



Attracting Diverse Talent

Recommendations for Inclusive Recruitment

The Importance of a Diverse Workforce

Promoting and delivering equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in the workplace is an essential aspect of good people management, and there are numerous benefits to be gained from doing so. In a working environment where people feel safe and a sense of belonging, they are empowered to perform and achieve their full potential. A diverse workforce means a broader range of skills, ideas and perspectives, making way for increased productivity and an edge over the competition.

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Review of Job Descriptions

A clear and concise job description is an important part of any recruitment process. It provides a precise definition of the skillset required to successfully perform the role. This allows candidates to review the information and decide whether they are aligned to the requirements and if they would like to apply for the role.

- Review language in the Job Description to ensure it is clear, plain English, personable and engaging.
- Ensure it is outcomes / impact focused rather than a list of tasks – does the candidate have space to put their own stamp on how things are done?
- Check for coded language such as language that might speak to a one gender or put off people of different ages e.g. remove language that specifies a specific length of experience (remember you want to focus on the impact you are looking for this candidate to make).
- Check the qualifications that are needed – are they reasonable? Are alternatives considered?
- Check for any jargon, acronyms and remove or expand.
- Would someone from another sector or organisation understand what this Job Description is saying?
- Preferably use Arial or Calibri font as it's easier for people to read and process the information (It can also support people with Dyslexia to process the information more easily).

Develop Advert and Recruitment Pack

Advertising is often the first interaction a candidate will have with an organisation. This is where you can make an impactful first impression and ensure that your brand is attractive to a diverse pool of candidates. Creating a role specific recruitment pack is a positive way to engage with candidates and showcase the organisation, providing insight into its culture, team and the job role.

- Use personable and engaging language – promoting the “employer brand” – who you are, your organisational culture and values
- Actively promote what the organisation is doing around EDI – link to strategy / webpages / positive stories
- Make a clear authentic statement around why organisation would like to attract diverse talent that is not tokenistic (consider how candidates from different backgrounds would receive it when reading the statement – would it attract you to apply if you were from that group?).
- What is in it for the candidate? – make this clear!
- Clearly communicate the benefits / Employee Value Proposition (EVP):
 - » What are the family friendly policies in place?
 - » What development opportunities will they have?
 - » What is work-life balance like at your organisation?
 - » What flexible-working opportunities do you offer?
 - » Are there any other benefits beyond remuneration?
- Be transparent around remuneration / relocation costs covered.
- Consider if the role is eligible for visa sponsorship and promote this (please note – double check you are eligible to do this and what is required before advertising this as an option)
- Actively consider and promote if the role is flexible / hybrid / can be undertaken remotely. Ask yourself – why couldn't it work?
- Offer opportunities for job share if possible – again ask yourself – why couldn't it work?
- Consider needs of disabled and neurodivergent applicants – how will they be supported through the interview process and beyond? Are you asking people if they need any adjustments or support at interview?
- Ask for CVs and cover letters rather than asking applicants to fill in an application form asking for the same information, if possible.
- Offer an informal conversation to understand more about the role with a named contact.
- Marketing – what imagery are we using to promote this role? Make sure images involving people are representative of different communities and backgrounds where possible. There are organisations who can support you with this if you don't currently have this type of imagery.
- Preferably use Arial or Calibri font.

Promoting the Role

There are a huge variety of ways in which you can promote a role and it is a good idea to utilise these to ensure you get as wide a reach as possible. Consider where you want to focus and make sure that the role is visible in these locations.

Promote the role on:

- Your website
- Your LinkedIn company page (you could also sponsor a post to get more views)
- Any other social media accounts your company have
- In your newsletter, if you have one
- Ask your team and any colleague networks / employee reference groups to share it with their networks
- Share with external EDI or community networks
- Consider using dedicated Diversity job boards (note – there are costs associated). Think about who you want to attract and decide if this route might support your aim.

Some recommended job boards are listed below:

[Diversity Jobsite](#)

[Diversity.co.uk](#)

[DiverseJobsMatter](#)

[DiversityLink](#)

Period where Job Ad is Live

Tracking where candidates view your advert will give you a good indication of where you are successfully attracting candidates and allow you to utilise this information for future recruitment campaigns.

- Keep track of where candidates are coming from.
- Actively speak to as many candidates as you can – take a warm, encouraging approach.
- Use the above approach to help inform a longlist of candidates.
- Consider looking further afield for talent. The best talent is out there! People may be open to relocating or working remotely.

Screening Calls

The initial screening call can have a big impact on a candidates decision to progress with an application so it is important to give a great first impression.

- Take a warm, encouraging approach when speaking to any potential candidates.
- Identify core questions which centre on values, transforming culture, bringing something new to the table (as well as considering the aim to attract diverse talent).
- Explore who might be the right person to conduct these informal interviews / screening calls (consider their own identity and approach) and how this will be received by candidates.
- Keep candidates interested and engaged, with regular check-in and good ongoing communication.

Shortlisting

Shortlisting is an extremely important part of the process. Use the same criteria for all candidates and where possible have more than person as part of the decision process to allow objectivity.

- Shortlist against established criteria and aims for the role.
- Consider personal bias in the selection process – are you being objective? are you making any assumptions?
- Who is doing the shortlisting? Are you shortlisting separately?

Formal Interviews

The interview panel is an opportunity to showcase the diversity and inclusive culture of an organisation. Having a diverse panel helps to avoid hiring on shared biases or “group think”.

- Ensure a diverse interview panel where possible – especially visible diversity (e.g. gender and ethnic diversity where possible).
- If that is not possible, consider bringing an independent panel member (someone from a different part of the organisation) of any background or identity to bring a different perspective into the room and challenge your teams’ norms and culture.
- Ensure all panel members have a voice in the decision-making process (i.e. no tokenistic panel membership – everyone’s views are respected and the role of every panel member is made clear from the start).
- For more senior roles consider hosting a “meet the stakeholders” session – choose a diverse stakeholder panel and with senior colleagues where possible.
- Have clear, objective, values-centred interview questions that allow candidates to demonstrate personal impact.
- Avoid asking long questions with several parts that a candidate is being asked to answer (candidates can lose track of each sub-question or forget what was asked – and not perform their best as a result).

- Consider having an open conversation as a panel before the interviews about bias – make it clear that you are actively trying to work to mitigate unconscious bias (even saying this out loud to a panel has been proven to have an impact).
- Actively check if candidates have any access requirements to support them at interview (disabled and neurodivergent candidates may need adjustments).
- Give clear prompt feedback to all candidates – ensure they leave the process (if not offered the role) with a good experience of their interaction with your organisation.
- Remember word of mouth is still very important in how people perceive your organisation and it has an impact on your employer brand. This is particularly impacts how people from diverse communities are attracted to apply to work for your organisation in the future.
- Consider asking all applicants for feedback about their experience with engaging with your organisation and your recruitment process. Even if you don't get a response, the feedback you get from people who didn't get offered a role might be very helpful in how you approach recruitment in the future, and this shows them that their opinion matters to you.

General Recommendations

- It's best to take a holistic approach to EDI –where does this recruitment exercise fit within the bigger picture around EDI? Ensure that initiatives are not undertaken in isolation but form part of a wider strategy to attract and retain diverse talent.
- Ensure the wider work to create a more inclusive culture is underway to support retention and that people who are recruited are able to thrive and have a good ongoing employee experience.
- Utilise staff diversity networks / employee reference groups in developing your approach to EDI and help you by sharing job roles with their external networks and support candidate referrals (consider any bias in the process – and ensure this is mitigated through robust interview processes).
- Consider other ways to promote your company values and EVP on job pages using different media – e.g. through a video - “What it's like to work here”.
- Consider using diverse and representative imagery and stakeholder involvement in any initiatives such as the above.
- Utilise social media in creative ways – focus on attracting younger communities. You may recruit a much more diverse talent pool more broadly as a result. Younger generations also can have a greater awareness and understanding of diversity and potential to bring fresh ideas and energy to your organisation.
- Develop a clear authentic statement around EDI that you can consistently use. Celebrate your achievements and where you want to go to next. Use this in all adverts, job pages, and in the narrative of how you talk to candidates / external contacts about who you are.
- Promote your EDI statement as a link in your email signatures and keep a consistency of communication around EDI. There is no such thing as too much communication!

If you'd like to take your EDI strategy to the next level but aren't sure where to begin, get in touch with us for an informal chat about the services we offer.

We will work with you to bring EDI to the heart of your business.

team.admin@hunteradams.co.uk | +44(0)1224 900 760

Aberdeen

32 Carden Place
Aberdeen
Scotland
AB10 1UP

t: +44(0)1224 900 760

Edinburgh

19/1 Manor Place
Edinburgh
Scotland
EH3 7DX

t: +44(0)131 285 0420

Manchester

5th & 6th Floors
51 Lever Street
Manchester
Greater Manchester
M1 1FN

t: +44(0)161 297 0001

London

The Gridiron Building
1 Pancras Square
London
N1C 4AG

t: +44(0)203 714 4930