

DECEMBER 2020

**BEST PRACTICES FOR
INCLUSIVE HIRING:
HIRING MANAGER
EDITION**

Report by:

Office of Institutional Equity and Access
Division of Diversity & Inclusion
Division of Affirmative Action



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & GUIDE CONTENT

The **OIEA Division of Diversity and Inclusion** provided leadership and counsel in creating this guide.

This guide combines best practices drawn from search materials created by Harvard University, Columbia University, Johns Hopkins University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, North Carolina State University, Pennsylvania State University, Stanford University, The Ohio State University, Syracuse University, University of California (Berkeley and Irvine), University of Florida, University of Michigan, University of Minnesota, University of Virginia, University of Washington, University of Wisconsin–Madison, and Yale University.

Table of Contents:

- Introduction.....3
- Bias + Blind spots in Hiring.....4
- Create a Diverse and Inclusive Hiring Team.....5
- Employ A Diverse Slate Approach to Hiring.....7
- Screen Applicants using Evidence-Based Processes.....8
- Review Applications with An Eye for Inclusion.....10
- Create an Inclusive Interview Process.....11
- Evaluate the Search and Onboard Inclusively.....13
- Build your Diversity & Inclusion Skillset.....14
- Conclusion.....15
- Roadmap for Strategic Hiring.....16
- Appendix.....18



INTRODUCTION

Recent findings published by the Harvard Business Review suggest that [hiring talent remains the number one concern of CEOs](#). Accordingly, PwC's 2017 CEO survey reports that [chief executives view the unavailability of talent and skills as the biggest threat to their business](#). But more than a business threat, recruiting and hiring is a costly endeavor. A study by the Society for Human Resource Management estimates that organizations spend [an average of \\$4,129 per job](#) in the United States.

By far, people are the single largest investment any organization will make into its future.

Due to the key role hiring managers play at UT Southwestern, hiring managers must be intentional in how they approach the recruitment and hiring process, paying special attention to any unconscious biases that may eliminate an otherwise qualified candidate.

We provide tangible and actionable strategies to aid hiring managers in their quest of hiring the best talent to further UT Southwestern's mission.

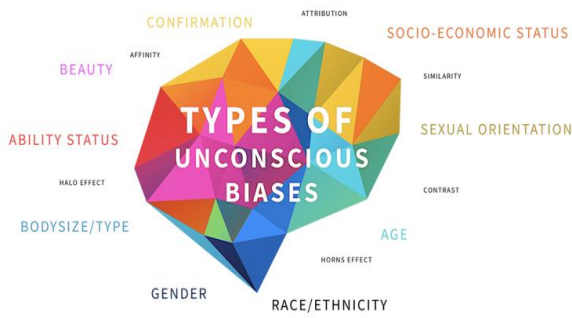


It's important to note that the contents of this guide do not suggest hiring managers implement a quota system, or incentivize review of demographic information without reference to qualifications. Under all sets of circumstances, only qualified applicants can be considered. UTSW's goal of hiring the best applicant for the job does not change by implementing the strategies suggested in this guide; rather, it creates a more diverse and robust applicant pool. Indeed, UTSW has an obligation to take affirmative action towards addressing placement goals by actively recruiting qualified, diverse candidates, not by making hiring decisions based on a candidate's demographic information.

Why should hiring managers invest in inclusive hiring practices? Because diversity works. Research has [shown](#) that diverse groups are better at decision-making, and a [report from McKinsey & Company shows that](#) organizations which rank high on gender, racial or ethnic diversity benefit financially. Additionally, there is an important [legal](#) and [moral case](#) for incorporating diversity, equity, and inclusion into our organizational framework. So, how do we get there? In this guide, we provide tangible and actionable strategies to aid hiring managers in their quest of hiring the best talent to further UTSW's mission of research, education, and patient care.

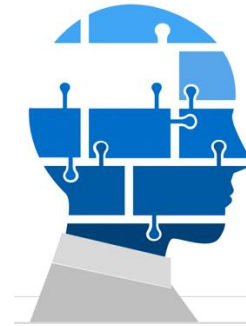
BIAS + BLINDSPOTS IN HIRING

Even though we know the business case for diversity, members of underrepresented communities continue to [be discriminated against in the hiring process](#). [Empirical evidence suggests that a variety of irrelevant factors](#) often play a critical role in recruitment and hiring. Indeed, studies have shown [that being attractive plays a role in the hiring process](#), [people who are overweight or obese find it more difficult to get a job](#), and employers are [less likely to hire a woman who wears a headscarf](#).



Source: Forshay 2018

Though we don't intentionally rely on stereotypes or prejudices to inform our hiring decisions, these implicit preferences often manifest as blind spots. Why? Research has shown that part of the reason [we have blind spots in recruiting and hiring](#) has to do with our [unconscious biases](#). [In essence](#), we all have blind spots that prohibit us from making objective decisions when evaluating candidates.



Unconscious bias is our brain's automatic tendency to take mental shortcuts based on cultural stereotypes to subconsciously and quickly process information. Even though we receive 11 million pieces of information each second, our brains can only consciously process 40. This is where our unconscious biases come in to play. Overtime, we tend to associate certain qualities with certain identities, and we rely on those shortcuts to translate how we think a prospective candidate will fare - given the qualities we associate their identities with.

It's often thought that admitting you have unconscious biases makes you a bad person. However, unconscious bias is not about being smart or a good person; everyone has it. Nonetheless, we can use strategies to manage our unconscious biases and make better decisions. The goal of this guide is to help hiring managers do just that.



Video: Blind spots – Challenge Assumptions
Click the image to play the video!

STRATEGY:

CREATE A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE HIRING TEAM

Research has shown that committees comprised of individuals with diverse perspectives make better decisions.

Hiring teams play a critical role in shaping UT Southwestern's staff—they are stewards of UT Southwestern's future. Because of this, hiring teams have the opportunity and the responsibility to seek out the most qualified candidates. In order to do this, the hiring manager must ensure the evaluation of these candidates is fair, equitable, and inclusive. Hiring teams with a strong commitment to inclusive hiring should encompass individuals from different backgrounds, identities, career stages, and areas of expertise.

Create a diverse hiring team

What does creating a diverse team look like? For many people, the first thought is to include adequate socio-demographic representation on the team. This can include a range of men, women, non-people of color, and underrepresented racial and ethnic minorities. Given research shows a diverse group is more likely to generate a strong applicant pool, ensuring the diversity of your team is key.

It's also important to note that diversity is more than just race and gender; consider the diversity of your hiring team in terms of generational composition, educational background, personality type, and seniority, among other traits.

Encourage Equity

One best practice is to encourage everyone to help ensure that the search is consistent with inclusive hiring practices and that the hiring team gives consideration to all candidates.

Although all members of the hiring committee should be trained on issues of diversity and inclusion, the hiring manager should make a concerted effort to advance equity as well.

1. Review the applicant pool and candidate interview list to ensure adequate representation of qualified candidates from all backgrounds.
2. Ensure that each candidate is asked about their demonstrated commitment to inclusion, and experience contributing to positive and inclusive work environments.

Evaluate power dynamics

The professional, mentoring, or personal relationships within the hiring team will affect the power dynamics of the group. To help ensure that candidate recommendations are a result of fair deliberations, and that all individuals have an opportunity to voice their thoughts, be mindful of how power dynamics may affect the group when assembling the hiring team. Imbalances of power among hiring committee members can silence some while allowing for others to control too much of the hiring process.

For example, more senior colleagues on the hiring committee may intimidate less senior colleagues - they may feel uncomfortable disagreeing with their senior colleagues who may have a say in their own promotions or advancement. If you perceive this type of dynamic may arise, ask the less senior colleagues if they have concerns outside of the hiring committee meetings. If they raise concerns, you as the hiring manager can serve as the “official source” of their alternative points of view during meetings.

Review past searches

One of the best ways to ensure an inclusive hiring process is to evaluate how previous searches went. Ask yourself and the hiring team these questions:



- What are some opportunities to include populations that are currently underrepresented in our department?
- What are some strategies we can implement to ensure fair assessment of all candidates?

Train the hiring team on biases

Just like any other professional development skill, hiring inclusively is a skill that needs to be developed and cultivated. To ensure everyone on your team is up to date with inclusive hiring practices, consider undergoing an inclusive hiring workshop and providing educational materials to committee members. See examples of such training on Skillssoft below:

1. [Conducting an Effective Hiring Interview](#)
2. [Applicant Screening: The First Step in Hiring the Best](#)
3. [Overcoming Unconscious Bias in the Workplace.](#)



STRATEGY: EMPLOY A DIVERSE SLATE APPROACH TO HIRING

According to a [study published in the Harvard Business Review](#), if there's only one woman in your candidate pool, there's little chance she'll be hired. Indeed, the researchers found that the likelihood a woman was hired was 79.14 times greater if there were at least two women in the finalist pool and the odds of hiring a racial and/or ethnic minority were 193.72 times greater if there were at least two minority candidates in the finalist pool.

So, what can we do? Employ a diverse slate approach to hiring. A diverse slate approach to hiring is setting the expectation that hiring managers will consider candidates from underrepresented backgrounds when interviewing for an open position.

When employing a diverse slate approach, hiring is based on merit with special care taken to ensure procedures are free from biases related to a candidate's age, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, and other personal characteristics that are unrelated to their job performance.



Video: Why So Few "Diversity Candidates" Are Hired

Click the image to play the video!

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FINALIST POOLS AND ACTUAL HIRING DECISIONS



193X

Studies show that the likelihood a woman was hired was **79X** greater if there were at least two women in the finalist pool

STRATEGY: SCREEN APPLICANTS USING EVIDENCE-BASED PROCESSES

Evidence-based selection is a process that leverages quantitative information about applicants to improve hiring decisions. It involves applying data-based processes to talent acquisition decisions. Essentially, leveraging evidence-based selection helps bring more objectivity and consistency to the hiring process, and helps hiring managers yield better results. So, what kind of evidence-based processes can hiring managers employ?

1. Employ a standardized rubric for evaluating interview responses.

- a. Please see an example candidate evaluation form template from [Talent Acquisition here](#).

2. Redesign the hiring process around competencies outlined in the job description.

- a. A personal competency is a combination of knowledge, skills, judgments and attributes. When screening applicants, it's important to evaluate whether the precise knowledge, judgments, skills, attributes and values outlined in the job description are reflected in the candidate's resume.

Strategies 1-2 can complement the values-based work already underway through the "eLevate the experience" initiative at UT Southwestern.

3. Eliminate talk about "culture fit" and focus on a candidate's "culture add"

Experts like Amplify Founder Lars Schmidt say the term "culture fit" has become

"a weaponized phrase that interviewers use as a blanket term to reject candidates that don't match the hiring manager's view of the ideal candidate; and as such, it has become the embodiment of [unconscious bias](#)."

Indeed, there are still many cases where job candidates are denied offers under the [guise of "cultural fit"](#) when the real issue is that their age, gender, ability, sexual orientation, race or other identity-based demographics do not align with what the recruiter believes will match the organizational culture.

However, hiring for culture add empowers hiring managers to build a balanced team in terms of skill sets and demographic identifiers.

4. Consider blind resume reviews

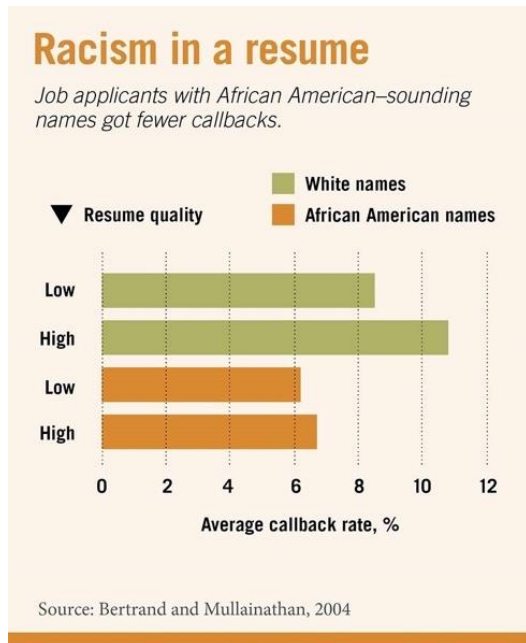
Remove the applicant's name (which can indicate sex and ethnicity) and graduation year (if years of experience is not applicable) from the resume and [choose instead to focus solely on skills and values](#).

- a. Create a goal for each position type using Affirmative Action Placement goals
- b. Pick what to redact (name, college, graduation year)
- c. Train the team on unconscious bias during screening
- d. Introduce blind screening in small steps to measure results and evaluate mistakes
- e. Measure results - are we achieving Affirmative Action placement goals 6 months from now as a result of blind resume reviews? Given there is an Affirmative Action placement goals midyear report, this would be an appropriate time to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy.

Eliminate talk about a "culture fit" and focus on a candidate's ability to be a "culture add."

Why is it important that we consider these strategies?

Data + Science: According to [a landmark study by the National Bureau of Economic Research](#), all else being equal, resumes with “white-sounding” names (the study suggests “Emily Walsh” and “Greg Baker”) got nearly 50 percent more callbacks than those with “black-sounding” names (the study suggests “Lakisha Washington” and “Jamal Jones”).



Evidence-based processes mitigate the likelihood that our unconscious bias and stereotypes will influence the hiring process.

Real World Application: [Mercy Health West Michigan](#) redesigned their hiring process around objective tests for specific skills and standardized their interview questions to assess pre-determined competencies. In doing so, they were able to [increase the percentage of non-white hires by more than 11%](#) and reduced time-to-fill for their roles by six days and first-year turnover by 6.6%.





Set aside a reasonable amount of time to review each application to ensure that each candidate receives a thorough assessment.

STRATEGY: REVIEW APPLICATIONS WITH AN EYE FOR INCLUSION

Once evaluation criteria are established, consider the following when reviewing applications:

- **Adhere to evaluation criteria.** When assessing applications, it is important to adhere to these evaluation criteria. Using a standard evaluation form will help committees to rate criteria consistently across a pool of candidates.
- **Look for strengths.** In the initial assessment of applicants, it will be helpful to search for reasons to continue considering individuals for the position. Such an approach will ensure that strengths are not overlooked and that all promising candidates are included.
- **Rely on evidence.** When determining whether or not a candidate meets certain criteria, refer to the materials in a candidate's application. Do not make assumptions.
- **Spend adequate time reviewing each application.** Set aside a reasonable amount of time to review each application to ensure that each candidate receives a thorough assessment. Apply criteria consistently to all applicants.
- **Avoid elitism.** Be careful of rating a candidate highly solely because of the reputation of their educational institution or previous company.
- **Avoid premature ranking.** Ensure that each application has been fully considered with respect to the different criteria that were agreed upon prior to expressing preferences for particular candidates.
- **Ensure Inclusive Remote Hiring.** Read [Talent Acquisition's tips and suggestions](#) on how to conduct remote interviews.



STRATEGY: CREATE AN INCLUSIVE INTERVIEW PROCESS

Part of moving the needle on inclusive hiring practices involves trying new and innovative practices, evaluating them, and leveraging those learnings and insights to continue to innovate. A well-planned interview process — including ramping up a well-trained interview team — takes time. Unfortunately, when we're strapped for time and trying to fill a role quickly, the thoughtful processes and practices we want to include can seem less important. This is where bias creeps in. One "bias protection" process we can include to mitigate the effects of our biases is to institute competency-based interviewing.

Consider Competency Based Interviewing

Competency based interviewing establishes pre-determined behavioral interview questions to ask all applicants. The questions are based on the concept that describes behaviors and actions which illustrate competencies. It is imperative when developing these questions that the hiring team relate the competency to the questions.

Competency based interviewing provides immense benefit to the interview process because it:

- Clarifies the verifiable, measurable results expected from a position
- Allows evaluation of an interviewee's mindset and how he/she/they would act again in similar circumstances
- Allows the applicant to describe his/her/their competence in critical areas
- Encourages the applicant to tell a story of an experience and gives interviewers opportunity to ask follow-up questions

Here we discuss two types of competency-based interviewing techniques, (a) behavioral and (b) situational.

Behavioral questions ask applicants to describe prior achievements and match those to what is required in the current job. For example, an interviewer may ask: "Can you tell me about a time when you faced a challenge during the research process?"

On the other hand, situational questions present applicants with a job-related hypothetical situation. For example, an interviewer may ask: "What would you do if you had conflict with a colleague? How would you navigate that process?"

To be most effective, interviewers should use a consistent set of questions for all applicants with criteria to assess quality of responses.

- Effective interviews use **70%** competency-based questions, **20%** open-ended questions, and **10%** general yes or no.
- Effective interviews are **70%** listening and **30%** talking.



Standardize and automate candidate evaluations

- Discuss, prior to interviewing candidates, how dimensions listed in the job ad will be weighted and valued.
- Ensure that each candidate is evaluated on all criteria listed in the job ad and identified as meaningful in the search.
- Hiring teams should establish evaluation and decision-making processes that ensure equity. Before starting to read files, the committee must develop an agreed-upon review process (e.g., who will read which files) and a set of criteria according to which all applicants will be evaluated.
- To ensure that each candidate is asked about his/her/their demonstrated commitment to diversity, and experience working in diverse environments, designate one person to lead asking these questions; this person should (preferably) not be the only woman or underrepresented minority committee member.
- Limit off-line conversations. An easy way to introduce bias into the interview process is by allowing off-line conversations between two or three of the hiring team members to affect the larger group discussions. As much as you can, limit discussion of candidates to the group meetings only.

Candidate Debriefs

Add structure to the discussion of candidate debriefs by centering the discussion on the specific attributes you were assessing for, and asking each interviewer to give their perspective on that attribute. Ensure every interviewer shares their perspectives, and has written and submitted their feedback ahead of the meeting. Be sure to have more senior people speak last to avoid anchoring effects, cognitive bias that describes the common human tendency to rely too heavily on the first piece of information offered (the “anchor”) when making decisions.

When evaluating candidates, it is important to make sure that the process is fair and gives due consideration to each candidate. It may be necessary to correct for unconscious tendencies by instituting certain protocols around reviewing applications.

1. Establish evaluation criteria. The dimensions for judging applicants, as well as their relative importance, should be determined prior to reviewing applications. Choose criteria that can help predict the future success of the applicant.
2. In each domain, consider both past accomplishments and future trajectory. Discuss how to weigh the various criteria. Stick to the established explicit criteria as much as possible to ensure an equitable review across candidates. Here is a [sample form](#) you can use from Talent Acquisition. Should you use additional forms to complement this work, consider examples from the [Harvard Business Review](#) and the [Society of Human Resources Management](#).

Interrupt Bias

Empower interviewers to spot and interrupt bias by using Bias Interrupters’ [Identifying Bias in Hiring Worksheet](#).



STRATEGY:

EVALUATE THE SEARCH & ONBOARD INCLUSIVELY

Just as important as finding talent is evaluating the search process and onboarding the new hire. According to previous research, employees who had a negative onboarding experience were twice as likely to look for other career opportunities in the future. With this in mind, let's be sure to be intentional about creating an inclusive onboarding process that retains our new talent, while evaluating our previous search to better recruit and hire for the next position.

Evaluate the Search

1. Did the committee use the best practices for hiring managers document?
2. What parts of the search process worked well?
3. What parts didn't work well? How could they be improved?
4. Was the applicant pool diverse? Did it include women and underrepresented minorities?
5. Could the job description have been constructed in a way that would have brought in a broader pool of candidates? Could the department have recruited more actively?
6. Were any promising candidates discovered during this search?
7. How did finalists perceive the recruitment process?
8. Who were the top 3 applicants, and did they come from a range of backgrounds?

Onboard Inclusively

Onboarding and new hire orientation are a critical moment in the talent life cycle. A few ways you can make your new team member feel welcome is by having them fill out a [personal user manual](#), meet with them daily during the first week, provide an [inclusive language guide](#) to help them understand office norms, and create a glossary of popular company acronyms and jargon to help them get situated.

You can also assign a buddy for their first 3 months. This is a person that's a more tenured teammate who can answer lower-priority questions. Also consider hosting virtual co-working sessions with the new hire so they can get acclimated to their new teammates.

Connect them with colleagues

Set up a series of meetings with departmental and non-departmental colleagues who will be key stakeholders in their work. Ensure they know who they will be meeting ahead of time and how their work will intersect.

Invest in Teambuilding

Each time a new employee joins the team, the hiring manager has an opportunity to change the team culture for the better. Leverage this time to re-evaluate existing norms, agree on expectations for communication and feedback, and adjust to the new team dynamics. To do this you can host an inclusive teambuilding workshop and encourage employees to engage with one another outside of work. By building a framework for inclusive teambuilding, you can make the new hire feel welcome and supported.



STRATEGY:

BUILD YOUR DIVERSITY & INCLUSION SKILLSET



Diversity and inclusion have gone beyond checking a box to evolving into an organizational imperative that – when executed correctly – has a direct effect on the institution’s bottom line. Now more than ever, it is critical that UT Southwestern ensures that each department is properly utilizing and embracing diversity and inclusion in their own way.

How can I help?

A couple of practical approaches to ensure all employees build their diversity & inclusion skillset, beyond the hiring process, include:

1. **Take a course in diversity and inclusion.** At UT Southwestern, we believe education and awareness are instrumental in developing a culture of inclusion. Diverse viewpoints lead to greater creativity, innovation, and productivity - it's imperative that we draw on everyone's strengths. Employees perform better when they feel valued, included, and a sense of belonging. Trainings in diversity and inclusion are a best practice to ensure all employees understand how they can foster and benefit from a diverse and inclusive workforce. We offer several opportunities for employees to enhance their Diversity and Inclusion toolkit by taking online trainings in Skillsoft.
2. **Asses your own biases and work to correct them** – Part of creating an inclusive community includes recognizing the ways we may be preventing it from occurring. Take Harvard’s [Implicit Association Test](#) to understand your biases and then review resources from [Harvard Business Review](#) and the [Society of Human Resource Management](#) to understand how to better manage them.

Why is it important that we consider these strategies?

Data + Science: Studies show that asking diversity training participants to set [specific, measurable, and challenging \(yet attainable\) goals](#) related to diversity in the workplace influences more pro-diversity behaviors over three months after the training. In addition, these measurable yet challenging goals have been shown to improve pro-diversity attitudes nine months after training.

Real World Application: At Pinterest, employees went through unconscious bias trainings, conducted an in-house study identifying the best practices of their most inclusive leaders, and created a playbook for their trainings which led them to [hit or exceed most of their diversity goals](#).

To build up your diversity and inclusion skillset review the resources below!

- We all have blind spots: <https://youtu.be/BFcjfqmVah8>
- Different types of biases: <https://youtu.be/Pn5qOgz8dqs>
- Overcoming stereotypes: https://youtu.be/6_ylevcJCPc
- Broaden perspectives: <https://youtu.be/HbBTM8bJt8Q>
- Decision-making traps: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k_ylpnvwdvM
- Unconscious Bias: Stereotypical Hiring Practices: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QCFb4BiDDcE&t>

CONCLUSION

Most hiring managers are doing a lot of things right when it comes to inclusive hiring; however, there is always room for growth. This guide explored several areas of improvement, which, if taken seriously, can be high potential for return on investment. These areas included:

- Creating a Diverse and Inclusive Hiring Team;
- Employing A Diverse Slate Approach to Hiring;
- Screening Applicants using Evidence-Based Processes;
- Reviewing Applications With An Eye for Inclusion;
- Creating An Inclusive Interview Process;
- Evaluating the Search and Onboarding Inclusively; and
- Building your Diversity and Inclusion Skillset.

Change management is the challenging work.



For each of these areas, the Division of Diversity & Inclusion, in partnership with Affirmative Action, have developed specific strategies to increase representation and inclusion at UT Southwestern.

To digest this all at once can be overwhelming, and we encourage you to lean on the roadmap (in the next section) we thoughtfully constructed in approaching these changes. The next step is doing the challenging work of change management. We look forward to partnering with hiring managers and Talent Acquisition to make the big and small changes that will add up to a more representative and inclusive organization.



ROADMAP FOR STRATEGIC HIRING

This section provides a roadmap of strategic recommendations to assist hiring managers in implementing inclusive recruiting and hiring processes.

Assessment & Tools for Implementation

Area of Focus	Strategy
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review past searches. One of the best ways to ensure an inclusive hiring process is to evaluate how previous searches went, and how diverse the applicant pool was.
Tools for Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reference the tools and strategies listed in this document, specifically the candidate evaluation template from Talent Acquisition here. Should you use additional forms to complement this work, consider examples from the Harvard Business Review and the Society of Human Resources Management. Review Talent Acquisition’s tips and suggestions on how to conduct remote interviews.

Building & Developing an Inclusive Team

Areas of Focus	Strategy
Building a Diverse and Inclusive Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a diverse hiring team. Ensure the hiring team includes a range of backgrounds. It’s also important to note that diversity is more than race and gender; consider the diversity of your hiring team in terms of generational composition, educational background, personality type, and seniority, among other traits.
Training & Skill-building	<p>Train the hiring team on biases. To ensure everyone on your team is up to date with inclusive hiring practices, consider asking team members to review Skillssoft trainings on conducting an effective hiring interview, applicant screening, and overcoming unconscious bias in the workplace.</p>

Ensure an Inclusive Reviewing & Interviewing Process

Area of Focus	Strategy
Review Applications with An Eye for Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Employ a standardized rubric for interview response evaluation.</i> • <i>Standardize interview questions to assess pre-determined competencies.</i> • <i>Consider blind resume reviews for the initial resume screenings.</i> • <i>Empower interviewers to spot and interrupt bias by using Bias Interrupters' Identifying Bias in Hiring Worksheet.</i>
Diverse Slate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Employ a diverse slate approach to hiring.</i>

Create a Culture of Inclusion

Area of Focus	Strategy
Candidate Debriefing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Add structure to the discussion of candidate debriefs by centering the discussion on the specific attributes you were assessing for, and asking each interviewer to give their perspective on that attribute.</i> • <i>Ensure every interviewer shares their perspectives (having written it down/submitted it before), have more senior people speak last to avoid anchoring effects, and discuss any areas of committee bias.</i>
Create A Culture of Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Eliminate talk about "culture fit" and focusing on talk about "culture add" or "community."</i> • <i>Create a culture of inclusion even by continuing education and skill-building even after the hiring process ends.</i>

APPENDIX A.1

STRATEGY:

EMPLOY INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE IN JOB DESCRIPTIONS



One of the first steps hiring managers can take to ensure a diverse pool of applicants is to guarantee that all job descriptions are free of exclusionary language. Indeed, exclusionary language has been shown to lower the likelihood that candidates from underrepresented backgrounds will apply. In this way, hiring managers should consistently evaluate job descriptions for inclusive language, leveraging the word bank and sample job descriptions presented later.

What is inclusive language in job descriptions?

Words Matter.

And they are especially important when we are using them to invite people from a variety of communities, identities, and backgrounds to apply. The *Guidelines for Inclusive Language*, published by the Linguistic Society of America (LSA), defines inclusive language as language that “acknowledges diversity, conveys respect to all people, is sensitive to differences, and promotes equal opportunities.” For example, many people advocate for using “people first language” such as “employee with a disability” instead of “the disabled employee.” Another example is saying “hey everyone” instead of “hey guys” when referring to a group of multiple gender identities.

Unfortunately, when writing and evaluating job descriptions, we often default to industry specific-jargon and gendered words. It takes a conscious effort to write job descriptions that are free of bias. Indeed, according to Dr. Michele Kerulis of Northwestern University, non-inclusive language “...is just rooted in our vocabulary. But

we need to be looking at neutrality, looking at providing language that is inviting to all people...”

How does exclusionary language affect the applicant pool?

Research has shown that [nearly 70% of job ads contain gender-biased wording](#), and gender-biased language (**words that favor one gender over another**) discourages job applicants. In fact, masculine worded job descriptions (competitive, dominant) significantly deter women from applying to jobs and feminine language (nurturing, collaborative) can deter men.

But beyond gendered language, jargon and idioms can also exclude people who may not have specialized knowledge of a particular subject, and impede effective communication with specific populations. Even more, many idioms don’t translate well from country to country, and some industry-specific language may deter applicants who are new to the field (ex: “looking for a jack of all trades in accounting”).

Why does this matter? Well, studies have found that on average, [women only apply to a job if they meet 100% of the qualifications](#), whereas men will apply if they meet 60% of the qualifications. It is imperative, then, that job descriptions only feature the desired skills and values. Avoiding words like [“rockstar” or “hunter mentality”](#) is critical, as this can signal to women and people of color that they may not fit

in. Indeed, even the word “leadership” can trigger gender and racial stereotypes, as well as feelings of exclusion for individuals with communal cultural backgrounds (e.g., Latinx, Asians, South Asians, etc.). For this reason, we recommend always including more inclusive versions such as “Collaborative Leadership” or “Shared Leadership” and more straightforward adjectives and titles such as “developed” or “sales representative.”

What does this look like in practice? In the example presented below, we highlight words in red which would be considered “masculine” and words in purple which would be considered “feminine.” Though subtle, the mere inclusion of these highlighted words can reduce the likelihood that some male identifying and female identifying applicants will apply.

OPHTHALMOLOGY FACULTY JOB DESCRIPTION

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
MIDEASTERN
MEDICAL CENTER

JOB TITLE: Ophthalmology Research Faculty Position

POSITION DESCRIPTION: The University of Texas Midwestern Medical Center, Department of Ophthalmology, is expanding our research faculty. Candidate will be expected to be **assertive and thrive in a competitive atmosphere**. The candidate will also be expected to be strong in all aspects of the pathobiology of retinal degeneration, (e.g., AMD), ocular surface diseases, corneal diseases, corneal cell biology, ocular immunology and inflammation, and ocular infectious disease. We are looking for a fully committed and motivated **self-starter** with exceptional leadership skills in clinical medicine. Faculty are expected to develop an **independent**, extramurally-funded research program and **collaborate** with clinical and basic research faculty across campus.

In the following example we illustrate ways in which departments can infuse inclusive language (in blue) that would encourage candidates from a variety of backgrounds to apply.

Studies show that on average, women only apply to a job if they meet 100% of the qualification, whereas men will apply if they meet 60% of the qualifications.



OPHTHALMOLOGY FACULTY JOB DESCRIPTION

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
MIDEASTERN
MEDICAL CENTER

JOB TITLE: Ophthalmology Research Faculty Position

POSITION DESCRIPTION: The University of Texas Midwestern Medical Center, Department of Ophthalmology, is expanding our research faculty. At UTME, our **impact** is vast - a new integrated health network with Texas Health Resources is expanding care options to more than 6 million Texans, and we have over 5,800+ protocols, 500 labs, and 1,000+ clinical trials currently underway. We are looking for an exceptional candidate who is motivated by high goals and has strong experience. The **area of specialization is open** and the **area of competence is open**. The Department is open to the possibility of **interdisciplinary appointments**. Faculty are expected to develop an extramurally-funded research program and partner with clinical and basic research faculty across campus.

In line with UTME's **institutional values** of excellence, innovation, teamwork, and compassion, the Ophthalmology department seeks candidates whose research, teaching, or service has prepared them to contribute to our **commitment to diversity and inclusion** in higher education, research, and patient care.

These examples illustrate how small, subtle changes in language can have a marked difference in how prospective applicants perceive their viability for the position, which can ultimately affect the diversity of our applicant pool.

Why should I invest in ensuring our job descriptions are inclusive?

Frequent use of masculine-themed words like “execute,” “drive,” and “tools,” and fixed mindset language like “ideal candidate” can deter qualified, underrepresented candidates. But why should hiring managers care about the diversity of our organization? Well, as stated by senior leadership, enhancing the diversity of our campus is an organizational imperative at UT Southwestern - helping us further our mission and goals.

Even more, research demonstrates that greater diversity enhances innovation, productivity, performance, and decision-making power. To this



a pro-diversity work climate is correlated with [lower turnover intentions among diverse employees](#) and employees reported higher levels of satisfaction at agencies in which they perceive have [\(1\) higher levels of organizational fairness](#) and [\(2\) where diversity is effectively managed](#).

Put simply, you should invest in writing inclusive job descriptions because it helps (a) further UTSW’s organizational mission and (b) enhances innovation, productivity, and greater satisfaction for all employees, including you.

How can I help?

1. Reference the below list of gendered words when evaluating your job descriptions. Be sure to avoid feminine or masculine language and use neutral language instead. For a more comprehensive list of feminine and masculine words, see A.2 in the Appendix.

Source: [LinkedIn Ultimate Recruiting Toolbox](#)

	
<p>Avoid male-bias words</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong • Competitive • Assertive • Ninja • Decisive • Leader • Self-reliant • Chairman 	<p>Instead, choose words like</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceptional • Motivated • Go-getter • Chairperson
<p>Avoid female-bias words</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerned • Nurturing • Polite • Sensitive • Honest • Loyal • Empathetic • Dependable 	<p>Instead, choose words like</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional • Courteous • Customer-oriented • Responsible • Quality

2. Use these sample guides from [LinkedIn](#) to help craft and evaluate job descriptions.



TEMPLATE 3
Account manager

Job Description
We're looking for an account manager to join our team to grow new product sales by enabling customer success and identifying upsell opportunities for our key accounts.

The ideal candidate will be able to appropriately identify the needs of both new and current customers in order to aid customers in their success using our product. This will be done by developing an appropriate level of communication with clients and internal team members to better understand and mitigate any issues the customer may face.

Responsibilities

- Work cross functionally within the company to communicate with all stakeholders to ensure customers' successes
- Create and maintain relationships with customers to better understand and achieve their needs
- Make visits to our customers to identify opportunities for growth within our platform
- Manage all reporting about the health of customers' accounts

Qualifications

- Previous account management experience
- Articulate and well accustomed to a client-facing role
- Willingness and ability to travel

TEMPLATE 4
Executive assistant

Job Description
We're searching for an executive assistant to provide administrative support to our senior-level executives. You will be responsible for professionally interacting with management within and outside of the company, comfortably communicating with customers, vendors, and visitors, and flawlessly handling confidential and critical details. In this role, it will be crucial for you to anticipate the needs of the executive team and work flexibly to accommodate schedules.

The ideal candidate will have experience supporting high-level executives. They should be well organized and be comfortable scheduling meetings and responding to emails on the executive's behalf. Lastly, this individual should be able to draft documents and help the executives with any necessary meeting preparations.

Responsibilities

- Managing calendars
- Aid executive in preparing for meetings
- Responding to emails and document requests on behalf of executives
- Draft slides, meeting notes, and documents for executives

Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience
- Proficient in Microsoft Office Suite
- Experience in managing multiple priorities, administrative coordination, and logistics
- Well-organized, detail-oriented, and able to multitask with great follow-up skills
- Strong written and verbal communication skills

TEMPLATE 9
Product manager

Job Description
Our product management team is responsible for defining and building the company's next-generation tools and products that will generate \$20M in 2018. Our product managers lead the company in building our core product vision and feature set.

The ideal candidate is an analytical, customer-focused team player who will own the entire product lifecycle from strategy to launch. This candidate will also work cross-functionally to complete product roadmaps and discover new opportunities.

Responsibilities

- Create business models and analyze competitive landscape
- Bring 1 – 2 new products to market on time and within budget
- Conduct extensive customer engagement and validation

Qualifications

- Strong written, verbal, and collaboration skills
- Bachelor's degree or 3+ years of experience in product management, engineering, or consulting

TEMPLATE 10
Marketing manager

Job Description
We're looking for a marketing manager to play a key role in the growth of our customer marketing programs. This marketing manager will focus on leading and facilitating the future of customer marketing by utilizing marketing automation, CRM, and other enterprise software solutions.

The ideal candidate will be responsible for creating and executing our marketing campaigns, evaluating our marketing performance metrics, and collaborating with internal teams. This candidate will have a strong marketing background with excellent communication and collaboration skills.

Responsibilities

- Define and execute the marketing and communication activities according to our marketing plan
- Coordinate all marketing activities to generate leads
- Collaborate with other teams to promote offerings
- Track performance of all marketing campaigns

Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience
- 3+ years' experience in marketing
- Ability to multitask
- Strong verbal, written, and organizational skills

TEMPLATE 1

Software engineer*

Job Description

As a software engineer, you will specialize in building performant frameworks that power the most popular products in the world. We are looking for someone that has a strong passion for developing infrastructures, and has experience with APIs, processing, and graphics.

The ideal candidate for this position will be a reliable and adept programmer who is eager to break down large technical problems and solve them systematically.

Responsibilities

- Analyze business needs and implementation approaches and deliver high-quality applications
- Work collaboratively with team members to complete projects on time
- Deliver successfully on all aspects of the product lifecycle

Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in Computer Science or Engineering or equivalent experience
- 1 – 3 years of professional Software development experience
- Ability to write clean, functional code in Java, C/C++, or Python

* This description reflects job title variations, including software engineer, senior software engineer, and software developer.

TEMPLATE 2

Project manager

Job Description

As a project manager, you will lead the launch of new projects by leveraging account management, production, and organizational expertise. You'll work hand in hand with producers, marketing, communications, legal, procurement, and external vendors.

The ideal candidate will be responsible for planning, coordinating, and implementing projects within budget, timeline, and scope. This candidate will also monitor and present project updates to relevant stakeholders, clients, or project team members.

Responsibilities

- Set project timelines
- Monitor project deliverables
- Update relevant stakeholders or team members on the project's progress
- Delegate tasks to project team members and mentor junior project managers

Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience
- Strong business acumen in project planning and management
- Strong verbal, written, and organizational skills



APPENDIX: A.2

A.2 Gendered Words in Job Descriptions

The following words have been identified by [researchers](#) as those that are gendered (i.e., masculine- and feminine-themed words associated with gender stereotypes). Consider avoiding the following words when crafting job descriptions.

Masculine words to avoid:

Aggress, assert, athlet, autonom, battle, boast, challeng, champion, compet, confident, defend, domina, dominant, driven, fearless, fight, force, greedy, head-strong, headstrong, hierarch, hostil, impulsive, independen, individual, intellect, opinion, outspoken, persist, principle, reckless, self-confiden, self-relian, self-sufficien, selfconfiden, selfrelian, selfsufficien, stubborn, superior, unreasonab,

Feminine words to avoid:

Affectionate, communal, compassion, emotiona, empath, feel, flatterable, gentle, kinship, loyal, modesty, nag, nurtur, pleasant, polite, quiet, respon, sensitiv, submissive, sympath, tender, trust, understand, warm, whin,



