

Ensuring Equitable Searches for Staff Positions



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Objectives

Review federal and institutional requirements related to hiring practices

Explore the concept of implicit bias and how it can impact strategic diversity and inclusion goals and influence the staff search process.

Identify strategies to overcome barriers to diversifying the search process.

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Affirmative Action (AA)

- EEO = Non-Discrimination (Title VII)
 - Focus is on *Individuals*
 - Implementation through Policies
 - EEO Commission Enforcement
- AA = Good Faith Efforts (Executive Order 11246)
 - Focus is on *Systems*
 - Implementation through AA Plans
 - Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) Enforcement

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Affirmative Action (AA)

Federal Requirements

- **Clery Statement**
 - Notify applicants of our Annual Safety Report (ASR)
 - Internal and External statements
- **Qualified Applicant Status**
 - Expression of Interest
 - Consideration
 - Basic Qualification
 - Continued Interest
- **Search Disposition Data**
 - Codes used to explain movement of applicants and candidates through the hiring process

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Affirmative Action (AA)

Institutional Requirements

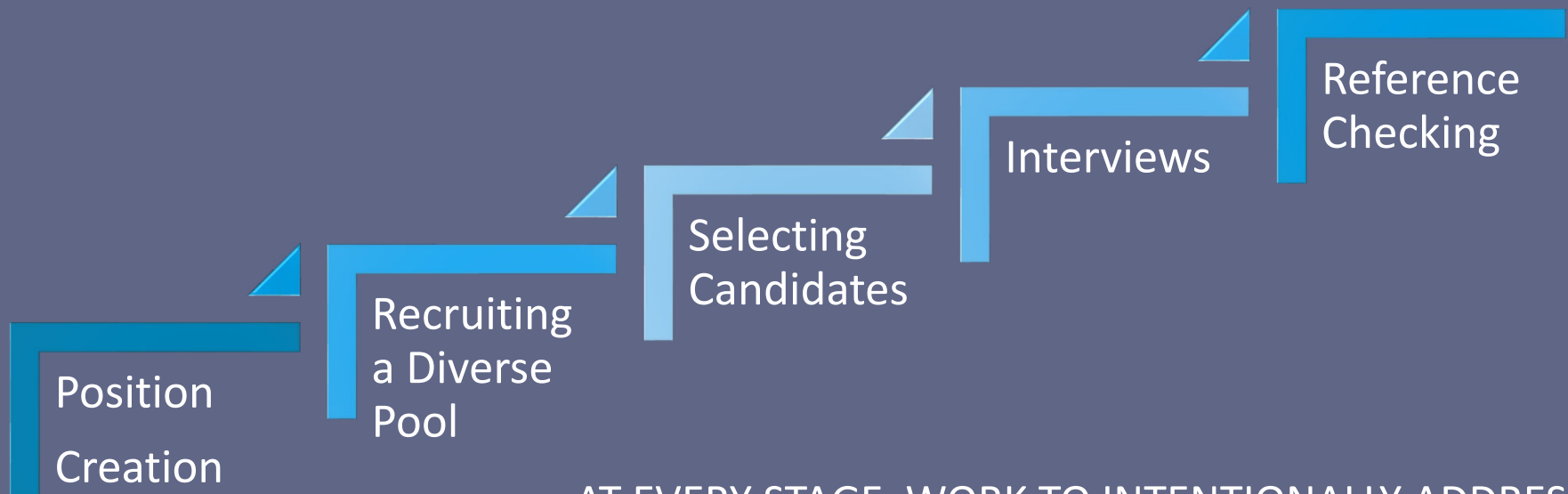
- EEO Statement (Required vs. Optional)
- Advertising Sources
 - National advertising for Executives, Division I Head Coaches, Athletic Directors, Associate Athletic Directors
- Posting Length – 7 Days
- AAO Process
 - Academic Recruitment Form
 - Short List Approval Form
 - Affirmative Action Recruitment Report

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Affirmative Action (AA)

Institutional Requirements

- Policy HR101 Revisions
- Retention of Records
 - All candidate evaluations, list of search committee members, and applicant materials must be collected and retained
 - Search committee chairs are to give these materials to your HRSPs
 - Three-year retention period from application deadline date; five-year for foreign nationals

Connecting Equity and Inclusion with the Search Process



AT EVERY STAGE, WORK TO INTENTIONALLY ADDRESS AND IMPLEMENT STRATEGIES FOCUSED ON ADVANCING OUR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION GOALS

Excellence or Diversity

“How do we recruit the best and hire for diversity?”

The two are not mutually exclusive.

It presumes that diverse candidates are inherently NOT the best.

This question often underlies the unaddressed implicit bias that exists and is prevalent during the recruitment and hiring stages.

Arguably, the best candidates are the ones who bring diverse perspectives and experiences to the unit.

Recruiting a Diverse Pool



Unconscious or Implicit Bias

Forming a quick opinion about a situation or person *without being consciously aware of it*. How we take in, tag, and sort information.

Results from one's "Cultural Programming".

More likely to occur in moments when we are rushed or under pressure.

Unconscious or Implicit Bias

Affinity bias: The tendency to think positively about people like ourselves.

Halo effect: The tendency to see one great thing about a person and think everything is good about that person as a result.

Horns effect: The tendency to focus on one particularly negative feature about a person, which then clouds your view of their other qualities.

Confirmation bias: The tendency for people to seek information that confirms pre-existing beliefs or assumptions about that person.

Conformity bias: The tendency to mimic others' beliefs or hold back your own thoughts and opinions (i.e. group think).

Before the Search

- Affirmative Action Plans
 - Purpose
 - Plan Review
 - Goals and Rationale

Before the Search

- “Candid Conversations”
 - Identified Recruitment Process
 - Who, Where, How
 - Challenges
 - Mechanisms to address needed change
 - Resource Identification

Challenging the Status Quo

“Our surrounding communities don’t reflect much diversity, so there just isn’t a pool to pull from.”

“Diverse candidates don’t want to move to this area/region for this kind of job.”

“We’ve tried this before, and underrepresented candidates don’t end up staying long. We don’t want to have to turn around next year and do this search all over again.”

Employment Branding

Does the unit have a positive reputation among populations you're trying to recruit?

Outreach efforts, image advertising, networking and other strategies need to be used to develop relationships with target populations.

If communities don't have a connection or experience with an institution, they won't typically take a risk and apply for a specific position. This is particularly true if few members of those communities are employed at the institution.

Employment Branding

Employment Landing Page:

Section on a website that gives potential applicants all the information they need to become interested in and apply for the job.

To attract URM candidates, this page should focus on demographics, climate, a desire to increase diversity, and highlight examples of successful URM staff, and faculty as well if applicable.

Image Ad:

Indirect form of advertising that doesn't specifically announce a vacancy, but it develops the unit's employment brand as a great place to work.

An example might be a campaign such as "See who's working in Housing & Food Services or Student Affairs", featuring a diverse group of successful staff.

Predisposes a candidate to apply when a vacancy arises because of the earlier positive images of the unit.

The Search Committee

Determining committee membership

Ensuring that all members understand their responsibility for conducting a fair and equitable search.

Promoting “candid conversations”

- Identifying challenges
- Acknowledging and recognizing the influence of implicit bias and actively mitigating it

Establishing screening criteria to ensure an equitable review process

Writing the Job Post

- Research has shown that organizations who move beyond the required EEO Statement (*Penn State is committed to the diversity of its workforce...*) and include a statement on their overall Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion vision/goals/mission have a greater likelihood of increasing the diversity of their applicant pool.
- Generationally, Millennial and Generation Z members also look for alignment with personal and professional values. Can they be a part of an organization where they can make a difference in the areas that matter to them?
- Penn State's Statement on Inclusive Excellence
equity.psu.edu/diversity-statement

Sample Optional Diversity Statement

Penn State is committed to and accountable for advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in all of its forms. We embrace individual uniqueness, foster a culture of inclusion and belonging that supports both broad and specific diversity initiatives, and leverage the educational and institutional benefits of diversity. We value inclusion and belonging as core strengths and essential elements of our public service mission.



Promoting diversity & inclusion as a required competency

- Beyond sharing our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, we want to make sure that our workforce has a level of cultural competency and agility as well.
- Including D&I competencies in the job description increases the likelihood of a more diverse pool, and of hiring a candidate, regardless of demographics, who is committed and adept at demonstrating these skills.

Example statements:

- *Demonstrated ability to work with underserved and/or underrepresented populations.*
- *Demonstrated commitment and ability to successfully advocate for diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging.*
- *Successful record of recruitment and retention of diverse faculty, staff, and students.*
- *Demonstrated knowledge, skills, relevant abilities and/or interest in: (list diversity-related topics, activities, and/or diverse populations).*

Types of Sourcing

Advertising

Passive

During search

Job seekers

Wider focus

Can be diversity-sensitive

Competitive offers likely

Networking

Active

Before, during, after search

Employed, Job seekers, Influencers

Limited focus

Can be diversity-sensitive

Competitive offers unlikely

Recruiting

Most Active

Before, during search

Employed

Narrow focus

Most diversity-sensitive

Competitive offers unlikely

Beyond “Post and Pray”

- What partnerships can you leverage (internal and external)? Pipelines you can build?
- What conferences or professional organizations have higher percentages of individuals from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds?
- Where can you find lists of award recipients (mentoring, research, fellowships)?
- Explore challenges and limitations within formerly established networks.
- Partner with other units to advertise multiple openings in a variety of publications or networks.

Selecting Candidates

SCREENING PHASE – BUILDING THE CANDIDATE POOL



Screening Process

Research has shown that removing demographically identifying information from applicant materials greatly increases your chance of diversifying the applicant pool. **BUT**, we also know that looking for cues which indicate candidates' diversity, or commitment to it, can help diversify the pool.

Recognizing the potential for bias and the willingness to challenge it can help address this dilemma.

- Notions of “fitness” can often be influenced by affiliations of gender, age, race, ethnicity, ability status, etc.

Screening Process

Other areas of potential bias:

- Non-traditional career paths
- Breaks in service
- Screening elitism – particular schools, organizations, certifications, etc.

Interviewing and Evaluating



Interview Process

While you may be able to implement some controls during the screening process, it may be harder to do so during the interview stage.

It is crucial to be aware of personal biases at this stage as well. Physical representation, verbal and non-verbal communication styles, and other presentations will trigger cultural notions of “fitness” and can impact the rating of candidate performance during the interview.

Maintain levels of standardization throughout the interview process – asking similar questions (allowing for follow-up as necessary), and similar routines.

Behavioral Based Interviewing

Communicate your Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion while assessing the candidate's contributions and commitment to these values.

Values

- What are the candidate's core beliefs around diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging?

Articulation

- How does the candidate convey their understanding of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging and the value of these concepts in their work?

Skill

- How does the candidate demonstrate cultural competency and agility?

Interview Questions

- Ask questions across the three domains in the previous slide.
 - What would we expect the culturally competent and agile candidate to know?
 - What would we expect the culturally competent and agile candidate to be able to do?
- Ask candidates for examples of how they've promoted or advanced diversity, inclusion and belonging in previous positions and/or how they will do so in the position they're applying for.
- Ask candidates how they might adapt their work or presentation to reach a particular audience.
- Ask candidates how they assess the climate within a unit with respect to diversity, inclusion and belonging.
- Ask candidates to share any barriers or challenges they have encountered or that might exist in higher education with respect to promoting diversity, inclusion and belonging.

Checking References



Maintain Equity through the Reference Checking Process

At the stage of reference checking, we are once again looking to confirm a number of factors.

It is important to be attentive not only to our own biases, but to the potential hidden biases of the person providing the reference.

Are we looking for specific traits, characteristics, or key words? Are these phrases likely to be used regardless of the candidate's identity?

- Research indicates that the language used to describe female candidates often focuses on soft skills and service related functions rather than on competency related functions that are typically used to describe male candidates.

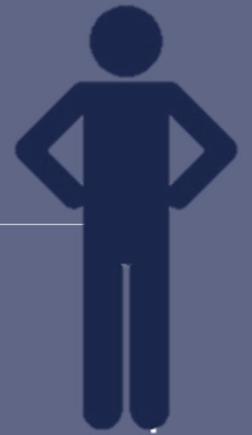
Preventing the References from Undoing Your Work

Ask the candidate to provide a range of references: supervisors, peers, former or current students, etc.

Keep questions aligned to the same competencies used to evaluate the candidate for the position.

Ask the reference about the candidate's demonstrated commitment to creating diverse and inclusive work and learning environments

Summary



Countering Unconscious or Implicit Bias

- Acknowledge and discuss the potential for bias to exist and influence decision making at various stages; Be willing to disrupt the status quo
 - What types of bias might exist within the field or towards underrepresented individuals?
- Slow down – Be intentional
- Create and communicate structure
- Carefully consider standardized processes (ranking, interviewing, etc.)
 - Implement a process that makes managing the number of applicants reasonable enough to allow for a more thorough review.

