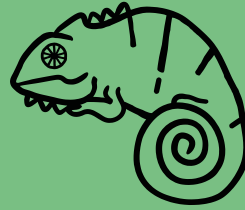


*Talented*



# A Guide To Inclusive Hiring Practices

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Whether the organisation you work for is already making strides towards improving diversity, equity and inclusion or it's not something on their agenda just yet, a good place to start is building a strong business case for investing in change.

Building a more diverse workforce leads to a variety of benefits that can positively impact delivery and, in turn, have a tangible impact on the bottom line. Making the first steps as a company to reach this point can be challenging but, more importantly, extremely rewarding.

To give you some guidance on how and why your company should make these changes, Evie-Rose Deighan, Client Lead, San Francisco, shares top-level hiring techniques on finding, attracting, and retaining diverse candidates.

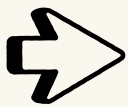
In her four years with Talentful, Evie has supported multiple businesses with talent acquisition, strategy and developing their recruitment functions to hire top quality talent. Her experience ranges from early-stage tech startups such as Attest and Gram Games to larger tech enterprises such as DeepMind and more recently, X, the moonshot factory. Throughout most of her projects, Evie has built diverse teams and embedded sustainable diversity and inclusion practices into talent acquisition strategies.

Drawing on her own experiences building diverse teams, Evie sheds light on how to make your hiring as accessible and inclusive as possible.



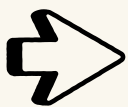
## Definitions: Diversity, Equity And Inclusion

Firstly, let's take a look at the definitions surrounding this topic. As leaders begin to plan new strategies and naturally have more difficult discussions regarding equity, diversity and inclusion, it is essential to understand the correct language to use in these dialogues.



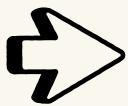
### Diversity

The full range of ways a person can identify, including race, ethnicity, gender or gender identity, age, religious affiliation and sexual orientation.



### Equity

An approach that enables everyone to have the same opportunities, ensuring that all people have the chance to grow, contribute and develop, regardless of their identity.



### Inclusion

When every person in the community is valued, respected, empowered, and feels a real sense of belonging. You can have a diverse team of talent, but that doesn't mean that everyone feels welcome or are valued.

## What Is Inclusive Hiring And Why Is It Important?

The term "inclusive hiring" covers more than just gender and race in recruitment. It means connecting with, interviewing and hiring a diverse set of individuals through understanding and valuing different backgrounds and opinions, ensuring fair and equal opportunities for all.

Adopting inclusive hiring practices that offer an equal opportunity to all applicants will help organisations build a team that resembles the real world and ultimately, will be more aligned with an increasingly diverse and global customer base.

## The Importance Of Diversity In The Workplace

A diverse team brings together different skills, personalities and perspectives, resulting in fresh ideas and smarter problem-solving. As a result, workplace diversity has the power to transform businesses, increase profits, drive more informed decisions and leads to an increase in innovative developments.

With more businesses embarking on diversity initiatives, it's vital to grasp what it means to be more inclusive, what D&I can bring to organisations and how to reap the benefits whilst being aware of the continuous challenges.

# Key Statistics Supporting Diversity

## 4x

Employees who say their company provides equal opportunities are nearly four times (3.8X) more likely to say they are proud to work for their company.

Salesforce, 2020, Understand The Importance Of Diversity And Inclusion At Work

## 70%

70% of job seekers say a company's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion is important when evaluating a potential employer.

The Manifest, 2020, How To Develop An Employer Branding Strategy

## 51%

51% of employers believe diversity helps introduce staff with unique skills into the workforce.

Robert Walters, 2017, Diversity And Inclusion In Recruitment

## 24%

24% of people are more interested to see their company host training and discussions to improve employee diversity.

Clutch, 2020, Diversity In The Workplace: New Data

## 4x

Employees who say they're able to be their authentic self at work are over four-times (4.4x) more likely to say they are empowered to perform their best work.

Salesforce, 2020, Understand The Importance Of Diversity And Inclusion At Work

## 36%

Companies who focus the most on racial and ethnic diversity are 36% more likely to have financial returns that are above average for their industry.

McKinsey & Company, 2020, Diversity Wins: How Inclusion Matters

# The Organisational Barriers To Inclusive Hiring

While workplace diversity and inclusion has a significant impact on employees and the bottom line, research suggests that some employers do not have the recruitment tools or the resources to implement effective inclusive initiatives. For other businesses, there can often be a lack of understanding or confusion over who is responsible for developing an inclusive brand and culture - Senior Management, HR teams or Marketing.

The data we have collected below presents common obstacles for many companies such as prioritisation, unconscious bias and ineffective hiring tools.

## 50%

Only around 50% of employers have concrete diversity programs in place.

Harver, 2020, 5 Proven Practices For More Inclusive Recruitment

## 81%

81% of employers recognise that unconscious bias can impact their hiring decisions.

Robert Walters, 2017, Diversity And Inclusion In Recruitment

## 45%

45% of employers believe their current recruitment tools are ineffective at helping diverse candidates find their company.

Robert Walters, 2017, Diversity And Inclusion In Recruitment

## 42%

42% of employers do not use any strategies to reduce unconscious bias when recruiting.

Robert Walters, 2017, Diversity And Inclusion In Recruitment

## 41%

In 2019, it was reported that 41% of managers are “too busy” to focus on diversity initiatives.

Builtin, 2019, The State Of Diversity In The Workplace In 2020

## 17%

Only 17% of workers across America support increased recruiting of underrepresented racial and ethnic groups.

Clutch, 2020, Diversity In The Workplace: New Data

# Breaking The Cycle Of Exclusion

With an understanding of the benefits and some of the challenges of inclusive hiring, what can be done to break the cycle of exclusion moving forward? Evie shares some suggestions for how your organisation can rethink hiring practices to attract, hire and retain diverse talent.

## Five Steps To Start Making A Difference As A Company

### 1. Be Transparent



Companies should be transparent in their motivation for embarking on this journey. They should articulate and cascade their commitment to D&I from the top - from the CEO to directors and middle management. They should answer the questions, why now? What's the purpose of taking action?

### 2. Define company values and align diversity initiatives to them



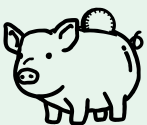
Think about what you stand for as an organisation and what behaviours you will not tolerate.

### 3. Make it clear what the expectations are in creating an inclusive workplace



It shouldn't only be employee resources groups (sometimes known as 'Affinity Groups' or 'Diversity Groups') who drive these initiatives.

### 4. Commitment goes beyond words



Allocate resources, time, energy, money, and decision-making power.

### 5. Obtain data and create achievable metrics



Measure the success of the initiatives implemented and communicate those successes to the wider business.



“

*As a Client Lead, I partner with businesses ranging from early-stage startups to larger enterprise companies and support them with talent strategy, talent acquisition and everything in between.*

*Much of my expertise is within Talent Acquisition for Deep Tech - an industry which significantly lacks diversity and inclusivity, so there's a lot of work to be done.*

*A common theme with most of my projects has been building diverse teams and embedding sustainable D&I practices into talent acquisition strategies.*

”

**Evie-Rose Deighan,  
Client Lead at Talentful,  
San Francisco**



# How To Find Diverse Talent

As talent professionals, we have a level of control over the top of our funnel, so we should all be accountable for how well-represented our candidate shortlists are. Here are a few of our sourcing tips to follow to start building a diverse talent pool.

## Set Key Metrics To Measure

Setting metrics for sourcing diverse talent is a good place to start. For example, ensuring 50% of your reach-outs are women or identifying X many candidates without university degrees. You'll need to be thoughtful about these metrics, as while they should be ambitious, they should also be attainable.

## Source Strategically On LinkedIn

When it comes to focusing on gender diversity, LinkedIn Insights is a valuable tool. You can pull reports on your target talent pool which will give you a gender ratio and you can design your targets around that result. For example, if the talent pool is 15% women, your pipeline should be 15% women, at least.

LinkedIn Recruiter can help you explore even further as it shows the most parameters and filters. You can use the custom filters to source candidates from specific colleges, universities, underrepresented groups and use terms to distinguish men from women.

**TOP TIP** It may take time inputting all of the keywords you're searching for but once you have, you can save them as a custom filter and apply them to any generic search you do in future. Alternatively, you can create long, boolean strings and store them in a sheet. There are so many different ways to filter, so explore what works best for you.

## Leveraging Your Employee Referral Program

If designed well, referral programs can be an effective way of supporting diversity goals. However, they can most definitely be detrimental too. Often people are more likely to refer candidates similar to themselves, which, if solely relying on referrals, can lead to building more homogeneous teams.

Make an effort in engaging the entire organisation in taking ownership of diversity. If your company has successfully cascaded its commitment to D&I from the top, then it should be easy to encourage employees to refer people from underrepresented groups.

It's useful to engage employee resource groups or "squads" in this effort (if you have these groups in your business), as they are likely to have a more diverse network. At Talentful we have built different groups of volunteers named the D&I Taskforce, Wellbeing Taskforce and Culture Squad. These groups help our internal teams develop and roll out a variety of initiatives and new strategies to support and engage employees.

## Attend Events And Partner With Communities

Attend in-person or virtual events to learn more about the experience of underrepresented groups. A quick search on Eventbrite will pull up countless minority targeted events locally or in your chosen areas. Alternatively, 'Meetup' is an excellent platform for hosting your own speaker events. There are also plenty of conferences and large events you can sponsor as a company to network with potential candidates. Making meaningful partnerships with nonprofits, charities and community organisations is also a brilliant way to connect with people from different backgrounds.

## Consider Non-Traditional Career Paths

Avoid getting into a habit of considering the same type of candidates for open roles. For engineering, this could look like someone with a computer science degree from a top university or college, with a summer internship and straight into a software engineer role. While these types of candidates are most definitely right for the job, there are plenty of other career trajectories that could still produce brilliant engineers. For example, candidates who studied in other related scientific fields, like physics or computational biology, can be great coders. It may depend on what these candidates went on to do afterwards, but we shouldn't rule them out.

For tech roles, another option is to consider hiring candidates out of coding boot camps. University or college is expensive and not everyone has the opportunity to further their education. Coding boot camps equip people with practical skills needed to succeed in various roles and often graduates come from a wide variety of backgrounds, cultures and life experiences.



**Strategic  
Sourcing On  
LinkedIn**



**Referral  
Schemes**



**Events &  
Partnerships**



**Non-Traditional  
Career Paths**







# How To Attract Diverse Talent

A good place to start with attracting candidates from underrepresented groups is to revamp all your job descriptions and rethink your employer branding.

## Re-Work Your Job Descriptions

Avoid using gendered pronouns such as 'he' or 'him' and convert them to gender-neutral language, like 'they' and 'them'.

Use language that is as neutral as possible. Studies show that words like 'dominate' or 'superstar' tend to attract more male candidates, while words like 'community' and 'understanding' attract more female candidates.

Make sure you emphasise your company's commitment to D&I in a statement and add this to your job specs or your careers page. Even a simple sentence can send a strong message to your applicants.



### Textio

is a language analysis platform that helps to uncover gendered phrases and also spots biases. Alternatively, Kat Matfield is a free gender decoder tool which can also be found online.

## Focus On Your Employer Brand

Start by building your employer brand internally. Your recruiting or HR team may already promote diversity and inclusion initiatives among employees but it's also helpful to identify your champions who can help spread the word internally. Hosting company-wide events or talks to discuss why you're prioritising D&I, what you're currently doing and sharing the progress you've made as a company can help your organisation drive more initiatives forward.

The next step will be to promote your employer brand, externally. Begin with your careers page. Your careers page is a great tool and a window into your company, it's culture and its values. Include content that will resonate with candidates, for example:

✗ **Avoid using stock images**

✓ **Opt for real photos of your team**

✓ **Include employee testimonials**

✓ **Detail benefits and perks**

✓ **A statement detailing your company's commitment to D&I**

Share blogs and social content. Discuss what you're doing to build a diverse and inclusive workplace on your employer blog. Use this space to share how your company is engaging and partnering with different communities. Show how people of different backgrounds can grow and impact their communities by joining your company.



**Eliminate Gendered Language**



**Diversity Statement**



**Results Based Requirements**



**Identify Your Champions**



**Revamp Your Careers Page**



**Blogging & Social**



# How To Hire Diverse Talent

When we consider our processes, practices and behaviours throughout the hiring process and how these can impact diversity and inclusion, we often think of bias or unconscious bias. As recruitment or HR professionals, it's our role to eliminate as much bias as possible from the hiring process, while ensuring it is robust and effective.

## Eliminate Bias With The Right Tools

Think about anonymously evaluating candidates and CVs. There are lots of tools that can help with this and it's worth investigating which ones work best for your interview process. Here are two tools to explore in the meantime:



### **Unbias.io**

A Google Chrome extension that removes faces and names from LinkedIn profiles to reduce the effects of unconscious bias.



### **Interviewing.io**

An anonymous technical interviewing platform designed to fix Silicon Valley's 'fundamentally broken' talent funnel by minimising unconscious bias.

## Use Structured Interview Techniques

Having structured interview techniques will leave less room for bias. If hiring teams ask the same set of questions and have clearly set a rubric for what a good answer is, interviewers can be more objective in their evaluation. It's useful to run interview workshops with your hiring teams to build out question banks and come up with values-based and behavioural questions. Interviewers should individually and privately use a scoring system, so others' feedback does not influence the hiring team as a whole.

## Include Diverse People In The Hiring Process

It's important to have a diverse interview panel to allow for different perspectives when evaluating a candidate's performance. Including diverse people in the hiring process will make candidates feel more comfortable and demonstrate that your business is inclusive and welcoming to everyone.



# How To Retain Diverse Talent

It's essential to remember that the aim must be to ensure your company is a place that attracts diverse employees and creates an environment where they can thrive.

## Build Communities Within Your Organisation

An organic way of creating an inclusive culture is to encourage communities for underrepresented employees. If you're unfamiliar with an "ERG", it's an employee identity or experience-based group that builds community. For example, Google has 19 ERGs representing social, cultural or minority groups, including the Gayglers (for homosexual employees), the Greyglers (for older employees), the Hispanic Googler Network and Google Women Engineers.

Something to remember is that these dedicated groups, squads or taskforce teams should be voluntary, employee-led communities that serve as a resource to foster a diverse and inclusive workplace.

## Create A Safe Space To Talk

Create a space where employees can talk actively and openly about D&I in the workplace. For example, using a Slack channel or another communication tool to share D&I articles, news and informative resources. As well as this, you can offer roundtables for people from underrepresented groups to gain a better understanding of how they feel and ways you can improve your initiatives.

## Engage Employees On Meaningful Days And Holidays

Create an internal calendar of important events that are meaningful to your diverse employees. Celebrating holidays and events for underrepresented minorities like Black History Month or Pride can help raise awareness within your company. Hosting company-wide socials during work hours around these events and holidays where everyone can attend and get involved will help your company create a real sense of community.

## Ensure The Path To Growth Is Transparent

Advancement and progression is a significant factor in creating an inclusive workplace. Have transparent and standardised progression routes for all employees, with tangible goals and ensure well-trained managers execute them. As we know, everyone is different and some people are far more likely to ask for promotions than others. Provide and encourage mentoring to support this; having role models from underrepresented groups is really important for nurturing a diverse workforce.

**Talented is on a mission to reinvent recruitment and accelerate the growth of tech companies at every stage, through expert, embedded talent acquisition.**

**Whether you're a startup, scale-up or enterprise business, our talent experts can help scale your team.**

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