

The background of the slide is a dark, textured pattern of small, light-colored leaves or petals. Overlaid on this is a circular cutout showing a close-up of a woman's face. She has dark hair, is wearing round, thin-rimmed glasses, and has a neutral expression. Her eyes are looking slightly to the right of the camera.

# Insights to Diversity & Inclusion within Recruitment

#diverseteamsaresmarter

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# INSIGHTS TO DIVERSITY & INCLUSION WITHIN RECRUITMENT

By Jacqueline Weller, Associate Director - April 2021

I am often asked by clients “what can we do to increase diversity within our recruitment process and broaden the talent pool?”. We all know that a diverse workforce is key to ensuring competitive advantage, driving change and innovation as well as leading to a happier and more productive workplace. There has been a number of studies over the years by companies like McKinsey & Co, Harvard Business School and Boston Consulting Group that helps provide context to the impact a diverse and inclusive workforce has on innovation and success.

As recruiters and talent acquisition specialists we are at the frontline of these initiatives. So, what can we all do to assist our organisation? I thought I would share from my experience some basic points that might assist on your Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) recruitment initiatives:

- Ensure that all employees have received structured D&I training. We had our annual training last week and it really helps to highlight the role we all play in ensuring a diverse and inclusive workplace, as well as the advantages that diversity of thought brings to our organisation.
- Anti-bias training underpins the D&I initiatives by recognising the different forms of unconscious bias that can exist within the recruitment process and ways to bring more objectivity to selection processes. This can be achieved through different selection techniques, use of diverse interviewer panels, structured competency-based interviewing, ability tests, work sampling and personality profiling etc.
- Ensure that a range of agreed stakeholders are involved in the CV assessment review process not just one person in an organisation to help reduce any possible bias. Also shortlisting against set criteria which has been agreed for the mandate you seek to recruit provides objectivity and consistency.
- Try ‘Blind CV’ assessment by removing personal information which may highlight an individual’s gender, location or school/college/university for example to reduce the possibility of bias.
- Establish a selection panel of interviewers, ensure that your selection team are truly represented by the diversity you wish to achieve and are fully trained to be able to conduct interviews on behalf of the organisation.
- Check with shortlisted candidates whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made and ensure that this is actioned.
- Assessments should be made and scored against criteria set for a role, with each interviewer scoring individually and then subsequently discussing findings as part of the selection panel. Allowing all parties, the opportunity to express their thoughts and opinions on the candidate. ▶

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- Ensure your final stage selection pool has a diversity of candidates. Evidenced by a Harvard Business Review determined if the final candidate pool has one minority candidate, he or she is unlikely to be selected but where two or more in the final pool helps for reducing unconscious biases and increasing diversity (known as the “two in the pool effect”).
- Consider the use of Automated Intelligent (AI) technologies in initial screening to automate shortlisting and screening, also bringing more objectivity and consistency – reducing the impact of human bias.
- When advertising a position, ensure that your wording and images do not discourage certain candidates from applying. You want your advertisement to be as inclusive as possible to attract a diverse range of candidates – think carefully about the words used, format and the audiences you want to attract. There are several free online ‘Gender Decoding’ tools available where you can drop your advertisement copy into the tool to see if you are using words more attractive/less appealing to male or female audiences. In addition, try to avoid the long ‘shopping list’ of requirements needed to perform the role, consider what are the essential attributes, qualities and skills required for success in the role. Research has shown for example that a woman is less likely to apply to an advertisement unless they meet 100% of the qualifications, men apply for a role when they meet only 60% of the qualifications.
- As with advertising, remember that your job description needs to align to the same guidelines. Remember language used within the specification needs to be gender neutral and inclusive. Ensure that the person profile really aligns to the requirements needed to perform the role and not just a wish list that could disengage with your potential target audience. For example, if a degree qualification is not required to perform a role then why include in the specification, you may prevent a candidate who has all the required experience applying.
- For companies that use third party recruitment partners such as recruitment agencies and screening providers, ensure you are educating your suppliers on your diversity and inclusion initiatives, providing necessary guidelines and standards you wish them to adopt and communicate to potential candidates.
- Broaden your recruitment channels to market to communicate to a wider audience and target specific diversity groups to build brand awareness. Think outside of the traditional attraction sites to engage with diverse candidates to build longer term talent pools.
- Engage with external networking forums, membership societies and professional bodies which have diverse memberships and under-represented groups.
- Use activities like careers fairs, industry events, community programmes and wider insight/intern activities to underpin your commitment to D&I.
- Ensure you are promoting your equality and diversity policy and that you welcome candidates from all backgrounds, genders, abilities and ethnicities etc so that this stands out to candidates to demonstrate your organisation’s commitment. ▶

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- Set meaningful recruitment KPIs for your inhouse talent team and managers, that tracks how well you are progressing with your D&I objectives. Conduct regular diversity audits on your hiring process establishing your strengths and challenges. Having meaningful data is key to monitoring success within your D&I initiatives.
  - Consider flexible workplace policies that allows more flexibility. For example, home working options, condensed hours or flexible working patterns not only will appeal to a wider audience it will also help in your retention of employees.
  - Vocalise your D&I achievements and your success stories through your people, testimonials, website and social media channels. Highlight the benefits of working for your organisation. Your employees are your greatest ambassadors.
  - Remember diversity is broader than the protected characteristics, it should embrace other considerations like diversity of thought and opinions.
- I hope the above provides you with some useful insights to recruitment related D&I initiatives, and that as a recruiter you can benefit from the application of these hints and tips within your recruitment processes to help you on your D&I journey. For further insights on IGA Talent Solutions please visit our website [www.igatalent.com](http://www.igatalent.com) and if you wish to explore any of the above in further detail feel free to contact me on [jweller@igatalent.com](mailto:jweller@igatalent.com)



Over 30 years' in the area of talent acquisition, Jacqueline has the breadth and depth of experience to understand the strategies, processes and pitfalls associated with the full recruitment lifecycle. She is passionate about matching the right person to the right role, ensuring long term success for both parties.

Jacqueline joined IGA Talent Solutions, having previously worked as the Recruitment Manager for the Punter Southall Group of companies, where she was responsible for the development and delivery of talent acquisition across the group. In this and her previous roles at CapGemini and onsite at TCA Consulting, Jacqueline acquired extensive experience in multiple sectors, including pensions, actuarial, investment, wealth management, banking, employee benefits, healthcare and IT professional services.

Jacqueline's expertise spans across in-house, managed service and agency focus where she's demonstrated a strong focus on candidate and client engagement.