Examples of Bias

Halo Error
- This is the tendency to let a global or overall impression or a single strong characteristic of the candidate influence all judgments about him or her.
- "Great personality! This person must be smart."

Attractiveness (Beauty) Bias
- This is the tendency to give more favorable evaluations to candidates who are physically more attractive (a particular instance of halo error).
- "She's has a great smile, she must be nice."

Affinity Bias / "Similar to Me" Error
- This is the tendency that interviewers may have to give higher evaluations to candidates who are similar to themselves in terms of physical and/or psychological characteristics (appearance, age, values, attitudes, etc).
- "They went to UW - Madison, so they're a Badger just like me."

Horns Effect
- This is the tendency to allow negative responses or factors to overpower positive responses or factors.
- "Oh wow, they were terminated from his last job. We can't hire them!"

Conformity Bias
- This is the tendency to sway personal opinions to match the opinion of the majority. Often results when our deep-seated need to belong causes us to adapt our behaviours to feel like part of the group.
- "I'll just go with whichever candidate Tory likes."

Leniency/Severity
- This is the tendency to be a "hard" or "easy" interviewer. This will result in consistently giving ratings that are higher or lower than warranted to all candidates.
- "No one is hitting these benchmarks! / Everyone is so great!"

Central Tendency
- This is the tendency to avoid extreme evaluations and to give average or middle-of-the-scale evaluations to all candidates.
- "No one has really 'wowed' me during these interviews."

Contrast Effect
- This is the tendency to let the quality of other candidate(s) influence the judgments about current candidate's evaluation. Often problematic when previous candidates are very good or very poor.
- "That last candidate was way better then that first one - who totally bombed."

First/Last Effect
- This is the tendency to be overly influenced by information about the candidate that occurred very early or very late in the interview. Also could be overly influenced by the first or last interview of the day.
- "Geez, I am tired and it's so early/late... what did that last candidate say again?"

Assumed Characteristics
- This is the tendency to assume that if a candidate has characteristic A, they must also have characteristic B.
- "She is quite the blonde, she must not be very smart or good at her job."