



QUAKE LAB

INCLUSIVE RECRUITMENT

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LAB**

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WHAT IS A GUIDE, AND HOW TO USE IT

WHAT IS A GUIDE

In the bespoke consulting work we do, with a wide range of clients, inevitably, the question of recruitment always comes up. We believe that inclusive, equitable and accessible recruitment processes are critical and beneficial to an organization and the applicants who seek to give their time and labour.

That being said, when we speak to teams about why it is important to tackle recruitment as part of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) work, the answers almost always reflect the benefit it will have to the organization or institution.

Recruitment as a central aspect of DEI work can often be incredibly self serving, because ultimately, you, as the recruiter, have a lot more to gain just by bring folks in, but especially by bringing marginalized voices into the fold.

The marginalized people who may become part of your organization due to inclusive recruitment measures will be:

- Providing their labour
- Give insights about the communities/people groups that have not been considered
- Diversifying your team
- Positioning you as an industry leader in Diversity Equity and Inclusion

In return, like any employee, they will hopefully find value in being part of your organization, they will hopefully be fairly compensated, perhaps have access to professional benefits - but what they give, will outweigh what you give them.

This is especially true if your organization brings on individuals from marginalized communities, and they are forced to fight an uphill battle to be heard, to participate, and not to be tokenized. This will inevitably happen if:

- You position their sole value as a 'spokesperson' for their community;
- You assume they will have solutions and insight for you related to their communities, thus the rest of the organization's staff does not have to do any research to learn more about these communities
- You do not reduce or eliminate the barriers of access that would exist to anyone who is not part of your homogenous staff.

Again, it cannot be overstated - building equity into recruitment is important! It is important for the same reasons why including methods of entry into building entrances are important, they removes unnecessary barriers for those who visibly and invisibly have to navigate the world in different ways. Recruitment that is equitable means everyone, including folks who look like you, will have a better chance to illustrate their talents, skills and contributions to your organization.

But we must also acknowledge that where there is smoke, there is fire. So if there are barriers to access and discriminatory policies, procedures and practices within your recruitment process, they also exist in the ways your organization functions. Every single member of your organization is obligated to intimately understand the ways in which marginalized populations are kept from being beneficiaries of your work and being part of your organization. Unless you bring in a staff member whose mandate is clearly, and explicitly focused on equity, any new staff member representative of a marginalized community does not and should not under any circumstances bear the sole responsibility of identifying and reducing barriers.

For this reason, as you are using this guide, it will be important to understand that the work doesn't begin and end with bringing folks in, you need to do the deep, structural work of identifying what they are coming into, and ensuring they will not face harm or undo barriers to access and participation.

So what this guide is not, is a silver bullet, but just one tool in your tool box.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is created with a few assumptions:

- You have the labour and resources to bring together a hiring body who will oversee this work. If this is not the case, this work can be housed within an HR department or existing DEI committee.
- A recruitment process will take up to two months. This number may not be realistic for you depending on your organization and industry. The key thing is giving your team and applicants ample time to do this work well. A rushed recruitment process is the thief of excellent candidates.
- You have a lot of autonomy and control over what recruitment looks like. Again, this might not be possible for government departments, agencies and other organizations. If this is the case, ensure you are being realistic about your scope and area of influence.

This guide is meant to be just that, a guide. Not every aspect might be possible to action word for word, and that's ok! The key thing is ensuring you are doing your very best to ensure you are consistently adding processes, checks and balances for decision makers and are also giving applicants as much autonomy as possible. Remember, you may be assessing applicants, but they are also assessing you and deserve clear, concise information in full and time to make informed decisions.

You'll want to do your best to apply as much as possible for each section, do not focus just on redesigning how you circulate applications!

Lastly, think of this guide as officially yours - it is a living and breathing document. Because of this, you'll need to collect as much feedback and information as possible from applicants (successful and not) to continue making tweaks to how you recruit!

We are so grateful that you've trusted us with this work!

QuakeLab



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WHAT IS A HIRING BODY?

The hiring body has a mandate to maintain and oversee inclusive and effective recruitment and retention processes at an organization. The hiring body will act as an oversight and stewardship body for the processes and objectives of recruitment.

It is separate from individual committees created to recruit and hire for specific vacant positions. It is not a replacement for a Human Resources team or department. However if an organization has a HR department they can use this document as a guide to building an equitable recruitment process.

The hiring body should be made up of diverse staff, at different levels of the organization. This document lays out the key components of the recruitment process, and responsibilities of the hiring body and committees related to:

1

Creating a mandate regarding commitments to hiring for representation

4

Supporting the recruitment process

2

Relationship with hiring committee

5

Screening and interviewing

3

Validating job advertisements using the inclusion criteria

6

Maintaining and reporting back on demographic data

The entire recruitment process should take two months to complete. The table below outlines the anticipated timelines and labour requirements for each activity.

| | Hiring Body | Hiring Committee | Time (effort) | Time (time)* |
|---|-------------|------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Triggering recruitment process | | ✓ | 1 day | 1 day |
| Draft job advertisement | | ✓ | 2 days | 5 days |
| Validate job advertisement and translate | ✓ | ✓ | 4 days | 1 week |
| Data review to assess current staff needs | ✓ | ✓ | 3 days | 1 week |
| Platform selection and posting | ✓ | ✓ | 3 days | 1 week |
| Screening | ✓ | ✓ | 2 days | 3 weeks |
| Interview and review and assessment | ✓ | ✓ | 4 days | 1 week |
| Offer and Contract | ✓ | ✓ | 5 days | 2 weeks |



Solely responsible



Consultation



Shared responsibility

**The total sum of the time may not be 2 months because activity times may overlap*



A MANDATE REGARDING COMMITMENTS TO HIRING FOR REPRESENTATION

The hiring body's first order of business should be to develop an internal rationale for diversifying an organization or team and using inclusive and intersectional lenses in the recruitment process, providing documentation that expresses why a commitment to hiring a diverse team is critical to an overall mission and objectives.

The mandate document should include:

- 1 A history of the industry and the importance of decolonizing development.
- 2 A review of who the makeup of the hiring body as of the drafted date.
- 3 A review of the people, groups and communities served by the organization and the importance of reflecting these communities.
- 4 Meeting cadence of the hiring body.
- 5 Make up of the body including diversity of lived experience, professional experience, and staff level.
- 6 Identify goals and benchmarks for the hiring body.
- 7 Review cadence of the hiring body and its mandate.

This mandate should be shared with the greater staff team and Board.



RELATIONSHIP WITH HIRING COMMITTEE

| | |
|---|--|
| Triggering recruitment process | The hiring lead (defined on Page 8) will inform the hiring body that they have a vacant position. |
| Draft job advertisement | The hiring lead will form a committee that will draft the ad. A member of the hiring body will be assigned to offer support, consultation, and to provide necessary tools and resources. |
| Validate job advertisement and translate | The hiring body member will validate the job ad, and make any recommendations needed to ensure it meets hiring body standards. |
| Data review to assess current staff needs | The hiring body will review hiring data and recommend individuals who should be targeted. |
| Platform selection and posting | The hiring body member and hiring committee will select platforms and points of contact. |
| Screening | Two members of the hiring committee will screen applicants, the hiring body member will consult. |
| Interview and review and assessment | The hiring committee, with support from the hiring body member, will conduct and assess interviews. |
| Offer and Contract | The hiring committee and hiring body will collaborate to draft the contract and offer. |



VALIDATING JOB ADVERTISEMENTS USING INCLUSION CRITERIA

The validation process will work to meet each of the actions below:

Action 1:

A representative of the hiring body will meet with the hiring lead¹ and work with them to outline the possible duties required to perform the role. Do not rank or rate the duties yet.

Action 2:

For each duty, identify the skills and experience required.

Action 3:

Working duty by duty, determine which are essential and which are non-essential. Essential duties are those that are core or fundamental to the success of the role and the team. Non-essential duties are nice to have, but do not directly impact the outcome of the role's effectiveness.

Action 4:

Once the essential and non-essential duties are agreed upon, record them and their associated skills and experience.

Action 5:

Record how it will be determined whether or not the candidate being screened has the skills and experience relating to the duty.*

*Candidates will be scored by 'Ranking' and 'Weight'. The ranking should reflect the skills and experience described or demonstrated and the weighting accords the duty's importance as relevant to the role. The more important the duty the higher the weighting. An overall score for the duty is calculated by multiplying the ranking by the weighting.

¹ The hiring lead is the individual who has prompted a recruitment process for a vacant position. This is the individual who will be responsible for outlining the requirements for this position and will trigger the recruitment process by notifying the need for recruitment and proposed timelines.

When hiring leads identify a position that needs to be filled, they are responsible for the position description and defining the essential and non-essential requirements. The hiring body may request additional information about both sets of requirements before moving forward. The hiring body may want the lead to clearly articulate:

- Why the essential requirements are needed for this position
- Why the preferred (non-essential) requirements need to be included in the ad
- What non-professional requirements should be included (eg. experience in a country, lived experience)

Once the position description and requirements are approved, the committee will validate the job ad, ensuring the following considerations are included:

- ➡ Clearly indicate the critical and non-critical duties and responsibilities. Consider including percentage (effort and/or time) for each duty and responsibility. This gives applicants the opportunity to apply even if they think they may not meet all the requirements.
- ➡ State alternative expertise or experience. This encourages candidates with different abilities to apply. Qualifications and requirements must reflect inclusiveness and be result oriented (example below).
- ➡ Use plain language. Keep things simple and to the point; lay out information as clearly as possible. Ensure requested qualifications are not discriminatory.
- ➡ Use “you” and “us”. According to Textio (a platform that predicts the type of response job offers will get based on their wording), offers that use “you” and “we” are filled faster. Expressions like “you love finding the best solution to a problem” are much better than impersonal ones like “the ideal candidate”.

- ➡ State clearly and simply the conditions of employment, including potential flexibility regarding work hours. Indicate whether the position is full time, part time, casual or contractual. Mention salary and benefits as appropriate. Include the range of pay for the position as well as the process for reviewing performance and receiving pay increases, who will be managing that process, and if possible, what will be reviewed.
- ➡ Provide contact details. Provide details of a contact person who can answer questions about the job requirements. The contact person should also be aware of the company’s diversity and inclusion policy.
- ➡ Be accessible. Ensure your job offer is distributed in various formats, so it can reach as many candidates as possible. Consider using formats including HTML and Microsoft Word, large print, text transcripts of visual information, and accessible electronic formats compatible with screen readers.

- ➡ Be easy to reach. Provide several different ways to receive applications. Accept applications by email, fax, teletypewriter (TTY), video relay service (VRS), regular mail, or by inviting candidates to submit applications online via your company's accessible website.
- ➡ State the working conditions of the job. This includes where they will be working, what the environment is like, who they may be working with, levels of accessibility in that space. This includes details about possible disruptive triggers like "This full-time position is in a busy
- ➡ Consider translating the job ad into a few different languages for multiple platforms - however make clear the level of English required for the job, whether their application is required to be in English, and if the person/people reviewing their application and interviewing them will be doing so in English.
- ➡ Avoid gender, race, community, ethnicity, ability and citizenship coded words and use they/them pronouns as much as is possible
- ➡ Include a well defined Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) statement that lays out who is on your team, why inclusion and diversity is important, the aspects currently being addressed and who specifically you want to encourage to apply (eg. new immigrants with non-Canadian experience, young people who are new to the workforce)

- ➡ Avoid using unnecessary corporate speak and jargon. While candidates with plenty of experience in a similar role might know what you are talking about, [studies show jargon and corporate language in job ads is one of the biggest barriers keeping talented young people from applying to entry-level positions.](#) These subtle word choices can make candidates feel unqualified for a position they are absolutely qualified for.

•➡ Items to call out:

- 1 Call out inclusive benefits like parental leave and childcare subsidies.
- 2 Call out positive work and impact the organization has had globally and locally.
- 3 Call out work being done to make the organization more inclusive.
- 4 Call out specific material applicants can review to get a sense of the work ahead.



Some additional considerations for alternative language and requirements:

| Language that could create barriers | Alternative language |
|--|--|
| 10+ years' experience in project management in a non-profit environment. | Experience working as a project manager, including experience managing project design and deliverables, and communication with partners. |
| Valid driver's license required. | The ability to travel and provide own transportation. |
| Three years experience as a manager. | Experience in managing involving a variety of industries, including several complex projects. |

Language to integrate and consider:

- Ask for related work experience rather than the exact same experience. Be open to transferable skills. Keep in mind that in different cultures and countries, job titles can mean different things.
- Ask for ability wherever possible. Candidates can demonstrate ability through past achievements, including volunteer experience.
- Focus on the knowledge and the skills needed.
- Focus on the specific knowledge and skills your target demographic will bring.
- Make your communications requirements specific to the job.
- Write clearly and simply, using common words, a straightforward style and simple sentences.
- Instead of “five years of experience in donor relations”, ask for “experience in managing client accounts, particularly in the non-profit sector”. Avoid asking specifically for Canadian experience unless required.

- Instead of “three years experience writing grants” you could ask for “ability to research grant opportunities and write clear proposals”. They can explain their skills or even demonstrate them in practical tests.
- For example, look for a candidate who has “experience working in the arts sector or an arts administration degree.”
- For example, Look for a candidate who is “Spanish speaking with experience working with X community; networks within X community; specific knowledge areas related to the role.”
- Rather than seeking someone with “good communication skills”, you could ask for “ability to draft business correspondence.”
- Avoid jargon, technical and legal language, and especially acronyms which can be mystifying to those not ‘in the know’.

With the job advertisement developed and completed, the recruitment process can begin. A 30 (business) day period is recommended for the job ad to remain posted. This time should be extended if the application is particularly rigorous.



SUPPORTING THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

The process by which people access and engage with your job advertisements is critical. This is a point at which your ability to reach, communicate with, and convince a diverse set of applicants is tested. When you have completed a job ad, getting it in the hands of folks who would excel in the role requires an identification and understanding of who you're trying to reach, and breaking down your decision into the following:

- Who do we need to reach?
- Where can we reach them?
- Who are the trusted sources of information for the people we are trying to reach?
- When they are job hunting, who do they talk to? Where do they go?
- What information is critical to this group of people?
- What non-traditional platforms will we need to use?
- How will we need to customize our advertisement (eg. will I need to reformat, do I need to translate it, is there a certain structure this platform uses)?
- What is the cost of using this platform(s)?
- How can we build a relationship with this platform and it's gatekeepers?
- Who will take long term ownership of community outreach to accompany every posting?

These guiding questions will help the hiring body further investigate non-professional experience that is required and/or would be beneficial for this role.

It will be necessary to clearly identify whether there are people with specific lived experiences and/or people who are members of specific communities or group(s), that will be relevant to the specific role, and to the overall objective to better have the communities your organization/team lives and works in reflected in the staff.

When identifying people from marginalized communities, it is important to identify:

1. What is the ideal outcome of this recruitment process aside from selecting a candidate who will perform with excellence?
2. What can a person from a specific community contribute to the culture and values of the organization that are missing?
3. How would this support the prioritizing of a lens that is missing in the organization and the industry you work in?

The hiring committee will be responsible for identifying the platforms best suited for the circulation of each job ad based on the skills needed and the communities to be targeted. Some platforms will be chosen based on specific communities needed for the position (eg. folks with lived experience in Central America), and communities that should generally be targets (people of colour, disabled people, etc.). It will be critical for the hiring lead to work with the hiring body member supporting them to ensure that the hiring body's identification of communities to be targeted in recruiting does not conflict with the hiring committee's identification of communities they want to target.

Connecting with Community Based Organisations will require relationship building that extends past single recruitment efforts. This process will begin by building relationships with organizations that:

- Speak to, work with, and have networks within the community of people the organization wants to be inclusive of;
- Work to support communities that the organization wants to be inclusive of.

Building future recruitment plans with community organizations includes agreeing on details about the pipeline (eg. how they can recommend folks to be considered by the organization for opportunities, and how the organization can share opportunities suited to their communities as they arise). While future planning, consider:

- Does the organization need to send the opportunities early to validate translations?
- Will the organisation be identifying specific members of their community who qualify for the opportunity, generally circulate the opportunity, or do both?
- What does the organization need from the organization in order to maintain a mutually beneficial relationship?
- What kinds of time frames and lead time are needed on both ends?

In the circulation stage, organizations who work with the community the organization is looking to engage with will be flagged as a priority. Other organizations will also receive the opportunity; however, the former will be engaged more directly. These organizations including the organization's primary contact person, will be tracked here.

SCREENING AND INTERVIEWING

The hiring committee, with support from the designated hiring body member, will lead the screening and interviewing process. This process will be organized into the following sections:

1. Initial screening and shortlisting applicants
2. First point of contact
3. Interviewing
4. Assessment of interview
5. Job offer and contract

Throughout the process, it will be critical to use an inclusion and equity lens which will consider accessibility, method and mode of communication, unconscious biases, accountability and discrimination, valuing of language, culture, cognitive abilities and presentation.

Initial screening and shortlisting applicants

Two members of the hiring committee will be responsible for reviewing applications as they are received. The first screen is not a thorough review, but will identify and set aside applications which fail to meet any of the identified critical requirements. This first review will include the following:

- Meets at least three of the critical requirements
 - The hiring lead can indicate whether they should be any three, or if the three must be specified
- Creating blind hiring² environments by removing³ identifying information around the following:

²Be wary of blind hiring in general. Studies have found this often removes more applicants from marginalized communities than supports them to succeed in the process.

³This can be done by creating copies of the applicant's CV and cover letter, remove necessary info from the copies and make it available to the hiring committee.

- Where the candidate went to school (name of institution and country)
- Timelines for work experience (meant to remove any gaps in work experience)
- Meets cultural competency standards
 - This will be dependent on the targets created while drafting the job description

All applications must be recorded and notes on their success or otherwise should be captured for validation, accountability, and possible use for future opportunities. A file of resumes and contact information for potential candidates from underrepresented groups should be maintained. For each round of recruitments, this information should be captured by the hiring committee and handed over to the hiring body within 6-8 weeks.

TIPS FOR SCREENING⁴

1. When reviewing resumes and cover letters, remember that various cultures communicate differently.

Embrace this diversity of expression and seek to understand the experience and skills behind the presentation. Skilled immigrants may include references to religion (e.g. religious greeting), their families, or offer up other personal information deemed atypical to the hiring process. In many countries, religion permeates business communications and mention of family is both typical and honourable. Culturally-competent and non-ableist hiring focuses on the applicant's skills, knowledge, and experience and does not prejudge on the basis of differing styles of communication.

⁴ Sourced from the HRMA Cultural Competence Toolkit for Hiring and Retaining Skilled Immigrants.

2.Utilize the cultural diversity of your existing workforce in the selection process to better understand varied educational pedigrees and professional qualifications.

Some applicants include information in their resumes about their ranking in certain universities because this achievement is highly prized and opens the door to jobs in their countries or contexts. This information may be key, and relate directly to the skills required. Seek insight from within your team regarding qualifications of unknown relevance.

3.To better understand how to assess the foreign credentials of a candidate, visit:

<http://www.cicic.ca/415/credential-assessmentservices.canada> and <http://www.bcit.ca/ices>.

Candidates requiring certification and licensing by regulatory bodies should be referred to the appropriate Canadian regulator.

Two members of the hiring committee will screen all eligible applicants using the criteria above. They will then convene to compare and validate their decisions by screening all applicants together and accounting for the applicants they have screened out as well as those they have selected for the next level. All applicants selected by the individual members should be chosen to continue to the next phase of applications.

The ‘screeners’ are encouraged to [use this rubric to track their individual screening and reasoning](#). They will be required to use [this spreadsheet to track their final, joint decision](#).

When screening applicants:

1

Immediately after receiving applications, store the applications in a folder with all other applications marked with the applicants name;

2

Screen all applications at once to avoid prioritizing those that come in early or late;

3

Give yourself a reasonable amount of time and space to screen applications. Applicants deserve your full, undivided attention. You are [more likely to rely on bias and familiarity when you are tired](#), dehydrated and inattentive.

4

Ensure all applications are in the same format before you begin - this will ensure you don't have to change the format while screening which may cause frustration and inform how you screen the application;

5

The style, look and feel of their resume and application - cultural differences can influence how resumes are presented. This is not to say ignore glaring mistakes that serve as an indicator for the quality of work the individual will produce;

6

If a candidate meets the minimum requirements, but you find yourself having a “gut feeling about them” or “not sure if they would be a good fit” - include them in your shortlist. Screeners must have clear, tangible reasons for not being selected;

7

If the applicant meets all minimum requirements and you decide to not pass them through screening, indicate your reason in the notes section. This level of accountability is critical for the recruitment process and may flag patterns of bias that need to be addressed;

8

If you feel unsure about whether an applicant meets the minimum requirements, place their application aside and discuss it with your co-screener;

9

When you have completed your screening, look through the selected and rejected applications. Note any patterns in either pile (eg. 1 out of the selected 10 are folks with what seems like non-Canadian experience).

The final list of applicants will be brought to the hiring committee and applicants will be invited to an interview.

Unsuccessful applicants should receive an email indicating they have not been successful and that their application has been stored for future opportunities they may qualify for.

FIRST POINT OF CONTACT

Inviting successful applicants to the interview should be as simple and accessible as possible. Each applicant should be contacted the same way, unless the applicant has requested a different method for accessibility purposes. Each applicant should receive the following information⁵:

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Clear welcome: | Clear invitation to be interviewed. |
| Job: | Clear indication of the job they are being interviewed for and the organization, a PDF document of the original job advertisement. |
| Logistics: | Time, place, platform - provide at least three date and time slots to select from. |
| Requirements: | Extensions they may need to download (eg. Zoom extension), internet access, a phone, a computer, video or voice only etc., anything they need to bring (ID, references, etc.), any non-cultural specific requirements for dress (eg. business casual, protective gear, etc.), the language in which the interview will be conducted. |
| Assessment: | What will be assessed during the interview (skills, familiarity with region, lived experience etc.), and the method of assessment (rubric that all interviewers will fill out). |
| Expectations: | The interview format, topics of discussion, how many people will be there, who these people are in the organization, estimated amount of time, next steps after the interview, name of the person they would be reporting to in this role. |
| Requests: | Any requests for accessibilities and considerations (eg. cannot access strong internet, changes in date or time), cultural considerations, a point of contact should they need support, request for preferred name and pronouns. |

⁵ These details should be included as standard, however the necessity of some will be determined by the nature of the position and interview.

Responding to requests from applicants

It is important for applicants to have a point of contact to respond to questions, while making this process manageable for the organization's hiring team. The steps below are recommended for responding to applicant requests:

- The team members who are screening applicants will respond to generic or non-specific requests. They will respond that because of staff capacity, the applicant is invited to submit their questions by email and a response will be sent back to them with 24-48 hours⁶;
- The questions will be given to the hiring body committee with no additional information about the applicant;
- The designated hiring body member will respond. Should the requested information be hyper-specific or deemed appropriate for a phone call, they will be escalated to the hiring committee who will select the person best suited to respond - ideally, the person who responds will not be one of the interviewers⁷.

⁶ A template: Thank you for your email, we're happy to hear that you are considering applying for this position. We are a small team with limited capacity to respond to all incoming requests. We want to do our best to respond to questions so, if possible, please reply to this email with your key question and we will forward them to the team member best suited to give you a comprehensive answer. Please give us 24-48 hours to respond. Please note that this will not be a stand in or form a part of an interview process. Should your application be successful, we're very keen on having an in-depth conversation with you!

⁷ If you have a small organization, it is acknowledged that this may not always be possible.

INTERVIEW

It is important to be extremely clear about the purposes of each interview, the intended outcome and the resources and capacity available for the hiring committee to make decisions about which candidate is successful. Ensure that as a hiring committee and interview team you have fully answered these questions and are clear about the intention of the interview process.

| | |
|---|---|
| Purpose of the interviews | Are you looking to assess the candidate's skills? Are these best assessed through a test or conversation? What indicators will be used for interviewers with a technical and non technical understanding of the role? What factors will support the narrowing down of candidates at this stage? |
| Intended outcome | What is the intended outcome of each interview stage? What is your expectation for the number of candidates who reach the next level of interviews? What mechanisms should you develop to end an interview when a candidate is very unqualified for the role? |
| Resources and capacity available | If your top candidates meet all critical requirements, what capacity, budget and resources do you have at your disposal to invest into missing skills and in the candidates professional development? |

Before the first interview, have the interview team discuss and agree on a scoring system to rank candidates. Have clear criteria to score the candidates ready ahead of time and stick to it⁸.

- Is experience more important than academic education?
- What skills are critical for success in this role?

After each interview, have the interview team provide their feedback and their candidate score to the hiring committee and the hiring body member supporting the committee within 24 hours and before the next interview.

⁸ People are biased, emotional, and inconsistent when interviewing. Decades of industrial psychology research has found that the validity or predictive power of a typical unstructured job interview is around 20%, meaning that only one in five interviews increases the baseline odds that a hired candidate will be successful.

When moving into the interview stage, the hiring committee should be mindful of the following:

- At least two people should interview each candidate, ideally three. It's always helpful to have a colleague or co-interviewer with you to reduce individual bias. It can be especially valuable to have someone with a good understanding of cross-cultural issues to provide a different perspective. It can be especially valuable to have someone who is at a similar level within the organization that the applicant would be in.
- Ask all candidates the same questions. All questions should relate to the job only. It's always helpful to explain the whole process to candidates to shape realistic expectations and reduce misunderstandings.
- Ask questions that focus on 'how' applicants will apply skills or 'how' they would handle a particular situation. It reinforces the value of transferable skills.
- Be conscious of your assumptions around body language and other non-verbal communication, such as lack of eye contact, long pauses, or humility regarding personal accomplishments. For example, some candidates avoid eye contact with a figure of authority as it is considered disrespectful in their culture. Silence in an interview may indicate something different to various people from various cultures, it may show a need to process the question and form an answer, or it may be because English is not the first language.

In the interview process, be mindful of biases (unconscious and conscious) [Harver identifies 13 biases that impact hiring](#). Watch out for them so they do not trip you up and cause you to lose out on a great candidate

Refer to the table below to get a better understanding of how common interview questions can be rephrased in a way that solicits better answers from people from diverse cultural backgrounds:

| Scenario | Don't say or do this | Do say this | Rationale |
|---|---|--|---|
| When asking questions | "Tell me about yourself." | Tell me about your education and/or experience." | Some folks may have trouble answering open-ended questions. Specific questions help focus responses. |
| | "Tell me about a time..." | Add, "I want to know your particular role in this work activity." | Some folks are modest about personal "achievement"; their cultural values may emphasize collective over individual achievement. It is culturally inconsistent for them to speak of individual achievement. Emphasizing that you want to know their particular role will draw out this information |
| When receiving a brief reply | Assume the person doesn't know. | Be patient, polite and probe | Respect for authority sometimes causes some to "answer only what is asked"; elaborating without being asked may seem impertinent. |
| When receiving a slow reply | Become impatient. Think the candidate is incompetent. | Become patient. | Pauses in some cultures are natural, recognizing the significance of the question. Thinking before speaking is common for many cultures. |
| When receiving no reply after asking "Do you have any questions?" | Think the candidate lacks interest. | Assure the candidate they can ask any question at all about either the job or the process of selection | Some folks are not used to being asked this question, which in their culture may be associated with "challenging authority". |
| When discussing technical matters | Use jargon, slang, acronyms, complex phrases. | Communicate clearly using simple words. | Competency is key; core knowledge conveyance is what is critical. More complex communications will become possible with familiarization. |
| When the candidate has a strong accent | Lose focus or become frustrated. | Seek clarification. Encourage the person to speak slowly. | Again competency is key. Accents both lessen and become easier to understand with experience in the workplace. |

The interview should be structured and consistent for every candidate who applies. That means every candidate, whether it's the candidate you have been personally recruiting, someone internal who might qualify for the role, someone internal you do not think qualifies, or someone from outside the company who you do not know. Every candidate should receive the same experience for the interview and be given an equal chance for the position.

- Have a set of standard questions ready before the first interview, and use them consistently for each candidate
- Avoid asking trivia questions or single-answer questions
- Don't ask gotcha questions or brainteasers that put the candidate on the spot and have nothing to do with the role the person is applying for
- Focus questions on "how" a candidate handled situations in the past and not as much on "what" they think are their best traits
- Consider providing the interview questions 15 to 30 minutes in advance for the candidate to review beforehand.

The point of the questions you ask in the interview should provide ways for the candidate to show the value they would bring to this role. The point of the questions is not to trick the candidate or stress them out. Be supportive and understand this is already a stressful process. A good interviewer will help the candidate through it and still get the important information needed to make a decision.

It is important to be cognizant of the fact that applicants are also assessing you and the organization and they require enough information to make a decision about working with the team and organization.

The interview stage is an excellent opportunity to cover the following:



Stress that the organization values untraditional experience and that community engagement, activism, and culturally specific and non-western, non-colonial methods of knowledge building will be considered and valued.

2

Be explicit that career breaks for family or medical needs or community responsibilities will not negatively impact the hiring decision.

3

Promote the institution and community. If possible, provide candidates with a chance to have a confidential discussion with staff members not directly involved in the search who can provide information about schools, housing, childcare, places of worship, or any other types of information a candidate might need to envision themselves moving to the community?

4

Clearly state any significant conflicts or considerations that have arisen in the job search, this includes concerns raised by the communities most affected, how those concerns have been/are being addressed and any conflicts or contentions the candidate will need to navigate.

5

Criticism the organization has received for this role specifically, and the organization as a whole, and how those criticisms have been/are being addressed.

6

Address any ongoing efforts for diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging.

7

State clearly whether or not criticism or dissenting opinions are welcomed both by the candidate and by staff.

8

Discuss potential areas for negotiation including, but not limited to salary, relocation costs, working remotely, bonuses and other forms of compensation.

TIPS FOR DISCUSSING COMPENSATION AND SALARY

1. Consider the cultural implication of talking and asking about money.

Folks who are not white or Canadian may feel uncomfortable discussing money and compensation. Refrain from asking folks for a specific number. This ostracizes those who aren't comfortable with salary negotiations, or have a deep understanding of salary ranges of the role and industry, this is especially true with racialized people and women.

⁹ If you're organization is small, it is acknowledged that this may not always be possible

2. Understand that some folks, especially Indigenous people, immigrants, racialized people and people with experience of poverty are financially responsible for wider families and communities.

More importantly, they may currently be living with financial and economic instability. This means that their compensation will be distributed differently, and non-monetary compensation (eg. health coverage for dependents), will be just as important as monetary compensation.

3. Refrain from using the idea that job security is not an extremely important factor for some

Ensure you are very clear about the length of the contract, what renewal of their contract is dependent on, what they have access to in the way of benefits if they are not a full-time staff member, and whether raises are considered during their performance reviews.

When contacting references:

- Perform uniform reference checks for all candidates at the same time in the search
- Ensure all questions are job related
- Use a clear and consistent process for contacting and obtaining information from references. Create a “reference check form” with a series of questions to be used in all calls.
- Determine early in the search process how to handle unsolicited reference checks. Unsolicited reference checks refer to scenarios where a reference has not been informed by the applicant that they have been listed as a reference. Preparing for this may include:
 - Flagging before hand to the applicant that you are about to complete the reference check and request that they inform their references;

- Stating clearly the applicant's name, your organization, and the job the applicant is being considered for when contacting the reference;
 - Clearly asking for consent to proceed with the reference check.
- If accepting unsolicited references, use the same "reference check form" as solicited references.
- When possible, include multiple hiring committee members in reference checking, to allow multiple members to hear the input from each reference thereby maximizing the benefits of having multiple perspectives on the committee.
- Determine/clarify the relationship of the reference to the candidate.
- Ask the reference to address specific qualifications of the candidate as they relate to the job's responsibilities.

ASSESSMENT OF INTERVIEW

For each interview, the interview team should provide their feedback and candidate score to the hiring committee within 24 hours and before the next interview.

At the beginning of the assessment meeting, hiring committee members should review the considerations below and ensure there is consensus and understanding. It is important that team members question themselves and each other when using intangible reasons in their assessments (eg. good culture fit, good vibe, gut feeling). Considerations include:

- ➡ Avoid using a candidate's "fit" as a means to discriminate or indulge personal biases.
- ➡ Consider strategic hiring (where aligned with provincial human rights statute, as applicable) when two candidates are approximately equal, meaning there are two equally qualified candidates and one is from an underrepresented group.
- ➡ Explicitly remind committees that the need for accommodation cannot be used as a negative against a candidate in the assessment process.
- ➡ Avoid averaging productive periods across nonproductive periods, such as those required for parental, family or medical leave. For example, some immigrants may have gaps in their work history, or periods of unrelated experience due to relocating and adapting to a new country and language.
- ➡ Consider the demographic hiring data that the hiring body has been collecting - what patterns have been identified and need to be corrected?

Submissions will be collected and held until all members are able to schedule a meeting with all members of the hiring committee. During the meeting, the process of assessing applicants will follow the action steps outlined in the table below.

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Action 1:

Assess applicants' answers to questions vertically.

This means applications will be assessed based on each question rather than each applicant (eg. how did all applicants answer question number one in the interview). Feedback from hiring body members who interviewed the applicant will be captured.

Action 2:

Assess each applicant as an individual.

This is the point by which their cultural experience and comfort with the region will be discussed.

If there is a second round of interviews, the process above should be repeated, with a smaller group.

When narrowing down final candidates, all committee members take time individually to consider the following along with the candidates application and interview:

- Aside from the critical requirements, how many preferred qualifications does each candidate have?
- What skills do they have that were not listed in the job advertisement, but would be a positive addition?
- What skills gaps do they have which are most easily filled with the capacity and resources identified at the beginning of the interview process?
- What additional non-professional experience do each of the candidates have and how may they add value to the role and the organization?

- Review your own interview notes, reflect on whether there were aspects of the candidate that made you react with bias;
 - Did they communicate in ways that may be considered cold - but could be specifically cultural or normal for atypical individuals?
 - Did they have an accent that stood out to you?
 - Did they seem unlike anyone on your team at this moment? Did you perceive that as negative?

Use these considerations to each draft notes individually then regroup and compare notes to discuss the way forward. Avoid a situation where you ask the candidates to go through more interviews. This is unfair and forces them to perform additional unpaid labour with no guarantee.



JOB OFFER AND CONTRACT

At this level of the recruitment process, the tone will be set for how successful applicants begin their long-term relationship with the organization. Although the diversity aspect of this work may have been met, the job offer and contract negotiations is where the inclusion measures taken by the organization really begin to be highlighted.

When drafting the contract and making the offer, consider the map below. This is an empathy map that shows the process and barriers that need to be considered when people who are marginalized reach the job offer stage. These folks are more likely to be faced with a number of financial obligations that include extended family, supporting dependents abroad, current or past experience of financial instability, lived experience of poverty, debt, unemployment or underemployment.

These all inform the ways in which they will engage with job offers and the organization. Research also shows that women and people of colour often face difficulty negotiating at and after this stage¹⁰. It is critical to enter this process with an empathetic and intersectional lens that acknowledges that compensation is a critical incentive for why folks do the work they do, and different individuals will have extremely varied experiences informed by their identity that affect the ways in which they approach this process.

¹⁰ Harvard Law School's Program on Negotiation - "Yet its persistence in the workplace presents a personal negotiation challenge that asks women to reconcile their needs with how they present those needs to their counterparts."

SAY:

- Happy to be working at the organization
- Time needed to review job offer and contract
- May ask if there is room to negotiate the proposed salary and benefits

THINK:

- Negotiating salary, pay rate and benefits may have consequences
- Working to figure out the middle ground between the pay they want and what they have previously been compensated
- Needs to know full scope of the role, expectations and how they will be assessed
- May not have access to support who can help make sense of the terms of the contract and compensation

FEEL:

- Doesn't have knowledge of industry standards and rate
- Anxious to negotiate any aspect of the offer
- Worried about performing the role well
- Worried about stability of the next few months
- They have no knowledge of the organization's budget line for this role, the organization's pay scale or parameters

DOES:

- Quickly accepts
- Quick research about industry compensation
- Calculate their cost of living and other financial obligations (caring for family, parents, sending money abroad)

Women, immigrants, Indigenous people, Black women, and people of colour have documented pay gaps in comparison to white men and to each other. This phenomenon has a number of explanations, one being the process of salary negotiations and the point at which a job offer is made.

While drafting a contract and offer, use the table below as a guide:

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Presentation | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ensure it is clearly stated that the role is being offered2. Reiterate the title of the role, the contract type and length and3. Ensure the contract and job offer are clear and do not require a lawyer or hired professional to decipher4. State whether or not discussions are welcomed about compensation, and whether that includes non-monetary compensation (benefits, way of working, etc.)5. Clearly state that having a discussion about compensation will not cause the job offer to be rescinded |
| Pay discussions | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Consider avoiding the use of language like 'negotiate' that can be extremely intimidating2. Do not wait for the successful applicant to start the conversation3. Do not ask about their pay rate in past roles¹¹4. Do not start the negotiation by asking them to submit their preferred pay rate5. Be clear about budgetary parameters and what has been considered in making the initial offer6. The applicant's life or life decisions should play no part eg. whether they are single, partnered, have children etc.7. If possible, provide them with a link to your organization's publicly published pay scale |
| Benefits | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ensure benefits are not excluded from the conversation about compensation and the successful applicant's needs2. Ensure they have a clear and concise document outlining the benefits package offered with this position. If there are none, ensure that is clear |
| Onboarding | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Reiterate the role and terms of reference2. Let them know who they will be reporting to and who their direct team will be3. Let them know the cadence of performance reviews4. Reiterate any critique that has been made about the creation of this role and any existing conflicts they will be entering |

It is important to give applicants a suitable amount of time (3-5 business days) to consider the offer.

¹¹ Basing a person's salary on what he or she made at the last job can perpetuate systemic gender pay discrimination



MAINTAINING AND REPORTING BACK ON DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Collecting, maintaining and reporting on recruitment data will be a critical part of building an inclusive recruitment and retention process. This data will be important in indicating:

- Whether the organisation has been successful in meeting the goals and objectives laid out by the recruitment body and larger organisation;
- Patterns in hiring, retrenching, promotion, and pay - some of which will need to be formally addressed;
- Where additional efforts need to be made for future recruitment.

Setting up feedback loops to understand the recruitment process will be a useful starting point. This can consist of a simple optional survey sent to all applicants to get feedback about that recruitment process, questions should be clear, and preferably in multiple choice format. You'll want to understand:

- If the job ad was easy to understand and clear
- If the critical qualifications listed felt attainable
- If they were unsure whether they qualified for the job
- If the application process felt accessible
- Any additional information they want to share about the application process

The survey should automatically be sent to candidates via email the moment the candidate moves to or past a selected stage in your pipeline. For example, you could choose to trigger the survey the moment a candidate submits an application. Candidates will receive a link to the survey in their inbox, and have the option to submit demographic information including gender, race, ability, gender expression, etc.

When sending out a survey, ethical considerations must be included in the design of the final design. It's important to state:

1. Why the survey is being conducted
2. Whether their responses are anonymous
3. What their responses will be used for
4. Who they can contact should they have questions off concerns about the survey

Below is the data that should be collected regularly, and shared quarterly or annually.

| | |
|---|--|
| Demographic information ^{12 13} When presenting, visualizing and recording data, demographic information should be cross | Gender, race, ethnicity, gender expression, age, education level, country of origin, physical disability, intellectual disability |
| Retention and mobility | Hirings, firing, retentions, resignations, demotions, promotions, extension of contracts, termination of contracts, non-extension of contracts, successful responses to RFPs |
| Pay scale | Pay ranges within all levels of staff, cadence of pay increases, percentage of pay increases |
| Mobility | Upward mobility of staff, ie. where they start in the organization and if they get promoted, and how often they are compensated |

- ➔ The hiring body should make this data available to all members of the organization staff and consider making it externally available to the public, union, board of directors, and future job applicants.
- ➔ This data should be reviewed at the beginning of the recruitment process to flag areas of focus and interest.

¹² This information should only be collected and recorded with the informed consent of your staff.

¹³ When collecting this data ensure it is clear which of these data points are full-time, permanent staff, short contracts, consultants, volunteers, etc.

QUAKE LAB

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