



WHAT IS WHITE FRAGILITY?

White

*Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People
to Talk About Racism*

Effective Strategies and Practices to Recruit and Retain a Diverse and Inclusive Workforce

There is no such thing as a one-size-fits-all approach to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Solutions and commitments must be created specifically to match the environment. The following practices should be considered in the context of the organization and selectively applied where relevant.

RECRUITMENT

Changing the messaging on job descriptions, even through subtle word choices, can have a big impact on diversity sourcing and attraction efforts. Encouraging hiring managers to be more open to candidates who do not meet all the job requirements opens the position up to candidates who are ready to move up and grow into the position.

Implicit biases concerning “culture fit” often lead to homogeneity in the workplace. It is important to establish objective criteria for all open roles and to rate each applicant using a standard rubric. If using technology, ensure those tools are built on data that is fair to all socio-demographic groups. Proactively test technologies for disparate impacts on workers and check for implicit biases on the back end. When one insurance company began hiring with objective criteria, it ended up offering jobs to 46% more nonwhite candidates than before (Williams & Mihaylo, 2019).

The odds of hiring a nonwhite candidate are 194 times higher with at least two nonwhite candidates in the pool (Williams & Mihaylo, 2019). To build a diverse pool, search using sources such as historically Black colleges and universities, Hispanic and Latino organizations, or professional groups like the National Association of Asian American Professionals. When asking for referrals, reach out to employees of color to source from their networks. This strategy should not be used in isolation, as it may cause the burden of equality to fall exclusively to employees of color.

Use a blind resume review to ensure focus on a candidate's specific qualifications and talents rather than surface demographic characteristics. Shopify recently held a virtual career fair and assigned neutral avatars to all attendees that were race, age, and gender agnostic. (McLaren, 2019). This allowed recruiters to objectively evaluate applicants based on their experience and competencies.

Unstructured interviews are often unreliable for predicting job success. Skills-based questions and work sample tests force employers to critique the quality of a candidate's work versus unconsciously judging them on appearance or race. Ask all interviewees the same questions and ensure that each question directly relates to the desired knowledge and skills. Rate the answers immediately in order to compare candidates fairly. Train hiring managers on equitable candidate evaluations and ensure that these managers are diverse in gender and race.

Partnering with HBCUs



Dot Foods has adopted a company-wide strategy to increase diverse talent, which includes unconscious bias training, revamping its recruitment and hiring practices and strengthening its onboarding process. In 2016, Dot began efforts to recruit from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and has had several campaigns geared toward operational, sales, and IT positions. As of 2019, Dot has grown applications and job views from 5,000 job views/50 applications/0 hires to more than 58,000 job views/500 applications/3 hires.

Dot has been named in HBCU Connect's Top 50 Diversity Recruitment Employers list, recently at #20. HBCU Connect works with organizations to assist in efforts to reach students and alumni. Dot was recognized for doing an excellent job in efforts to target students and graduates from HBCUs for employment.

HOW TO BE ANTI-RACIST

How to be an Antiracist



Chubb operates within a dynamic and changing global environment where marketplaces and customers are culturally diverse and broad. Meeting diverse customer needs requires the best minds collaborating in a

Cross-racial sponsorship is critical to development and advancement in the workplace. Furthermore, the presence of an ally increases feelings of belonging

ERGs allow employees to connect and share experiences with their coworkers, but can also be instrumental in trying to push DE&I efforts forward. Build connections between ERGs and management to empower them to impact the direction of the organization. Be sure to reward them for their efforts.

The work of racial equity is never done. While it is unrealistic to assume that all managers will immediately see the value of change initiatives, interventions that work with and engage managers are more sustainable and long-lasting. It is therefore worth investing time in explaining why a culture change is necessary, as well as the inherent risks to the organization if current approaches toward inclusion are not improved. Change agents need to clearly define how the change process aligns with the organization's strategic goals to gain long-term buy-in. Both majority employees and employees of color should be invited to become active participants in the change process.

"As leaders, especially as white people, failure to stay the course and to use our power to disproportionately shoulder the burden to combat racism at work is a violation of the trust that [people of color] put in us and this process."

Hecht (HBR 6/16/20)

Black Employee Network



Colleague
Customer
Community

Conclusion

With each passing year, the United States becomes more diverse, and yet people of color remain consistently underrepresented and under-promoted in US organizations. While the case for increased diversity and inclusion is compelling, companies face many barriers to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace, including the difficult nature of authentic conversations, resistance from majority employees, organizational inertia, deeply held implicit biases, and limited funding.

Organizations should be mindful of not just recruiting but also retaining and promoting diverse individuals. Simply increasing the number of diverse employees does not dismantle the systems that prevent people of color from developing a sense of belonging and advancing within an organization. To increase representation throughout an organization, leaders must work to challenge implicit biases, engage in honest and vulnerable conversations, and mindfully support and mentor people of color for advancement opportunities.

The risks of not making a serious commitment to racial diversity, equity, and inclusion can be damaging for an organization. Lower levels of employee engagement, hampered productivity, and decreased loyalty among employees of color are some of the consequences that may occur. However, when organizational leaders prioritize and commit to improving diversity and inclusion practices and policies over the long term, they create a supportive workplace that empowers all employees to thrive and contribute to higher organizational performance overall.

The time is now for organizational leaders to pause and reflect. Taking an honest look at existing diversity and inclusion policies and practices and identifying where improvement should occur is an examination that is well worth the effort. Mapping the path forward and following through on planned actions is critical. In order to maximize organizational wellbeing and epitomize the