3 Step-Guide to Inclusive Interviewing

DEVELOP DIVERSE™

The quality of your interviews says a lot about your company and what kind of employer you are. Making your interviews as inclusive as possible not only enhances your employer brand and the candidate experience but also improves the quality of your hires. By using inclusive interviewing practices, you can create a fair process for every applicant and discover outstanding candidates who may not have been considered otherwise.

83%

say a negative interview experience can change their mind about a role or company they once liked.

DEVELOP
DIVERSE ™

"To avoid beauty bias in hiring decisions, we made some conscious changes to our hiring process. This is why first interviews are now always done by telephone by the hiring manager — no camerasare involved in this initial stage of the process. Managers can objectively assess the candidate's motivation and capabilities without bias coming into the equation, while still creating a welcoming environment for candidates. At the second interview, we make sure it's a joint process. We use the same questions for every candidate to ensure consistency so that we know we're always assessing candidates in a structured way."

Kathrine Benzon
– Talent Acquisition Partner at Maersk Tankers

Key Components of Inclusive Interviewing

1. Structured and Standardized Process:

- Establish a clear interview structure and standardized criteria for evaluation.

- Provide training to interviewers on unbiased interview techniques and competency-based questioning.

- Ensure consistency in evaluating all candidates based on the same criteria and questions.

- Avoid subjective evaluations that can lead to bias.

All candidates should be assessed using the same criteria. If you ask an older candidate about their tech knowledge but don't pose the same question to a younger candidate with prior tech experience, your process is biased from the start.

2. Identify Inclusion Gaps in Assessments:

- Assessments should go beyond skills-based evaluations to account for candidate potential and holistic suitability.

- Identify and address biases in assessments that may inadvertently disadvantage certain candidates.

- Consider the impact of assessments on candidates from different backgrounds and experiences.

Skills-based assessments may seem like you're levelling the playing field for your candidates. They provide proof of skills, while holding each candidate to the same evaluation criteria, meaning you're less likely to succumb to bias - right? Not exactly. The problem with most interview assessments is that they have a limited perspective. They prioritise on-the-job learning and candidate potential. But they're not designed to account for the whole human at the center of the process.

In simpler terms, interview assessments are so focused on creating an equal experience that they fail to be equitable. They're designed based on an assumption that every candidate has the same amount of time, knowledge, and needs. But your candidates may not always share how an assessment impact them. For instance, a working parent might have limited time due to family obligations, and a neurodivergent candidate might struggle with certain assessment formats.

3. Redefine the Interview Experience:

Just because most organizations standardize their interview process in the same way, it doesn't mean that it's the best and most inclusive. When we realize that the interview can present a challenge for some candidates, it no longer makes sense to always hold interviews the same way we always have done — especially if we can choose a new approach that identifies a great candidate while increasing a sense of inclusion.

- Challenge traditional notions of formal interviews and consider alternative formats.

- Create a welcoming and less stressful environment for candidates.

- Communicate clearly with candidates about what to expect, interview format, etc.

"We're conditioned to think that the interview process needs to be a formal conversation and that candidates have to dress and act a particular way. But what if we challenge that cookie-cutter narrative? What if we try harder to see how people are in more natural scenarios, than in a high-stress environment where you're expected to act in a professional way? What if you created an interview where neurodivergent folks played with Lego, so they didn't feel pressured to maintain eye contact at all times? What if we told women in leadership roles to forgo the pantsuit? Organizations can create a more inclusive interview environment and still get the same — if not better — results."

Dr. Poornima Luthra
- Associate Professor, Copenhagen Business School

Contact Develop Diverse
W: developdiverse.com
E: contact@developdiverse.com

Book your demo today

Checklist for Inclusive Interviewing

Embracing inclusive interviewing practices not only benefits marginalized candidates but also enhances overall hiring outcomes and improves the candidate experience for a broader range of individuals. This positive experience can significantly boost your employer brand, as candidates who feel valued are more likely to share their positive experiences with others.

Before the Interview:

- ☐ **Introduce Yourself:** Set a welcoming tone by introducing yourself along with your preferred pronouns.

- ☐ **Provide Detailed Agenda:** Send candidates the full agenda outlining what to expect during the interview, directions to the office, and what to do when they arrive.

- ☐ **Audit Assessment Times with Team Delegation:** Audit your assessments by giving them to a team member, and timing how long they take to complete.

During the Interview:

- ☐ **Follow a Structured Format:** Stick to a structured interview process where each candidate is assessed using the same criteria.

- ☐ **Create a Welcoming Environment:** Encourage a comfortable and open atmosphere to allow candidates to showcase their true selves.

- ☐ **Use Inclusive Interview Techniques:** Employ inclusive questioning and avoid biases in evaluating candidates.

After the Interview:

- ☐ **Gather Feedback:** Encourage feedback from candidates about their interview experience to continuously improve inclusivity.

- ☐ **Regularly Review and Update Processes:** Audit and refine interview processes to ensure ongoing inclusivity and effectiveness.

DEVELOP
DIVERSE™