

## **HIRING TOOLKIT**

Inclusivity and equity require addressing both institutional and individual biases. This toolkit is a starting point to mitigate gender, racial, and other hidden biases in your institutional hiring process. This toolkit does not address how to minimize individual bias. For resources on individual bias, please visit our website.

### **The Big Picture**

- ☐ **Establish goals:** Institute recruitment targets for hiring across identities.
- ☐ **Institute accountability:** Create institutional processes that hold managers accountable for fair and inclusive hiring practices.
- ☐ **Recruit intentionally:** Post the call for applications on a variety of job sites. (see Appendix for suggestions).

### **Marketing<sup>1</sup>**

- ☐ **Do prospective candidates see themselves reflected in your materials, such as your website and printed marketing materials?** Aspirational advertising is not misrepresentational as long as your materials authentically represent who you reasonably aspire to be, and you are putting money where your mouth is to expand recruiting efforts and cultivate an inclusive culture.
- ☐ **Do your materials represent other identities that your candidates may have, including age, sexual orientation, gender expression, and disability?** Women and people of color walk through the world at an intersection of multiple identities, some more salient than others. Not essentializing people by a single identity is key to creating a visually inclusive marketing message.

### **Job Descriptions** (see Appendix for an example)

- ☐ **Only the bare necessities:** Job descriptions should be succinct. Potential applicants can be dissuaded from applying if they feel they do not meet all qualifications. For example, one study shows men apply for jobs when they can check off 6 out of 10 boxes on the list of qualifications; women only apply when they can check off all 10.<sup>2</sup> Take out anything that is not required of the candidate. In particular:

---

<sup>1</sup> Some of these tips are adaptive, and not technical, meaning that they require introspection and deep work of culture change. Merely diversifying your image will be ineffective without adaptive work. For assistance on how you can complement these technical fixes with adaptive work, contact us for a consultation.

<sup>2</sup> Tara Sophia Mohr, *Why Women Don't Apply for Jobs Unless They're 100% Qualified*, (Harvard Business Review Aug. 25, 2014).

- Do not require English language skills (which can be illegal unless necessary to the safe performance of a job).
  - Ditch all “preferred” qualifications, including specific degrees, prior outdoor or nonprofit experience, or that the candidate be a prior participant in your program. These can be raised in the interview.
- ☐ **Cast a wider net with “fair and balanced” wording:** Job descriptions language should be balanced language to make your organization attractive to everybody. Certain wording may signal to someone that they may not fit or belong in that job. For example, a study of 4,000 job descriptions found that that postings for jobs dominated by men had a high frequency of words such as *lead, head, direct, determined, and superior*, and postings for jobs dominated by women had a balance of these words and complementary words such as *collaborate, committed, responsive, and self-aware*.<sup>3</sup> Researchers also found women were more interested in jobs when the description had a balance of words (even when the job was male-dominated, like engineering).
- ☐ **The criteria should allow candidates to demonstrate important life experiences that may not show up on traditional résumés:** Job descriptions should encourage applicants to describe any pertinent experience, including professional and personal experience.

<sup>3</sup> Danielle Gaucher, Justin Friesen, & Aaron Kay, *Evidence that Gendered Wording in Job Advertisements Exists and Sustains Gender Inequality*, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Vol. 101, No. 1, pp. 109-128 (2011). The chart below provides some examples words that, when use din balance, can mitigate bias in job descriptions.

“MASCULINE” WORDS	“FEMININE” WORDS
Lead	Join
Head	Dedicated
Determined	Committed
Driven	Motivated
Ambitious	Inspired
Superior participant experiences	Responsive,
Competitive	Sympathetic
Assertive	Sensitive to participants’
Decisive	needs
Outspoken	Collaborative
Assertive	Cooperative
Independent	Honest
Direct	Understanding
Assist	Engaged
Analyze	Loyal
Determine	Support
Individualized	Review
Risk	Establish
Gamble	Community
Master	Connected
Acquire knowledge	Interpersonal
Aptitude	Experience
Self-confident	Understand
Intellect	Learn
Challenge	Ability
	Self-aware
	Acumen
	Opportunity



- ❑ **Describe skills desired, not characteristics:** For example, the ability to take initiative and produce results is a skill, but “action-oriented, results-driven” describes character.
- ❑ **Don’t require candidates to be available evenings and weekends unless absolutely necessary:** Adding this to your job description may needlessly eliminate qualified candidates who are caregivers of others or may have other life priorities.
- ❑ **Include criteria such as “ability to work on diverse teams or with a diverse range of people”** If this is a position that is directly linked to carrying out diversity & inclusion efforts, be specific about the qualifications they need to carry out the specific work.
- ❑ **Add “salary negotiable:”** This two-word phrase has been proven to decrease the pay gap and mitigate biases against women and those from more collectivistic cultures that may not value assertive self-advocacy. For example, researchers posted two versions of job announcements in stereotypically masculine businesses (NASCAR, football, and basketball), with one version including the words “salary negotiable.” They found that women were less likely to negotiate their salaries without these words, and that ultimately this two-word phrase closed the negotiation gap and the pay gap between the male and female hires by 45%.<sup>4</sup>

### **Your Team**

- ❑ **Form a recruiting committee:** Ensuring more than one person makes hiring decisions, create a system of checks and balances that mitigates each individual’s biases and results in greater success in hiring the right candidates.
- ❑ **Ensure your team is diverse:** A diverse hiring team further mitigates individual team members’ biases and counterbalances inherent institutional biases that disadvantage women, people of color, and other underrepresented communities.

### **Screening résumés**

- ❑ **Screen résumés sans names, address, and even school—just look at experience:** Fold the résumé over or take a sharpie to the name, address, and education section for the first round of review to mitigate bias.
  - In a study of identical résumés—one with a man’s name and one with a woman’s—researchers found that 79% of male applicants vs. only 49% of female applicants name were deemed ‘worthy of hire’ and that the women deemed worthy of hire received \$4,000 less in compensation.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Andreas Leibbrandt, John A. List, *Do Women Avoid Salary Negotiations? Evidence from a Large Scale Natural Field Experiment*, National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper No. 18511 (Issued Nov. 2012).

<sup>5</sup> Corinne A. Moss-Racusin, et. al., *Science faculty’s subtle gender biases favor male students*, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the U.S.A., Vol. 109, No. 41 (Oct. 9, 2012).



- In another study, résumés with white-sounding names received 50% more calls for interviews than identical résumés with black-sounding names, and researches concluded the white-sounding name was equivalent to about 8 more years of experience.<sup>6</sup>
- **Check your maternal bias:** Membership in a PTA or taking time off to be a stay-at-home mother should not count against the candidate. In a study of identical résumés with one difference—“membership in the PTA”—researchers found that those listing this were 79% less likely to be hired, half as likely to be promoted, and offered an average of \$11,000 less in salary.<sup>7</sup>
- **Check your style bias:** If you want top talent, you need to recognize different résumés’ communication styles and the skill sets behind them. If you dismiss a candidate based on their résumé, be clear about what skills and experience the candidate lacks. For example, in an analysis of 1,100 résumés in the tech sector (which like the outdoor industry is traditionally dominated by men and masculine culture), researchers found that the women’s résumés were longer than the men’s, but that they included less precise bullet-by-bullet job descriptions than the men’s and instead had more high-level job descriptions with narratives interweaving their experience.<sup>8</sup> The women told stories; the men let the facts speak for themselves. Though both qualities are valuable, the tech industry is far more equipped to appreciate precise execution, which results in a résumé reading bias that overwhelmingly eliminates qualified female candidates.

## **The Interview**

- **Interview each person in the same space or via the same technology:** Each person being interviewed should be interviewed via the same medium. If a candidate is unable interview in person and is interviewed over video, then all other candidates should be interviewed over video.
- **Ensure your physical space is clean, bright, and not decorated like a “man cave.”** The power of subtle social signals is incredible. Even the way your physical space is designed can send signals of inclusion or exclusion. In a Stanford University study of undeclared majors, researchers found women were more likely to consider degrees in engineering and computer science when the room in which they were interviewed was clean and decorated in a gender neutral fashion (so, no Cheetos, beer cans, and circuit boards).<sup>9</sup> You too can pay homage to your organization’s gritty culture and humble roots

<sup>6</sup> Bertrand, M. & Mullainathan, S. (2004). *Are Emily and Greg more employable than Lakisha and Jamal? A field experiment on labor market discrimination*. The American Economic Review, 94(4), 991.

<sup>7</sup> Correll, S.J., Benard, S., & Paik, I. (2007). *Getting a job: is there a motherhood penalty?* American Journal of Sociology 112(5), 1297.

<sup>8</sup> Kieran Snyder, *The resume gap: Are different gender styles contributing to tech's dismal diversity?* (Fortune March 26, 2015).

<sup>9</sup> Google Ventures, *Unconscious Bias @ Work* (Sep. 24, 2014).



without a physical space that turns people off. This includes making sure the interviewee has access to a clean and well-stocked bathroom, decorating with neutral images or, if you have images of people, including a balance of people of multiple identities. Also remember that the impact of décor continues past the interview—to make your workplace truly inclusive you don't want your interview room to be the only welcoming space in your workplace.

- **Introduce the candidate to employees who may identify the way they do:** For example, ensure women candidates meet other women and people of color meet other people of color.
- **Use an interviewing rubric:** An interview rubric ensures that each candidate is asked the same questions and that their answers will be evaluated similarly. The rubric helps guide the interview so casual conversation and affinity bias are mitigated. It also allows the hiring committee to similarly assess each candidate to make a fair decision. This is probably the most challenging piece of mitigating hiring bias. Rubrics can feel robotic, contrived, and not conversational . . . which is exactly why they are necessary. Casual conversation is rife with opportunities for affinity bias, where interviewers latch on to commonalities between themselves and the candidate that may have nothing to do with the job but make the interviewer feel like the candidate would be a “great fit.” Maybe they went to the same school as you. Or maybe they're from the same town. A rubric ensures that you ask only those questions that are necessary, and that you have predetermined what constitutes a good, mediocre, and bad response to each question. Want to know what a rubric looks like? Google it.
- **Check your body language and your expectations for the candidates' body language:** Expecting candidates to shake your hand firmly, make eye contact, sit squarely to you, and speak in a loud, modulated, firm tone biases your interview in favor of white, American, male candidates. In many communities of color, eye contact is seen as an affront, sitting squarely is viewed as aggressive and not respectful, and handshakes are not a common practice.
- **Embrace multiple communication styles:** If you want to recruit a wider range of people, you need to embrace a wider range of communication styles than the dominant, which is direct, informal, and immediate. Depending on the candidate's culture, they may be more indirect or even use storytelling to make a point, they may be more formal than you're used to, and they may be more reflective. Provide the candidate with time to respond and ask clarifying questions if you do not understand their response.



## **APPENDIX**

---

Where to post jobs: Examples of social media and job sites built to attract specific demographics are the Forté Foundation job board, diversityjobs.com, diversity.com, hirediversity.com, womenforhire.com, oiwc.org, Indeed.com, Idealist.org, Malakye.com, Glassdoor.com, Outdoorindustryjobs.com, university outdoor clubs, Diversity networking forums on LinkedIn and Identity specific social networks such as the Environmental Professionals of Color Facebook page, grassroots outdoor groups (Black Girls Ride, Outdoor Afro, Latino Outdoors, GirlTrek), career fairs at diverse colleges and universities, and bloggers from nontraditional demographics (mom bloggers, bloggers of color such as Glenn Nelson of Trailposse.com)

