DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION
IN RECRUITMENT, HIRING & RETENTION EFFORTS

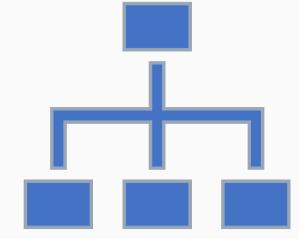*GUIDELINES FOR BEST PRACTICES*

Claremont Graduate University

Background

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to hiring managers seeking to diversify their staff by applying an inclusion and equity lens.

As the U.S. becomes more diverse and as our student population continually changes in racial and ethnic demographics as well as LGBTQIA+ demographics, it is imperative now more than ever that units build a coalition of professionals that can understand how to work with, support, and galvanize action amongst all diverse communities.

Recruitment

A job description outlines the responsibilities of the position and desired skills, experience, and abilities to complete a job effectively, *AND* it also communicates the values of your organization. It is worthwhile and strategic to first evaluate how any position being recruited for can advance the diversity, equity, and inclusion goals of an organization and how such expectations and responsibilities can be integrated into the job description. It is the responsibility of the leadership team in each unit to ensure that the job description mirrors our divisional and departmental values of DEI.

If the position will work with racially, ethnically, socioeconomically, LGBTQIA+, and gender diverse communities, consider adding language like the following:

- Experience working directly with people from diverse racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, LGBTQIA+, and gender backgrounds.

- Ability to flex communication style to multiple cultural environments and multiple social identities

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, and ability to present to diverse audiences racially, ethnically, socioeconomically, LGBTQIA+, and gender diverse communities.

If a position will be focused on policy, consider the following language:

- Experience incorporating the perspectives of multiple communities, including [communities of color], in the consideration of impacts and outcomes of a decision-making process.

- An understanding of the concepts of institutional and structural racism and bias and their impact on underserved and underrepresented communities.
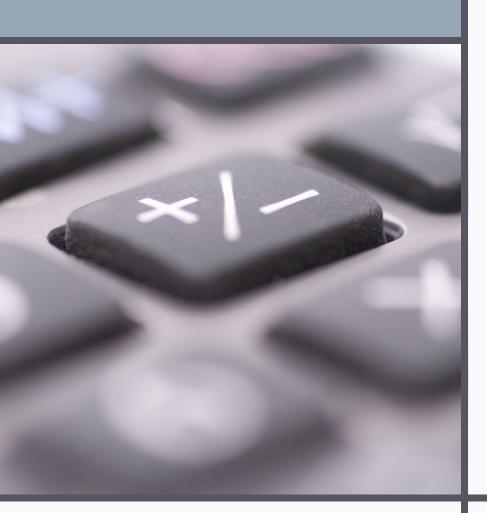
Highly technical or specialized positions should consider how the position could be structured to support equity goals:

1

Experience considering the impacts of the work on multiple communities, including communities of color, in technical analysis.

2

Experience working on a diverse team

3

Experience working with different communication styles

Avoiding Bias

Another important strategy is to evaluate the job description for socioeconomic bias. Requirements related to educational background, particularly advanced degrees such as a Bachelor or Master's degree, could be biased against individuals who have relevant professional experience but could not afford a college education. Hiring managers and supervisors can utilize HR's equivalency of degrees in years of experience in all of the job postings (2:1 Ratio – Associate's Degree = 4 years of experience, Bachelor's Degree = 8 years of experience, Master's Degree = 12 years of experience).

Bias Checklist

Do the minimum qualifications include experiences that can be learned on the job?

When evaluating education and experience, other accreditation or training should be taken into consideration.

Does the language incorporate communication and management styles that are culturally and gender?

Recruitment & Outreach

Focused recruitment and outreach directed towards communities of color can be a highly effective mechanism for increasing the number of qualified applicants of color and balancing the impact of traditional forms of outreach. Such dynamics should also be considered with social media accounts and sending the announcement to schools and other large institutions that may be predominantly white.

Each of the following ways to reach a more diverse applicant base need to be considered based on its ability to reach candidates with the specific experience and background relevant to the position and job functions.

- Community newspapers, news websites run by communities of color

- Multicultural centers or cultural studies departments at local colleges and universities. Ideally a relationship would exist prior to sending the job postings.

- Job boards, websites, social media accounts and in-person job or community events hosted by organizations that serve communities of color.

- Professional associations (i.e., the National Forum for Black Public Administrators), affinity groups within professional associations (i.e., Latinos and Planning Division), networks of professionals of color (APIDAs in Higher Education, Black Student Affairs Professionals, Queer Trans People of Color in Higher Education, etc.).

HIRING

Briefing Session – For resume reviewers/search committee and interview panels, spend time to explain your goals for the position and how that ties to the DEI work and goals of the unit/department/division as part of the criteria for consideration.

Bias Test

Self-Assessment: Do I have bias?

A great resource to learn more about your biases and take action is going to Harvard's Implicit Association Test web page. This 10-minute self-assessment test can be included as a pre-interview preparation for your search committee. This can give committee members insight into their potential unconscious bias.

HIRING

Resume Reviewers/Search Committee and Interview Panel Composition – Aim to have diversity on your search committee and interview panels and have a balanced representation of racial and gender diversity at each interview stage. Seek out search committee participants from the communities that you partner with or that will be involved in the work the position is performing.

HIRING

Bias Education – Require all search committee members to participate in bias education. This can be as simple as having them review content to make them aware of what bias is and strategies for addressing bias in an interview process.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
THE QUESTIONS ASKED IN AN INTERVIEW ARE ANOTHER WAY TO IDENTIFY A CANDIDATE'S SKILLS AND ABILITIES RELATED TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION SKILL SETS AND COMPETENCIES. BELOW ARE EXAMPLE QUESTIONS THAT COULD BE INCLUDED IN AN INTERVIEW. EACH INTERVIEW SHOULD HAVE AT LEAST ONE DEI QUESTION FOR THE CANDIDATE TO ANSWER.
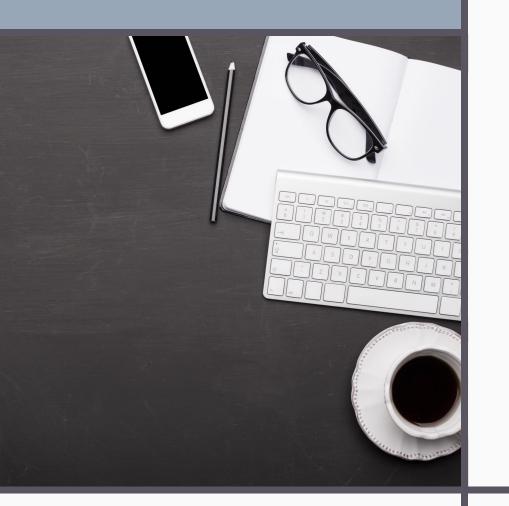
Questions to ask

How do you see yourself contributing to our work on advancing diversity, equity and inclusion? (Listen to see if the candidate has past experiences that will add to or enhance the department's efforts.)

Please describe a situation in which you worked on a project with people who were from backgrounds other than your own. What was challenging for you in this work? What did you do to make your work together successful? (Listen to see if the candidate has reflected on the opportunities and challenges of creating inclusive workplace cultures.)

Over half of our bias incidents are related to race, ethnicity, color, and/or national origin. Please provide examples of ways in which you have worked to eliminate institutional racism in previous jobs. (Listen to see if the candidate has a clear understanding of institutionalized racism and has relevant experience combating institutionalized racism.)

Onboarding

Once your candidate has been hired to a position, it's important to first onboard them with appropriate training to be successful for the job. University and division wide systems often work well for permanent employees, but temporary employees and interns may miss important information in terms of regular onboarding if they are hired differently than other CGU staff. It should go without saying, but ensuring they have access to a computer, a usable workstation, are oriented to equipment, the office, the mission vision and values of CGU and key constituents and key people is essential to a good start. A concerted effort to welcome a new employee to the team, and hosting opportunities for members to get to know one another will accelerate relationship building.

Support Strategies

Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) employees in predominantly white organizations can face a great deal of social isolation and bias within the workplace as our divisional bias incidents have shown in the past 5 years. It is important to be cognizant of the unique strengths that each BIPOC employee brings with them, the challenges they may face in the workplace, and methods to support them.

Build Trust

Be open to learning about your employee and their perspective and worldview on various societal concerns issues. Be willing to engage in uncomfortable topics, which may include race. Be willing to receive feedback and also provide clear feedback on performance. Employ identity-conscious supervision and management practices that are rooted in our values of diversity, equity and inclusion.

Identify Interests

Know what the employee wants to learn and be exposed to. For interns, develop goals that are both work oriented and experience oriented for their short term of employment.

Mentors

– Identify individuals that can serve as formal or informal mentors to help navigate problems, but also provide assistance in thinking about how to develop professionally. Mentors can be identified through project work, cultural background, or experiences.

Avoid this practice

Avoid putting the employee of color in the position to be the sole educator on race. Create an environment that normalizes learning about institutional bias and racism, including self-reflection about one's relationship to these systems.

Focus on Self-Care

Normalize self-care especially when a traumatic event has happened or when there is a triggering environment. For example, racially motivated incidents are on the rise across the country and impact BIPOC differently than white people. Events, even if they are not local, can be very personal because of long-standing racial trauma. Triggering events can also come in the form of microaggressions. Acknowledging what has happened and creating space for staff to process collectively or individually as they need to will help them to be more present and focused in the long-run.

Provide a Culture of Learning & Accountability

A management style that hovers or micromanages an employee's work prevents staff from gaining confidence in their work product or feeling like they are trusted. Allow the employee to push themselves and focus on what can be learned if a mistake is made and hold them accountable to remedy the mistake.

Check-In Regularly

Make sure that you are connecting with your employees about the experience they are having in the workplace. Ask your employees if they feel they have what they need to be successful and whole in both their personal and professional identities; understand their multiple identities and how those identities influence their ways of knowing, being and doing in the workplace.

Support Professional Development

Support the employee to seek out and participate in opportunities for training and professional growth.

Stay Interviews

Exit interviews occur when an employee has already decided they are ready to end their employment. Stay interviews are a strategy to identify ways to keep a valued employee from leaving. These types of meetings can happen regularly in check-ins, during performance evaluations, or at some other frequent interval. This is a valuable opportunity for a manager to get direct and useful feedback on how to support their employee in the way the employee needs support.

Sample Questions

What kind of work culture do you work best in? What ideas do you have to create that kind of work culture here?

What gets in the way of you being as successful as you want to be? What support do you need to get there?

Do you feel connected to your team members? If not, what has been challenging for you? If so, are there things that we should be doing more of?

Where do you see yourself growing professionally? Do you see yourself here long-term?

CONCLUSION

Good management practice is also an active mechanism for advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion. The resources listed above are relevant to all employees, regardless of race and can improve talent retention and performance. However, bias, institutional racism and other forms of oppression will affect BIPOC employees differently than white employees and may even affect each BIPOC employee in the workplace in a different way. So, it is important that any hiring manager who has staff of a different race and ethnicity continue to advance their own learning on the ideologies of whiteness and white supremacy, cultural and racial competencies, systems of privilege and power and various interlocking systems of oppression. This ongoing education is a lifelong process and will support effective management of high-performing teams and individuals.

Reference

Adapted from: Williams-Rajee, D. (2018, October 4). Urban Sustainability Directors Network. Retrieved from https://www.usdn.org/products-equity.html AND Roeling, M.V., & Granberry Russell, P. (Eds.) (2012). Faculty search toolkit: A resource for search committees and administrators at Michigan State University (NSF ADVANCE GRANT #0811205). East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University.