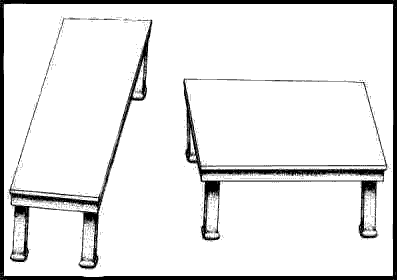
**Unconscious Bias Exercise**

**STEP ONE:** Look at the picture below of the two tables and describe the differences in the shapes.

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You would probably say: “The one on the left is longer and narrower than the one on the right.”

**STEP TWO**: Take a piece of paper and trace the table top on the left. Then lay your tracing over the table top on the right. That’s right, they are identical.

This picture was created by Roger Shepard, an Oxford and Stanford University professor. As Shepard says, “Because we are generally unaware that we are imposing a perceptual interpretation on the stimulus, we are generally unaware that our experience has an illusory aspect. The illusory aspect may only strike us after we are informed, for example, that the sizes or shapes of lines or areas that appear very unequal are, in fact identical in the picture.”

When we look at the picture, we don’t even consider that we might be seeing something different than what is obviously right in front of us. The problem is that it is not what is right in front of us at all. We make assumptions many times every day and don’t realize how subjective these assumptions actually are.

Consider the implications on hiring decisions that we make and how we may unconsciously act on biases we’re not even aware of.

*Adapted from the Cook Ross publication “Exploring Proven Strategies for Addressing Unconscious Bias in the Workplace” at* [*http://www.cookross.com/docs/UnconsciousBias.pdf*](http://www.cookross.com/docs/UnconsciousBias.pdf)