OFFICE FOR INCLUSION AND CIVIL RIGHTS

Mitigating Unconscious Bias in the Search Process

Unconscious biases, like affinity bias, conformity bias, and elitism, can unintentionally affect hiring decisions. Using structured checkpoints throughout the search process helps reduce these biases and supports an equitable evaluation of all candidates. This is essential for each member of our community to feel secure and welcome.

Job Posting

- **Write inclusive job postings**: Focus on the core skills and essential duties instead of unnecessary or overly restrictive requirements.
- **Establish objective qualifications:** Make sure required and preferred qualifications are relevant, specific and directly tied to the responsibilities of the role.

Application Review & Evaluation

- **Use standardized evaluation tools:** Establish a consistent rubric for evaluating applicant qualifications to ensure all evaluators are using the same objective criteria when evaluating applicants.
- **Allow enough time for review:** Avoid rushing through the evaluation process. Allowing sufficient time helps reduce snap judgments and reliance on assumptions or stereotypes.
- **Acknowledge and plan to address bias**: Review common screening and interview biases before evaluating applications. Everyone has both “bias for” and “bias against,” recognizing your own biases while actively monitoring for group biases reduces their influence on the process.

Interview Evaluation

- **Standardize the interview process:** Ask every candidate the same set of predetermined questions that have a purpose for being asked. Have the candidate articulate their “why” or “motivation,” not just yes or no answers.
- **Stay mindful:** Stay actively aware of potential biases at every step, from initial screening through final interview evaluations.

Additional information relative to compliance in the search and hire process is included on the OICR website.

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