

Movie Screening and Discussion – *Eye of the Beholder*

Course: MBA (Finance) Semester: II

This classroom activity used a short film, *Eye of the Beholder*, as a trigger to explore core topics in Human Resource Management and Organizational Behavior, especially focusing on perception, bias, and stereotyping in workplace decision-making. The objective was to help students recognize how unconscious filters shape our views about others — a critical realization for future managers who will evaluate, recruit, appraise, and lead people from diverse backgrounds.

The film tells a simple yet powerful story with an unexpected twist that challenges the viewer's assumptions. It was selected because it provokes emotional reactions, stimulates self-reflection, and opens the door for nuanced discussion on how judgments are formed — often not on the basis of facts, but on incomplete impressions.

The activity was conducted in three phases:

1. Pre-screening warm-up: Students were asked to write or discuss what factors influence their first impression of a person — including appearance, gender, accent, clothes, social media presence, etc. This helped surface their implicit beliefs and brought awareness to how often we rely on cognitive shortcuts (heuristics) to evaluate people.
2. Screening of the film: Students watched *Eye of the Beholder* in silence. The film cleverly builds a narrative that leads viewers toward a particular assumption, only to challenge it in the final scene. The emotional reaction at the end was intentionally used to create cognitive dissonance.

3. Post-screening debrief and discussion: Students were asked:

- What assumptions did you make while watching?
- What made you trust those assumptions?
- How does this relate to hiring or performance evaluations?
- Can unconscious bias be completely eliminated, or only managed?

The discussion then transitioned into a more structured examination of perception in the workplace — including halo effect, horn effect, stereotyping, confirmation bias, and attribution errors. Students shared real-life examples where misperceptions affected team dynamics or career growth.

The film triggered strong emotional reactions — surprise, discomfort, even guilt — which made the learning more memorable and impactful. Several students reflected that they had caught themselves making biased judgments during the film, and this realization made the debrief even more meaningful.