors, allies & amplifiers as Wipro's moves forth in its journey of inclusion. There will also be an increased focus on Train the Trainer refresher courses for all ICs to lead inclusion efforts at scale across Wipro.

- 2. Microlearning:** Conceptualize & design mini learning modules on the A-Z of Unconscious Bias through engaging, mini learning modules with behavioral nudges & action prompts to bring about mindset change through active, on the go learning & sharing examples of opportunities to practice everyday inclusion.
- 3. Sharpening the focus on building an inclusive ecosystem for associates with disabilities to set them up for success:** Similar to the Championing LGBTQ+ Inclusion at the Workplace & the 9 Months & More e-learning modules, a key focus area for Wipro is to develop disability sensitivity & a person first awareness amongst its associates. The primary objective will be to equip all Wipro associates with tools & techniques to best accommodate diverse work needs of their colleagues.