

## Checklist

Everyone has a different perspective and lens, shaped by our experiences and cultural contexts in which we live. These differing experiences and perspectives impact our ability to review applications with an equitable and objective lens. We all have biases, many of them unconscious, which can detrimentally impact, when they continue unnoticed, the recruitment, retention and **development of our employees**.

**If possible, here are a few ways you can reduce bias in the hiring process:**

### **Make sure that you are aligned with the job description and selection criteria.**

- Job descriptions play a critical role in creating a diverse and inclusive workforce. Bias (unconsciously) often shows up in job announcements and job descriptions. For example, research shows that some words have connotation for specific groups/demographics of applicants.
- *Ensure your job description has a mix of both types of these words:*
  - **Male connotation:** determined, lead, challenging, superior, decisive
  - **Female connotation:** committed, connected, dependable, loyal, trust, and interpersonal.
- *Ensure your job descriptions and job applications are aligned with your internal organizational goals of equity and inclusion.*
  - Do you ask about multicultural competencies in the application/interview?
  - Do you include multicultural competencies in the knowledge or competencies required for the job?

### **Evaluate what aspects of the job are required versus just nice to have.**

- Is a degree required as part of the job or is a nice to have?
- Is prior experience required or is a skill *absolutely* necessary on the job? Can there be training done on the job?
- Does the job have to be done during certain hours or is their flexibility in the schedule?
- Do you utilize an equity approach when deciding benefits or training provided?

### **Become aware of your own biases.**

- When we are aware of our biases (both conscious and unconscious) and watch out for them, they are less likely to dictate our behavior and decisions.
  - Take fifteen minutes to watch these videos on [Immaculate Perception \(13:48\)](#) to get a foundation of how unconscious bias works and how it evolves into [recruitment bias](#) (5:26)
  - Feel free to watch a few of these shorter videos about bias from [UCLA](#) ( about 5 minutes each)
  - As shared in the first video, one way to become aware of your biases is by taking one of the Implicit Association Tests (IAT) developed by Harvard researchers. We recommend starting off with an [IAT focused on Race or Gender bias](#).

### **Spend equitable time evaluating each candidate.**

- Bias is more likely to impact candidates when application reviewers are distracted by other tasks and under time pressure. The impact of bias is reduced when more time is taken in reviewing applications.

### **Have a diverse interview panel.**

- When composing your interview panel consider the diversity of your panel. Racial diversity on an interview panel will help mitigate the impacts of unconscious bias and will show the company's commitment to a diverse workforce.
- If it's not possible to have racial diversity on your panel due to the makeup of your organization, then invite a community partner to participate in the panel.

### **Reduce the risk that your interview panel brings bias to the process by ensuring they have been trained about implicit bias.**

- Understanding the hiring criteria for the job (job description and knowledge, skills and competencies) for the before participating in the interviews can help mitigate for this.

- Include a training on implicit bias for the interview panel. Anticipate that racial bias will exist in hiring deliberations and decisions should cue the committee to prepare for this possibility by using an equity impact assessment or other bias mitigating tools.

### **Provide Content Ahead of Time**

- When an interview includes developing a work product onsite, provide content ahead of time so candidates who need more preparation time do not feel pressure to perform in a context they are unfamiliar with.

### **Vet Interview Questions**

- Vetting interview questions before you begin allows you to gain feedback about two things: Biases that might be embedded in the questions that the hiring committee was unable to identify and culture that might be embedded in the questions. Examples might be expecting a certain approach to conflict, or anticipating one wants to move up a ladder, or expecting a certain characteristic such as assertiveness to be evidence for some positions as well as looking for a word or phrase in an answer.
- Ask questions that can also be interpreted within a group context so that candidates who are not aligned with an individualistic orientation to work achievements can respond fully. For example, asking people to talk about strengths or take credit for personal successes may not be perceived as appropriate in some cultures that are more collectively oriented.

### **Use standardized metrics and behavior interview questions**

- Develop a standardized list of questions to be utilized in every interview.
- Establish an evaluation rubric in advance based on your selection criteria.
- Ask behavioral questions: Instead of asking, “Are you a hands-on manager?” Say, “Give an example of the last time that you demonstrated you were a hands-on manager. What was the situation? What did you do? And, if you were able to repeat that scenario, would you change anything in the way you handled the situation?”
- An equity interview question could be: “Can you talk about a time you navigated dynamics around race or other identities in your work? What did you do? What do you think were the root causes of those dynamics? What were some of your core challenges? What lessons did you learn?”
- “Our organization is working hard to become a more inclusive and equitable workplace. How would you contribute to this work?”

### **Provide time immediately after an interview to collectively evaluate a candidate with the interview panel.**

- Waiting between evaluation and the interview will provide space for increased bias to enter the process.

### **Make sure you are making your hiring decision on knowledge and competencies as opposed to “fit”.**

- Interviewers often use “fit” to express intangible vibes. These “vibes” reflect unconscious bias.
  - “Fit” should be excluded from the selection process. Instead focus on the specific needs of the job (knowledge, behavioral skills and competencies) and the knowledge, skills and competencies of the candidate. If someone on an interview panel suggests that the candidate is not the right “fit”, follow up with asking for examples to be expressed as knowledge, skills and competencies rather than just a feeling or “vibe
  - Ask yourself, “Does it matter whether you like the person you hire?” If you do care about likeability, give candidates a likeability score as you would on other skills during an interview. By giving likeability a score, you’re making this common misstep more controllable and can weight it much less highly than other more pertinent skills and knowledge.