**Instructions: steps to ensure a successful interview process**

**Step One – Establish an interview selection panel**

The first step to any interview process is to ensure you have a trained and diverse selection panel. To be most effective in embracing EDI this first step is integral to enable a range of perspectives to be brought to the decision-making process.

Training can include unconscious bias, micro-aggression, and general EDI awareness training. It is important to ensure this training has been completed before an employee participates as part of an interview selection panel, to help eliminate biases.

A member of the selection panel should be trained specifically to act as a “bias interrupter”, responsible for highlighting any biases and mitigating against them.

Keeping up with candidates’ answers can be difficult, identify a notetaker to ensure all information has been documented.

**Step Two – Create a scoring matrix**

Once you have formed a fully trained selection panel and have identified a bias interrupter, the next step is to plan the assessment criteria. The best way to do this is by unpicking the job description you have written and highlighting the parts that you will be able to assess candidates’ suitability via an interview exercise.

Once you have identified assessment criteria, the next step is to put together a rating standard or matrix. An example of how to lay one out has been attached to this toolkit. The idea is that you ask open-ended questions based on each assessment criteria to assess candidates’ suitability to the role you are hiring for. It is important to ensure the same questions are asked of interviewees so that the process is the same for all candidates. Make sure to keep the interview questions focused on the job and are appropriate to ask. It is important to avoid questions around the protected characteristics (e.g., age, race, gender, national origin, religion, disability, sexuality, and marital or family status).

Once this has been established agree on a way to mark the candidates and produce a key. On the example matrix, we have used a simple 1-4 scale (1 [limited evidence of assessment criteria] – 4 [exceeds the assessment criteria]). Make sure there is room to include reasons for grading a candidate. You will typically conduct plenty of interviews and will likely forget why you have graded a certain way. With evidence and reasons for grading noted down, this process will become much more streamlined.

Make sure that you anonymise each scoring sheet to eliminate the possibility of biases.

**Step Three – Cater to the needs of the interviewee**

Whether your interviews are being conducted in person or online there are steps you can take to ensure EDI has been embraced within your recruitment exercise. If your interview is being conducted in-person, ask each interviewee if any adjustments need to be made to enable them to be comfortable for the interview. Sometimes, this could range from wheel-chair access to the building, requiring a sign language interpreter, or having an uncrowded space with an open window due to claustrophobia. However, if you are conducting your interviews online virtual backgrounds can help to give all candidates the image, helping to eliminate bias about where someone lives. All these adjustments are important to be made to level out the playing field and give all candidates equal opportunities for interview success.

Interviewing can be a stressful and unnatural experience for candidates. Ensure to put the candidate at ease by making eye contact and establishing rapport with them. An easy way to do this is by reading a candidate’s CV before the interview and finding a shared interest to talk about before the process starts.

Don’t forget that the interview is mainly about the candidate, so listen more and talk less. However, sometimes interviewees can be shy or nervous, which could reflect in their answers. Make sure to ask them to dig a little deeper into their answers if they have only given slight detail.

Ensure to give enough time for the candidate to ask you any questions about the role or company. This also may allow you to sell the company to the interviewee as this recruitment process goes both ways.

**Step Four – Collect your scores and make your decision**

Do not discuss your thoughts or attempt to rank the candidates through the process. This could give unfair advantages to the later candidates who may have not had a chance to impress the panel yet. It is much more appropriate to wait until all interviews have been conducted, collect your notes, scores, and then make a collective and informed decision based upon all the facts.

Make sure to inform each candidate when they will hear back from you. Typically, within two weeks is standard.

Once you have chosen your successful candidates before communicating that, ensure to inform the unsuccessful candidates, they haven’t got the position first and provide feedback you had collected as part of your matrix to them. 80-90% of candidates report that a positive or negative candidate experience can change their minds about a company.[[1]](#footnote-1) If the successful candidates know before the unsuccessful candidates and make it public it places other candidates in a strange position.

**Step Five – Reflect and make improvements**

EDI is an ever-growing concept. To continue to embrace EDI within recruitment exercises, a constant review of your practices will support you to keep up with developments.

1. https://talentadore.com/candidate-experience-statistics-know/ [↑](#footnote-ref-1)