

To Fill a Seat

5 steps to creating a strategy for diversity recruiting

By Rose Wagner, RN, M.H.S., FACMPE

Diversity is a hot topic today when hiring new leaders for your organization, but recruiting a diverse talent pool doesn't start with the recruitment process. It begins with an organizational strategy that reflects the desired state and what is valued within the organization in relation to diversity and inclusion. The strategy should also outline goals and accountabilities, establish an action plan to achieve those goals, and provide a process to measure results and, ultimately, success in attracting and retaining employees with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. The following five steps will provide guidance as you work to make diversity and inclusion part of your strategic plan and to develop the foundation for recruiting and retaining employees with diverse backgrounds.

Identify Your Strategic Priorities

Start with a clear vision and the objectives you are trying to achieve in recruiting for diversity. What do you want to accomplish? What is your desired outcome? Make sure your goals fit within the overall organization's mission, vision, and values. Next, analyze the current state. What is your current workforce makeup? Is it diverse, and do staff feel included? Does the composition of your workforce reflect your community and your patient base?

Gather Input and Data

Interview and survey employees in the organization to ascertain their thoughts and ideas regarding diversity and inclusion. If you have conducted a recent employee engagement survey, review those results and identify areas that show opportunities for improvement, especially related to diversity and inclusion. Perform a SWOT (Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats) analysis. This will help to identify the weaknesses and opportunities that can be addressed through goal-setting to move the organization in the right direction. Also, gather insight from your peers in the industry or professional societies who are developing similar strategies in this area. Identify the steps you will take to accomplish the objectives you have outlined. Keep in mind that goals should be realistic and measurable.



Formulate a Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan and Steering Committee

After defining the objectives and vision, obtaining information on the current state, gathering information, and establishing goals, develop a diversity and inclusion strategic plan. Establish a steering committee that can assist with developing the plan, as well as monitoring and measuring the ongoing outcomes and results. Start with the areas that can be accomplished quickly, are most urgent, or will have the greatest impact. Determine what metrics and tools will be used to measure progress and success.

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Establishing a diversity and inclusion strategic plan is a foundational step when recruiting for talent with diverse backgrounds. Candidates today seek out organizations that they desire to be a part of, where they can feel authentic and successful in the environment, and where diversity is embraced and made a strategic priority. Once the strategic plan is developed and implemented, recruiting for diversity and inclusion becomes easier, since you have demonstrated the importance and benefits of having a diverse range of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives within your organization. Having a strategic plan and demonstrating progress will go a long way in signaling to candidates that you really do want and value a diverse workforce. [GRJ](#)

Execute the Plan

Once the plan has been developed, the next step is implementation. Inform the entire organization of the strategy and its importance. Assign accountabilities and responsibilities to ensure the tasks and the work will be accomplished. This will also lead to greater engagement throughout the organization. Create a master schedule far in advance to ensure the plan stays on track. Regularly communicate to the staff about the progress being made.

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Monitor and Measure Your Results

Monitoring and measuring the results is key to having a successful implementation. It demonstrates your progress—or lack thereof. In this case, changes or adjustments need to be made. Communicate the progress and goals achieved throughout the organization. Course correct in order to keep the progress on track, as this will most likely be an ongoing and evolving plan.

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