# Hiring Manager Diversity Toolkit

Washington University in St. Louis

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# I.   Why Diversity Matters

A focus on diversity brings many benefits to Washington University in St. Louis.  The highest functioning workplace teams are those that have greater diversity among members and are encouraged and taught to excel in collaboration. This means that diversity needs to be clarified, understood, communicated and maintained through conscious effort and consistent practices.

Different perspectives increase creativity, provide new approaches to problem solving, and lay the groundwork for a stronger organizational community and culturally competent work force. Washington University is committed to maintaining a workforce that welcomes and reflects the diversity of the world in which we exist in order to better support the communities that we serve. To support the university's workforce development efforts a Manager of Diversity and Community Outreach serves as the liaison between our internal resources and the surrounding community to attract and retain diverse talent specifically in managerial and executive level positions. We view diversity broadly, including considerations of race, ethnicity, religion, ability, sexual orientation, and gender.

This toolkit is intended to be one of many resources for you to consult as you seek to increase your outreach efforts and build a strong and diverse applicant pool. The Washington university recruitment team is dedicated to enriching the university community by obtaining the best diversified pool of talent for all available career opportunities. We are strongly committed to assisting every hiring manager with all aspects of the hiring process in order to select top talent. Through the creation of a climate of mutual respect in the workplace, we create an atmosphere that promotes and supports diversity and inclusion. In order to best serve the constituents of Washington University, we work to stay informed of current workforce trends and potential developments in the labor market. Our recruiting efforts include offering a wide array of services to assist in acquiring top candidates, as well as utilization of a variety of communication venues to identify and attract a diverse candidate pool. We encourage you to consult with HR Recruitment and your departmental HR administrator as you plan the hiring process.

This toolkit can be used in its entirety or in its particulars to help focus on high-priority needs for your area. It is also designed to address and offer suggestions to develop a more gender, ethnically, and generationally diverse candidate pool.

# II.   Recruitment Planning

The key to any successful hiring process is effective planning. This includes making an effort to diversify recruitment practices as you seek to attract the strongest candidates for your position.

Recruiters are here to assist you in laying the groundwork for a successful search. We encourage hiring managers to begin the recruitment and hiring process by speaking directly with the recruiter assigned to your position in order to develop a strategy for finding the best candidates. Consider the following items to contribute to a successful hiring process. The first step to a successful hiring process is creating a comprehensive roadmap.

## Begin With the End in Mind

It is important to review and update the job description and posting in order to accurately reflect the needs of the position and attract the right talent pool. Carefully review each component of the job description. Are the responsibilities current and accurate? Do the requirements align with the responsibilities? Do preferred qualifications need to be updated or added? Is there language in any of the sections that might unnecessarily limit your applicant pool or screen out quality candidates? Any items that are unnecessary or outdated should be reconsidered. All staff positions should remain posted for a minimum of five business days. Many positions, in order to develop a strong, diverse group of applicants, should remain posted for at least 14 days. Applications should be thoroughly reviewed and selected applicants moved to the next step in process. Please contact HR Recruitment or HR Compensation should adjustments need to be made to the job description.

## Create a Timeline

Set a target date for when the new hire would ideally begin and work backward from that date. This will allow you to determine steps that are required to meet the deadline. Time should be allowed for developing the applicant pool, reviewing applications to narrow the pool, phone screening and interviewing, reference checking and other screening procedures, selection, reaching agreement on offer terms, and pre-employment screening prior to the start date. It is also helpful to allocate time for contingencies in order to be prepared for any unexpected delays.

## Create a Budget

For some positions, merely posting the position at the university application website may be enough to develop a strong pool of candidates. Often, however, filling some openings can be more challenging than others and it may be important to consider allocating resources for outreach and/or advertising with publications or organizations that attract diverse candidates with qualifications suited for your position. Recruiters can assist with options when additional advertising may be helpful. The section of this document, Candidate Sourcing, provides more details on advertising and other effective strategies for finding strong candidates. Some openings may also require budgeting to support expenses such as travel (airfare, mileage, etc.), hotel accommodations, ground transportation and per diem. Consult with your department's fiscal administrator to review allowable costs in advance of the search.

# III.   <u>Unconscious Bias</u>

A common definition of unconscious bias is a preconceived opinion that we are unaware of, and which happens outside of our control.  It is a bias that happens automatically and is triggered by our brain making quick judgments and assessments of people and situations.  These quick judgments are influenced by our background, cultural environment and personal experiences.  These quick judgments are in our blind spots and in our fast brain thinking.

Understanding unconscious bias is an important part of building capacity and competency in the workplace. Everyone holds biases to some degree which can impede a person's ability to objectively identify the best candidates for a particular position. The goal of understanding our unconscious biases is to build awareness and uncover any specific biases as these may shape the way we conduct business in the workplace. It is important to provide resources to your interview team on unconscious bias at the start of the search. The following link will take you to a presentation excerpt on unconscious bias from Howard Ross, an industry expert in diversity and bias. [Howard Ross-Unconscious Bias](). This Harvard [Implicit Bias]() test might be helpful in understanding more about what biases individuals may have. In addition to the above resources, please visit Washington University's [Office of Diversity & Inclusion]() website to learn more about trainings and consultations available to all Washington University employees and departments offered by Washington University's Diversity and Inclusion team.  It is important to identify and mitigate any unconscious bias as much as possible to avoid adversely impacting your selection, interviewing, and hiring choices.

# IV.   <u>Candidate Sourcing</u>

While the reputation of Washington University in St. Louis as one of the largest employers in the St. Louis region and as one of the nation's top research universities goes far in attracting candidates, finding highly qualified candidates can be more challenging depending on the type of position and the requisite background and qualifications needed for success in the role.  In order to enrich the overall talent pool, it is essential to recruit in a multi-faceted manner to reach diverse and talented audiences. When it comes to recruiting, having an outreach plan in place is essential. Ask the following questions as you build your strategy: Who is in your outreach network? Who can help you reach your target audience? How long should the position remain posted? What is your budget? Have you utilized the HR Recruitment team to maximize the likelihood of an efficient and successful search? HR Recruitment can assist with specific ideas for effective strategies for your particular position.

In general, successful searches may employ multiple approaches which include targeted advertising and proactive networking. Recruiters can assist with strategies and ideas for targeted advertising. Often, hiring managers are in an excellent position to know which professional organizations and institutions may be best to target for advertising to draw candidates with any unique needs specific to their area. While advertising is very important for recruiting, one potential limitation of advertising alone is that it may be less effective in identifying strong potential candidates who may not be currently searching for another position. For this reason, proactively reaching out to colleagues in professional organizations and collaborators at other institutions can help spread the word of a current opening and reach candidates who might not otherwise be actively looking. Networking can be another helpful tool in surfacing strong candidates through such means as making contacts at professional meetings, facilitating relationships with colleagues both on campus and at other institutions and connecting with colleagues via professional associations and social media.

It is important to note, however, that one potential barrier to developing a strong candidate pool is to rely too much on those in your immediate network, and fail to cast a wide enough net in reaching out to diverse candidates and miss potential best fits for your positon. Below are a few of the recruitment mechanisms in place at Washington University to aid in reaching recruitment objectives and broadening and diversifying outreach for the needs of the position.

## Higher Education Recruitment Consortium (HERC)

All positions posted on the Washington University staff and postdoc jobs website are automatically posted with the HERC job board. HERC is a non-profit consortium comprised of colleges, universities, hospitals, and related institutions who share a commitment to hiring the most diverse and talented faculty, staff, and executives. The Greater Missouri HERC (Greater MO HERC) was established in 2007 and is a collaborative response of member institutions to the many challenges of academic recruitment and retention. The Greater Missouri HERC is composed of three regions: St. Louis Metro, Central Missouri, and Central Illinois. In addition, positions at Washington University auto-post to the national HERC job board, offering national exposure for our university.

One feature that distinguishes HERC from many other sources is its commitment to addressing dual-career concerns. Assisting dual-career couples is a key part of the HERC mission and one reason it remains a highly utilized resource for job seekers, which in turn draws a wider audience for employers. Click on the hyperlink for more details on [MO HERC](#).

## Social and Professional Networks

One of the most efficient and cost effective ways you can reach your target audience is by leveraging your personal network. If you are well networked within diverse communities, send postings to

listservs, Facebook groups, and your LinkedIn page. Postings should direct applicants to get more information and apply at https://jobs.wustl.edu/ and include the job opening number.

Also, utilize the university's Manager of Diversity and Community Outreach. The role of the Manager of Diversity and Community Outreach is to develop strategic and sustainable relationships with professional and community-based organizations to enhance the presence of Washington University throughout diverse communities and to increase the pipeline of high quality leadership-level candidates.

## Job Boards and Advertising

Positions that are high level which require a national/regional reach, or that necessitate highly specialized qualifications may warrant investing in advertising *via* job boards. These boards typically post an open position for a minimum of thirty days and may require payment. However, the visibility might be worth the investment. Additionally, some of the boards 'cross-post' which gives the opportunity to automatically reach a broader audience. This is also a great opportunity to contact your assigned recruiter to create and execute a recruitment plan that will reach the broadest possible audience.

See section VI of this toolkit for a list of job boards and professional associations targeting higher education and diverse professionals.

# V.   Candidate Review and Selection

Once the applicant pool has been developed, the challenge becomes narrowing the pool by identifying and interviewing the strongest candidates.

## Select the Interview Team and Define Their Involvement

Ensure that all individuals providing input are aware of the timeline, commitment, roles and responsibilities of the search. In order to be as objective as possible, it is important to maintain consistency in the way that candidates are treated throughout the process (*e.g.* asking all candidates selected for initial phone screens or interviews the same general set of questions).  This can be accomplished by establishing clear roles for those individuals who will be participating in candidate review and selection.

## Initial Screening and Applicant Review

Once candidates apply for your position, there are a number of tools within the Talent Acquisition Manager (TAM) online application system that can assist with initial screening and candidate

selection. For a brief tour and more information, please view "A Brief Tour of the Talent Acquisition Manager Online Application System" at: https://hr.wustl.edu/Pages/Manager-Resources.aspx .

In the review of applicants, it is important to maintain consistency by using pre-determined criteria based on the position description as a guide. One effective strategy can be to do a quick initial sort using the minimum qualifications and any other pre-determined critical criteria. Attempting to vastly narrow the pool at this stage is unnecessary and may even cause one to miss potentially strong candidates who might not appear as qualified at first glance, as well as limit the diversity of the applicant pool. HR Recruitment can assist with strategies for this initial sort and help ensure that your applicant pool is diverse. The recruiter can provide a de-identified demographic report of all the applicants to your position. When the initial sort is complete, another screening can be conducted on this narrowed pool based on the preferred qualifications by more detailed review of the resume, cover letter, and other supplemental application information.

## Interviews

Once the candidate pool is narrowed to final candidates, the interview stage can help differentiate between strong candidates. In preparing for interviewing, it is helpful to start with the position description and determine key job-based competencies required for success in the role (*e.g.* initiative, independence, problem solving, multi-tasking, cooperation and collaboration). Next, a set of job-focused interview questions can be created based on those key competencies. One effective approach is to use behavioral-based interview questions which are designed to lead a candidate into a discussion of their own actual experiences or past accomplishments. This type of interviewing is effective because it is directly related to the key job-based competency needs of the position and reveals the specific abilities which will help determine whether they may be a good fit in the new role.

This approach involves posing questions that direct the candidate to describe past experiences with opening phrases such as "Describe a specific situation where you…", "Give me an example of …", or "Tell me about a time when you…". Listen for individuals to describe the situation that they were confronted with, the actions that they took, and the results that were achieved. It can be helpful to consider the following questions: Were answers related to the essential functions of the position? Were they significant and meaningful? Were they recent? Are they demonstrating a consistent pattern? As with the previous phases of the process, consistency is key to success. Ask each candidate the same set of core questions and document the responses. When developing interview questions, it is important to remember that there are ways to get the objective information needed to hire the most qualified candidate, and it is critical that hiring decisions are made within the framework of current laws and policies. For examples of acceptable and unacceptable interview questions from a legal perspective and more extensive examples of behavioral-based interview questions, please see: https://hr.wustl.edu/Pages/Manager-Resources.aspx .

If your applicant pool is very large with highly qualified applicants, initial interviews in the form of phone screens may be a good option. This can be a time efficient way to allow you to further assess each candidate's potential match for the position. Initial phone screens also allow for candidates to determine fit from their perspective – potentially reducing the possibility that a candidate chooses to withdraw later on in the process. When documenting candidate interview responses, it is important to keep personal or editorial comments out of interview notes or documents and only record job-specific information. All documents created during the interview process must be retained for a minimum of three years in order to minimize legal risk as they are discoverable should a complaint be filed.

During the interview, it is important to make the candidate aware of both the good and the more challenging aspects of the position in order to minimize potential negative on-the-job surprises. Also, asking challenging questions that could make a candidate temporarily uncomfortable may be doing them, and you, a favor if it saves everyone from the stress and anxiety of a poor fit. Please contact HR Recruitment for specific interview strategies.

## Reference Checking

No matter how good the interview and application materials, it is very important to confirm by checking multiple references (ideally current and former supervisors, mentors, *etc.*) prior to extending an offer to hire. Again, consistency is essential to the process. Ask the same core set of job-focused questions (including work attitude, attendance, technical skills, *etc.*). HR Recruitment recommends obtaining at least two supervisory/mentor references. References can be helpful in distinguishing among final candidates as well as to provide further confirmation of a candidate's strengths prior to extending an offer.

As in the case of interview notes, it is important to document reference results. Only job-specific information should be recorded, avoiding personal or editorial comments. Documents must be retained for a minimum of 3 years. HR Recruitment can provide you with a standard template for checking references. Another automated reference checking option is through SkillSurvey (http://www.skillsurvey.com/about-us/) at a nominal cost per candidate, regardless of the number of references they provide. Please consult with your department's HR administrator or recruiter for specific suggestions and guidance.

## Selecting a Final Candidate

You have gone through careful steps throughout this process. Now what? Ultimately, the final hiring decision is dependent upon carefully reviewing all data collected up to this point. It is helpful to have hiring managers and those who participated in the interviews identify strengths and weaknesses for

all finalists. Recruiters are glad to serve as a sounding board and to offer further thoughts and strategies in making a final decision. Besides having 'hard data' to support which candidate would be the likely best match, a thoughtful assessment of strengths and weaknesses can also be helpful in generating recommendations for later onboarding the selected candidate discussed below.

## Extending the Offer

Recruiters can assist with best practices in making an offer. In situations where salary limitations may be a concern, there are a number of other approaches to take to help "sell" the position to your final candidate by sharing with them the strengths of a potential career move. Washington University offers a generous benefits package. Details can be found at http://hr.wustl.edu/benefits/Pages/default.aspx. Sometimes, strong candidates may be reluctant to consider leaving their current position and location for various reasons and other approaches may be helpful. One effective approach can be to first listen to their concerns and then share with them from one's own positive experiences at Washington University and in the St. Louis area, or put them in contact with individuals who can do this. Recruiters can assist with ideas and strategies in getting to an accepted offer.

## Retention and Onboarding

While attracting diverse talent is important, it is equally important to retain the diverse talent that you have. By focusing on employee retention you are able to manage and reduce employee turnover, maintain and enhance performance and productivity, increase morale, and enhance your ability to recruit additional high performing talent. A foundation to successful retention is to develop an onboarding plan for every new hire in order to provide the best opportunity for success in their new role – especially if they are new to Washington University. Your department's HR administrator and HR Recruitment can provide specific ideas and strategies for effective onboarding.

Employee retention begins on a new hire's first day on the job. The training and support provided from Day One sets the tone for the employee's tenure here at Washington University and can immediately reaffirm that Washington University was a great choice to grow their career. A few simple and easy to implement retention strategies are to ensure that you have professional development goals for each member of your team, and to periodically check in with them to see how they are doing in order to create an environment where they feel comfortable sharing with you any challenges or concerns that they may be experiencing. A number of learning and development opportunities are currently available to all Washington University employees through HR Learning and Development. For more information, please visit Learning and Development (http://hr.wustl.edu/career_development).

Below are further examples of best practices that you can implement to enhance your employee retention:

- New Hire Orientation
    - Socialization and introduction to culture
- Employee Communication
    - Clear and precise expectations
    - Routine performance reviews (feedback)
    - Recognition
- Career Navigation (Succession Planning)
- Training and development
- Compensation and reward

# VI.   Higher Ed and Diversity Focused Web Sites

- **Ability jobs**
- **All Diversity**
- **American Association for Access, Equity and Diversity**
- **CareerOneStop "Business Center"**
- **Diversity Employers**
- **HBCU Connect**
- **Hire America's Heroes**
- **Hispanic Today**
- **iHispano**
- **INSIGHT into Diversity**
- **National Association of Asian American Professionals (NAAAP)**
- **National Employment Minority Network (NEMNET)**
- **OCA – Asian Pacific American Advocates (OCA)**
- **Out Professionals**
- **Workplace Diversity**

## Higher Education Specific Web Sites

- **American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC)**
- **Diverse Issues in Higher Education**
- **Diverse Scholar**
- **Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU)**
- **Latinos in Higher Education**
- **NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education**
- **National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO)**
- **The Chronicle of Higher Education**
- **The Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education**
- **The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education (JBHE)**
- **Top Higher Education Jobs**
- **Women in Higher Education**

# Other/Industry Specific Web Sites

- **Accounting & Financial Women's Alliance (AFWA)**
- **American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES)**
- **Association for Women in Science**
- **National Black Nurses Association**
- **National Association of Black Accountants (NABA)**
- **National Black MBA Association**
- **Society for Advancement of Hispanics/Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS)**
- **Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE)**
- **Society of Women Engineers**