

RECRUITMENT

In order to have a diverse, equitable and inclusive workforce, you need to attract a diverse group of employees. All parts of Minnesota are becoming more racially and ethnically diverse, so make sure you are reaching these communities in your area when recruiting for new employees.

A good place to start may be to assess your community, customer and employee demographics to see where they are aligned and where there are gaps. Then set goals for diversity recruiting to help fill the gaps. For example, you may have a large number of Spanish-speaking clients, but few Spanish-speaking employees. A goal around linguistic diversity could benefit customer service, marketing, and strategic planning.

Turn to your current employees as a key source of new employees

- Engage a diverse group of employees in creating an inclusive culture at your organization
- Share your recruitment goals with employee resource groups and ask their help in sourcing candidates
- Ensure your company leadership are engaging with diverse community groups and sharing the message that your organization encourages diverse candidates to apply

Make your organization known in your community (and beyond) as one committed to diversity, equity and inclusion

- Build relationships with community organizations so there is a sense of mutual trust
- Establish connections through mentoring, internships and other activities with diverse young people
- Determine how your organization's culture comes across to diverse candidates and work to change perceptions if needed
- Sponsor and/or take part in a diversity career fair
- Contact your local CareerForce location, which has relationships and resources you can leverage

Ensure you are being inclusive in what you are saying about job openings

This information is not intended to provide legal guidance. Please consult a human resources professional for additional information. However, these general tips for creating an effective and inclusive job posting can help attract the right candidates and broaden the reach of potential applicants.

- **Inclusive Language:** Use language that appeals to everyone.
 - Use gender neutral position titles and (i.e. firefighter vs. fireman) and avoid gender pronouns.
 - Use plain language, preferably at a reading level accessible to all candidates.
 - Avoid jargon and idioms, which can create unnecessary language barriers to nonnative English speakers or other groups.
- **Inclusive Qualifications:** List only the essential job functions and the knowledge, skills and ability that are actually necessary.
 - Reduce the number of preferred qualifications as it may keep some candidates from applying.
 - Review physical requirements such as "ability to lift 20 pounds" or "position requires standing, kneeling and lifting" and remove if those activities are not essential to the position.
- **Inclusive Commitment:** State your organization's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.
 - Include a statement about your company's commitment to be an equal opportunity employer committed to diversity, equity and inclusion in your posting.
 - Provide a contact name, email address and phone number for questions about the posting.

Cast a wide net to reach a diverse group of potential employees

Once you have created your inclusive job posting, it's time to reach potential candidates for that job opening. If you want to attract diverse, qualified candidates you will need to make sure you are promoting your open position in places where diverse audiences will find it.

- Participate in a hiring event with a diverse audience; for example, consider hiring events specifically for people of color—and make sure your organization has diverse representation at the hiring event
- Share your job posting on social media and make sure you reach a diverse network, through your own followers or by asking other organizations to share
- Place ads in Hmong, Somali, Spanish or other language in newspapers or on radio
- Hold job postings open until a robust level of diversity is represented in the candidate pool
- Consult with CareerForce for help in developing a plan to reach diverse candidates

Equitable Evaluation

You've received applications from a diverse range of candidates. Now you need to review the applications and resumes and identify candidates you want to bring in for an interview. Ensure that screeners and interviewers are comfortable with working with diverse applicants; a diverse screening or interview team can also help provide for a fair and welcoming process. During the initial screening process, ensure recruiters and hiring managers are looking for reasons *to hire a candidate*; and not to make the first cuts to a candidate pool by focusing on reasons not to hire a candidate. Make sure you are working to identify and eliminate unconscious bias in candidate screening and interviews. Consider cluster hiring as a way to support new employees from diverse backgrounds.⁷

Identify and strive to eliminate unconscious biases in candidate selection

Many hiring practices contain “unconscious bias” that have a negative impact, leading to passing over better qualified candidates in preference of candidates that fit a mold of who the person hiring thinks is right for the job. Often these biases are unconscious, and we have to work to identify them and work to avoid them impacting our decisions. Our brains are wired to help us process the volumes of information we take in daily and we use biases to help us sort and classify information to be more efficient, but often in misleading ways when it comes to hiring. Here are a few common unconscious biases that play a role in the hiring process – and how you can work to eliminate their impact in the hiring process, as well as in management of an inclusive workplace.

- **Affinity bias** – you share something in common with a candidate or employee that has nothing to do with their ability to do the job. You are of the same racial or ethnic background, went to the same school, grew up in the same town or enjoy the same hobbies. None of these indicate the person's ability to perform the job but may lead you to prefer them over other candidates or employees.
- **Confirmation bias** – you only look for information that confirms what you already believe. You have preconceptions about a candidate's potential performance at work based on their racial or ethnic background and you seek out information when evaluating the candidate to back up those preconceptions.
- **Halo bias** – a candidate or a current employee has one positive attribute that is so overwhelming that you don't objectively look at what might be their downfall or that precludes you fairly considering another candidate who is more evenly qualified for the position. This can be a disaster if you hire this person and they shine in one area but come up short in the majority of the skill requirements.
- **Horn bias** – this is the opposite of the halo bias, where one negative attribute a candidate or current employee has (or you perceive they have) is so overwhelming that you don't objectively look at positive skills that could make the applicant more evenly qualified for the position than other candidates. You may be losing out on a great employee.

Biases can be addressed in the hiring process in several ways. First, consider removing names during the initial resume or application review process. You can also review all of the skill requirements of the position and assign appropriate weight to each before you begin evaluating or interviewing, so that you consider candidates more objectively based on your organization's needs. Involve more than one person in the interviewing process to get different perspectives and have each interviewer rank their choices. Ask interviewers to summarize why they ranked candidates the way they did before sharing information with other interviewers, to avoid influence from others.

Making an offer

When you are ready to make an offer to the best candidate for the job, ensure you include information about your organization's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. Be clear about employee performance measurement, the expectations for employee growth and a path toward promotion and who they can talk with about onboarding and workplace processes and culture. Some key resources to share:

- Your organization's statement regarding commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion
- Your organization's diversity, equity and inclusion policies and resources (along with other general employee resources – this should be part of your employee “handbook” or online resources)
- Consider connecting all new hires with a mentor to help them onboard successfully and feel a part of your organization's workplace culture
- Whom the new hire should contact if he or she are feeling lost, unwelcome or otherwise disconnected in the workplace

⁷ <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/05/01/new-report-says-cluster-hiring-can-lead-increased-faculty-diversity> - focused on higher education, but useful insights for other employers, as well

MANAGING AN INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE

Many employers—from small and large companies —want to hire, keep and promote diverse employees. But many find that, while they can attract diverse candidates, it’s harder to keep them. Diversity efforts can get employees from many backgrounds in the door. Inclusive environments keep them there. It’s important for all employees to know their employer wants to them succeed at work. Employees need to know that there are clear career tracks and paths to promotion. And they need to know that their diverse perspectives and backgrounds are valued.

Implement Individual Employee Development Plans to show employees their path forward with your organization

Make sure a path for future growth at the organization is clear to *all* employees. Consider implementing Individual Employee Development Plans and providing one to each employee. In our fast-changing world, organizations need to keep their employees engaged or risk seeing great talent walk out the door. One of the best ways to increase employee loyalty and commitment is to Provide Individual Employee Development Plans. You’ll help employees identify advancement opportunities. You’ll show you care about their career path. You’ll go a long way toward building long-term loyalty. You can find out more about Individual Employee Development Plans at [CareerForceMN.com/employee-development-plans](https://www.careerforcemn.com/employee-development-plans)

Engage employees in an ongoing, structured way in fostering a diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace

There are multiple ways you can create structures to foster a diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace. Many organizations sponsor a diversity council or encourage employee resource groups to help ensure they prioritize making their workplaces more inclusive of people from diverse backgrounds. Their members are employees who advise leadership, offer valuable insights and data and engage in outreach to diverse communities. The goal is identifying and changing policies, practices and patterns that cause barriers to Black, Indigenous and People of Color.

One way is having leadership organize and put their support behind a diversity, equity and inclusion council. A diversity council should be made up of employees who reflect many aspects of diversity. Employees may volunteer to serve on the council, be appointed by leadership or be chosen by their peers. However, the council is formed, there should be a clear process defined before population of the council begins. The diversity council helps guide an organization’s implementation of their strategic plan for a diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace. Leadership, funding and executive presence is provided by the organization and critical for its success. Another term for such a group is a “coalition of advocates.”

An employee resource group is a group of employees who share an aspect of diversity in common and volunteer to serve as part of an advisory group. Together, they advise the organization on a particular diversity area. They also serve as a supportive career network. An employee resource group provides its own leadership; the organization may provide an executive sponsor and some funding. Another term for such a group is an “affinity group.”

An organization’s diversity and inclusion strategy may include both a Diversity Council and one or more Employee Resource Groups. If both are in place, clear communication of the charter and mission of each group is even more important. Here’s a quick overview of their respective characteristics.

	Diversity Council	Employee Resource Group
Participants	Appointed executives, representatives, or employee advocates	Diversity advocates, employees who volunteer to serve on the group, sometimes allies (supporters)
Mission	Help provide focus to an organization’s overall diversity and inclusion initiatives	Connects the organization to an aspect of diversity
Voice	Speaks with one voice and many voices to the organization	Reflects the affinity group to the organization and represents the organization to the community
Examples of Work Product	Strategic planning, input to management, education, communication	Career development support, staff education and outreach to diverse communities and customers