

Recruiting for gender diversity

Hays is committed to diversity both as an employer and when recruiting experts for our clients. In our own business we coordinate and share diversity initiatives and internal best practice, communicate initiatives and agree actions to deliver. Diversity is also a growing priority for many of our clients and more and more are asking us to assist them to achieve their diversity goals.

So what do we advise?

Organisations that both recognise and harness the different experiences and opinions of their workforce outperform those that are less diverse and inclusive. These organisations are also better placed to attract and retain talented professionals. At a time when skills shortages are an increasingly critical issue across many industries, companies need to take action to increase access to the recruitment of diverse, talented individuals.

But diversity doesn't just happen on its own: companies need to actively seek and recruit candidates from a variety of backgrounds to ensure they're not inadvertently creating a homogenous workforce.



> TOP TIP

Check out the free
Champions for Change
Flexible Working Toolkit
for practical resources:
[flexibility.championsfor
change.nz/resources/](https://flexibility.championsforchange.nz/resources/)



ATTRACTING DIVERSE TALENT

1. Model an inclusive environment

a. Have a diversity and inclusion policy which demonstrates your organisation's commitment.

More and more people are looking for organisations that prioritise diversity and inclusion. PwC's report on the millennial workforce showed that both male and female millennials consider an employer's policy on diversity, equality and workforce inclusion to be important when they decide whether or not they should work for them as. Having a policy that enshrines your organisation's approach to diversity and inclusion tells employees and potential employees that you are committed to ensuring that they can bring their whole selves to work and that their potential will be recognised.

b. Offer a flexible working environment to encourage engagement and productivity.

Flexible working has been shown as the biggest enabler for increasing diversity and inclusion in the workplace. Flexibility is not just about part-time work for mums, it is the key to achieving greater productivity, attracting and retaining the best talent and fostering an agile environment to respond to ever changing market needs. Today's workforce values flexibility for a variety of reasons from caring responsibilities to avoiding a long commute. There are many ways that organisations can offer flexibility in the workplace and they will depend on the requirements of particular roles.



c. Live out a values-based culture where people can be authentic

Having a culture based on trust and integrity is key to people feeling they are able to bring their whole selves to work. According to a recent Deloitte's report, 80% of respondents said that inclusion is an important factor when choosing an employer and 39% would leave their current organisation for a more inclusive one. When millennials believed their organisation was inclusive, they felt more engaged, empowered and authentic.

2. Re-think the wording and language you use in job adverts

Creating a diverse shortlist for your job vacancy will be difficult if you do not have a diverse range of applicants. The language used in job adverts can actually play a large role in whether you attract male or female applicants . Words like competitive and ambitious are masculine coded while support and responsibility are feminine coded. Check the whether your advert is subconsciously appealing to one particular gender by using this gender decoder: <http://gender-decoder.katmatfield.com/>

3. Use a range of advertising channels

By advertising in the same places using the same techniques, you are going to appeal to the same people. If you are consciously looking for someone to bring some diversity to the team then you need to consider advertising in different places or mediums. Reflecting diversity in your company materials, researching publications, forums or websites that your target group use, attending conferences or networking events sponsored by organisations that cater to diverse populations are all ways that you can reach a wider audience.

INTERVIEWING AND HIRING

1. Train recruiting/hiring managers to understand and recognise unconscious bias

It shouldn't come as a surprise that we are drawn to people like us and who reflect our view of the world. Ensuring that the people responsible for recruiting new employees are aware of their own biases is essential to expanding the potential talent pool for your organisation. They should be aware and supportive of the benefits that diversity brings to your business.

2. Ensure a diverse shortlist

Studies have shown that a shortlist needs to have 50% women for there to be any chance of hiring the woman.

3. Recruit champions to focus on specific groups

Having champions with a focus on specific target groups is a way to actively build pipelines by establishing relationships and identifying talent before a role becomes available. This group can develop networks to identify and attract diverse talent, this might include targeting educational or community establishments or attending conferences or events aimed at that target group.



References

- The female millennial: A new era of talent, PwC 2015
- Unleashing the power of inclusion: Attracting and engaging the evolving workforce, Deloitte 2017
- Danielle Gaucher, Justin Friesen, and Aaron C. Kay: Evidence That Gendered Wording in Job Advertisements Exists and Sustains Gender Inequality (Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, July 2011, Vol 101(1), p109-28).
- If There's Only One Woman in Your Candidate Pool, There's Statistically No Chance She'll Be Hired, HBR Apr 2016

4. Choose a diverse interview panel

Making sure that you have a range of perspectives on the interview panel is essential. Not only does this demonstrate your commitment to diversity and inclusion to the candidate but also provides a well-rounded view of the candidate.

5. Structure your interview questions

Having at least a portion of the interview where a structured approach is taken ensures that all candidates have a fair opportunity to provide relevant information. Evaluating people in this way also reduces the impact that unconscious bias has when you are 'getting to know' people during the interview process and deciding on 'cultural fit'. These both have their place but it is important to be able to clearly assess candidates on all the skills that they bring.

6. Be accessible

Having work premises that are accessible is essential to ensuring that you are not excluding those who are physically disabled.

It goes without saying that all this needs to be supported from the top. The CEO and Executive Team should visibly champion and role model diversity and inclusion in the organisation.