

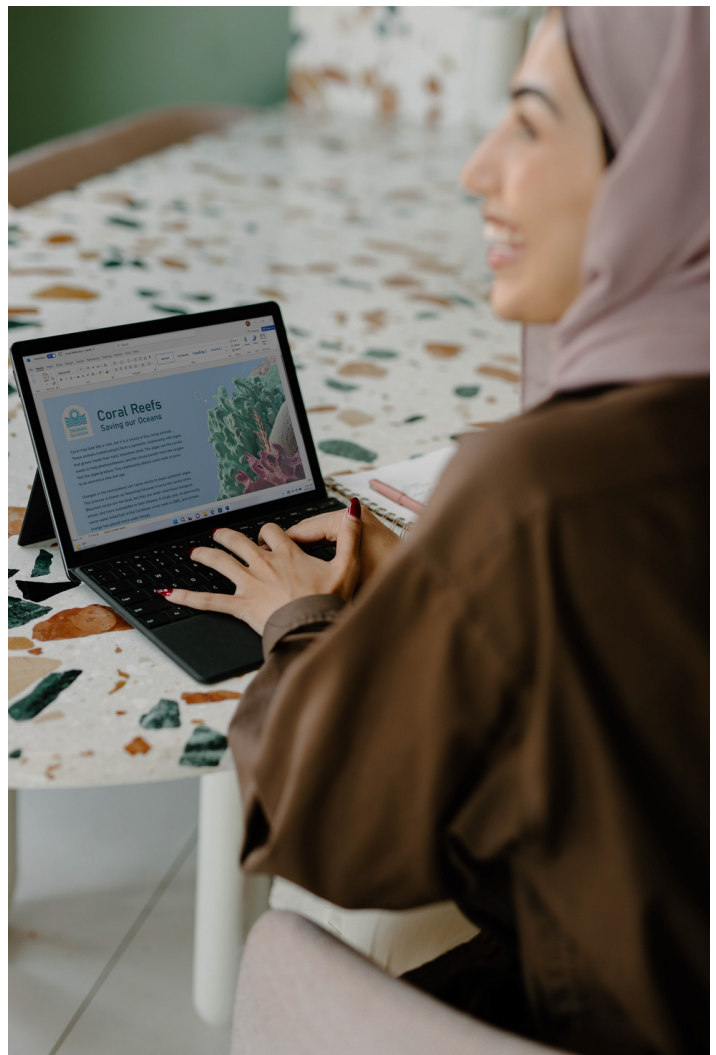
# Diversity Catalogue

*Specific ideas on how to work with  
diversity in **recruitment** without  
unintentionally counter  
discriminating*

**Building teams from qualified candidates regardless of their gender, background, race, religion, sexual orientation, etc. is long overdue, and a step towards true equality at work.**

Fortunately, the general discussion in HR is not if diversity is the way to go for organizations, but more towards how to ensure diversity with inclusion.

We will here not address any national laws regarding the matter, as there can be opposing laws in different countries and regions. So, the intention of this diversity catalogue is to serve as inspiration to recruiters, HR, and managers of what to be aware of, what to look for, what to investigate further, and ideas on how to implement diversity in recruitment in organizations.



**Different ideas to a recruitment process of diversity will be introduced. And when we dive into the how, we find, that sometimes, initiatives that have the best of intentions, can result in unintended discrimination towards the rest. So, the important task is qualifying the ideas of diversity, so they do not unintentionally counter discriminate.**

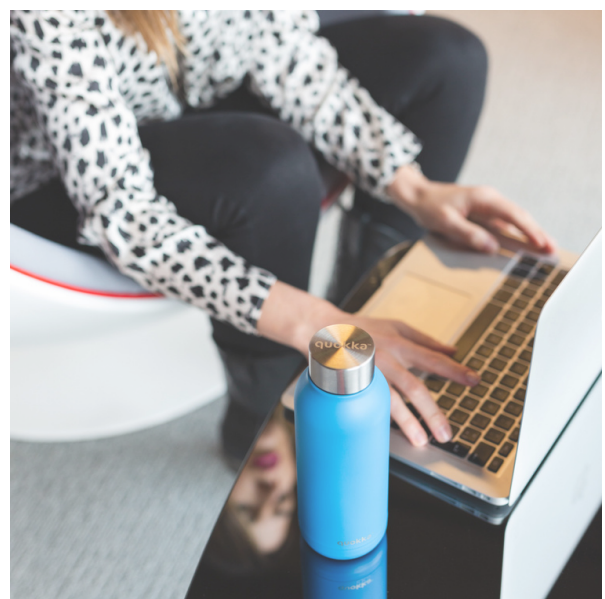


***At first glance, there seem to be a paradox in the recruitment winds currently.***

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On one hand we are focusing on non-bias recruitment and how to beat the conscious and unconscious bias when we are recruiting, by for example using blinded screening, leaving out demographic questions, that were very common just 5 years ago, like age, gender etc. And we are becoming aware of our need for diversifying our recruitment processes. We can see the result of being (unconsciously) biased in the large percentage of men sitting on the managerial positions in general around the world.

On the other hand, it becomes relevant for companies to raise questions like: How can we attract more female leaders? Or how can we map out our employees, to be aware of any unconscious bias? And how can we attract a more gender diverse application pool? Some countries work with gender quotas in for example the board rooms. The intention of this tendency is sympathetic and strategically well founded. But when favoring one part of the talent pool, you risk discriminating another. The big question is how do we address these seemingly opposing tendencies? For example, ***how do we ensure more female leaders if we cannot ask for a candidate's gender?***



# What is diversity?

Let's first look into the definition of diversity. Diversity in the workplace is ensuring that the people in the company reflect the general adult population of the society surrounding it. This can for example include diversity regarding gender, age, experience, educational level, physical appearances, political affiliation, ethnicity, cultural background, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic level, disabilities, and so on. Some of these categories are visible to the eye and some of them are not.

We can divide diversity into 2 subcategories. Diversity can be categories as either inherent diversity or acquired diversity. Inherent diversity refers to demographic factors, that you cannot control, such as gender, age, race, etc. And acquired diversity refers to the more fluid factors that can develop over time, such as education, experience, values, and so on. (Hewlett, Marshall, and Sherbin, 2013)

Diversity in recruitment then, has the end goal of ensuring a merit-based recruitment process, where focus is on the best fit for the job. Diversity in recruiting is all about creating a process that is free from bias. And at the same time structured to ensure all candidates an equal chance of obtaining the same position. The goal should be a recruitment process that attracts, evaluates, and employs candidates based on their merits. If this is followed through, the result can be seen in the organisation with a workforce that reflects diversity. If diversity is not reflected in the workforce, it suggests that we need to have a look at the recruitment process.

Any recruitment process can be broken down into subprocesses, each with a different focus (ISO 30.405), and diversity can be worked with on all these different steps of the recruitment process.

## ***Diversity when attracting:***

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Employer branding is all about how we generally attract candidates through the way we brand the company as a workplace.

Therefore, the first step is looking at diversity in the way the company brands itself as an employer.

Without the fundamental things in place, many of the other ideas will lack authenticity.

### ***1. Diverse company policies:***

Create company policies and employee policies, that appeals to diverse candidates. And promote them when branding the company. Many of the policies we see in organizations today are developed from the point of view of the organization. Investigate what appeals to the lifestyle of different people, instead of creating policies, that only reflect the employer.

**An example of a diverse company policy:** The company gives the opportunity to have flexible holidays. This way the employees can plan their holidays depending on for example their religion or family traditions. So instead of having Christmas day off, they can take the day of Eid off or visa versa.



## ***2. Diverse missions statement:***

Define a mission statement, that reflects your goal for diversity, to lead your recruitment strategy and enforce your employer brand by including the mission statement in your job adds.

An example of a diverse mission statement: "We believe in encouraging inclusion, acceptance, and understanding by employing individuals who bring unique perspectives to the company."

### ***Diversity when sourcing:***

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Sourcing is how you build a suitable candidate pool. So, the second main point is looking at the specific job posts and be curious to how you can ensure a diverse candidate pool on each job opening.

## ***3. Diverse job criteria:***

Set objective job criteria, when creating the job profile. Job Criteria are used to ensure a non-biased screening process and should be based on objective criteria such as specific skills for the job, personality aspects, and cognitive abilities tied to the Job Profile. Doing the job of setting these job criteria before seeing the applications and CVs, gives you an opportunity of being truly objective in your screening process. And be careful not to set up criteria, that unconsciously only looks for what you already have.

**An example of diverse job criteria:** Having the right IT system to create criteria and screen in the suitable candidates is an important HR tool. Many recruitment systems or ATS (Applicant Tracking Systems) have the functionality of screening for specific job-related skills such as language skills, having the correct driver's license, etc. And some test solutions have systems, where you can create criteria tied to personality profiles and cognitive tests, that you will introduce to the candidates later in the process. See an example here: <https://www.master-hr.com/solutions/opto-personality-test/>



#### **4. Diverse language:**

Be aware of the language you use in your job adds. Research has shown that there are words keyed to appeal more to one gender over another (Gaucher et al, 2011). These gender coded words can unconsciously make your job add appeal more to a specific gender. Making the job adds neutral in language or level out the language, so it becomes equally appealing to male and female gender identities, can be an important step in ensuring a diverse candidate pool.

**An example of diverse language:** There has been created a great tool based on the research, where you can copy-paste your English job add into, and it will tell you if you have used gender coded words and how the balance is between the two. This will most of all, make you aware of the language you use in the particular job add.

<http://gender-decoder.katmatfield.com/>

But you should also be aware of for example age or culturally loaded words.

## **5. Diverse platforms:**

We are used to think of the platform, where we post our jobs, based on the nature of the job. If we are searching for an IT developer, we will most likely post the job add on known IT networks. But try to seek out new opportunities to source in diverse candidates. Maybe the IT networks you are a part of, implicitly reflects your demographic profile.

**An example of diverse platforms:** If you are used to posting jobs on LinkedIn, this could seem like a very neutral platform to post jobs. But most of us are connected to similar people as ourselves, through networks that resembles our own demography. So, try to think of which LinkedIn groups could be interesting to share the job post in. And give yourself the challenge of each time you share in a group, where you are already a member, you should also share it in a group where you are not yet a member. Search for groups outside your network, ask your connection to highlight interesting groups to share job posts in, especially if they represent other demographic groups than yourself. This idea can also be used outside LinkedIn. Try to network with organizations that help for example refugees, people with handicaps, or young people to get into the job market.





## 6. *Diverse motivation:*

Motivate all candidates to apply for the job, instead of only including some. For example, “We encourage people with higher age than 40, people with handicap, women, etc. to apply for the job”. By listing specific demographic categories, you encourage to apply, and by pointing out who you include, you risk excluding others. Instead, you can use a completely neutral phrasing.

**An example of diverse motivation:** “All interested individuals, including people of all races and national origin, people of all ages, people of all religions, people with or without disabilities, and/or people with any gender identity and sexual orientation, are urged to apply.”

### *Diversity when assessing:*

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In the next step of the recruitment process, the goal is to assess and evaluate the candidates. Here diversity is ensuring that everyone has equal possibilities, and that the process does not discriminate or bias towards a specific candidate group.



## 7. Diverse screening:

At the point of having received the applications, and having a large candidate pool, it is important to ensure, that you screen in the correct candidates, and that you choose the most suitable candidates based on their merits. Here a bias-free method of screening candidates is to use blinded screening, where you don't subjectively evaluate the applications, but create a process, where the screening is done objectively, and potentially without human interface.



### **An example of diverse screening:**

Giving all candidates the same test through a system, that can filter the candidates automatically based on their results and the previously set Criteria taking the Job Profile into account. This way the screening process is more objective, by basing your Criteria on for example a personality profile or cognitive abilities. All candidates are screened using the same method, and the choice of who to see for interviews are based solely on objective Criteria. Here is an example of a screening tool based on a personality test aimed at the sales and service sector:

<https://www.master-hr.com/solutions/bright-screening-customer-service/>

## 8. Diverse interviews:

In the interview focus on behavior and experiences tied to defined Job Profile. By doing so you support non-biased interviews. But we are humans, and it can be extremely difficult to get rid of all bias. So be curious to your own judgements, and what the candidates make you feel. The first step of minimizing bias is to become aware of the mechanisms within ourselves during an interview.

**An example of diverse interviews:** Structured interviews allows the interviewer to be objective and treat each candidate equally. Systematically ensure that you have all aspects from the Job Profile covered through the application or assessment tests, and if not there, then the interview is the place to unfold these subjects. Make sure that you have information from all candidates on the same aspects of the Job Profile. Use the same 5-10 questions tied to the job description for all candidates, as a direction in the semi-structured interviews. Going through this systematically facilitates the objective comparison of candidates afterwards.





## 9. Diverse curiosity:

We are especially prone to become biased in the assessment of candidates, both in the screening and in the selection of candidates, as this is often where we rely on our gut feeling. So be curious as to how your assessment processes can become more bias free, and how you can ensure even more diversity. Look at other sectors how they do it.



### An example of diverse

**curiosity:** Looking at other sectors can be inspiring. For example, today some symphony orchestras choose their musicians, by letting talents audition behind a screen, so the panel do not get influenced by irrelevant personal judgments, but only by the musical talent of the candidates. During the final round, “blind” auditions increased the likelihood of female musicians being selected by 30% (Goldin and Rouse, 2000). How can this inspire you in your recruitment process?



## ***Diversity when employing:***

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### **An example of diverse**

**feedback:** Look at your notes from the structured interview. Focus on experience and behavior and where the candidate did not live up to the job criteria you had set beforehand.

## ***10. Diverse feedback:***

When the final candidate has been chosen, normally there is a small group of candidates, who will receive a rejection after a longer recruitment process. Focus here on the things the candidate can change or develop in the future. The behaviour, lack of experience, or lack of specific professional competencies that has been unfolded in the process. At this point the candidate can expect to fit the job description to a certain point, and many times it is minor differences that makes one candidate get hired and not the other. Make sure, that these differences are based on objective criteria, and not gut feeling.



## 11. Diverse onboarding:

The way we plan the onboarding of a new employee can also be biased by how the person planning the onboarding prefers to learn and prefers to be onboarded. If you are a very social person, you might be prone to plan a very social onboarding process for your new employee, but this may not be the best way to onboard every candidate. Also, the way we learn is very individual, so think about the level of theory, the level of peer learning, the level of hands-on etc. that is best suited for the new employee.

**An example of diverse onboarding:** Look at the cognitive test and the personality test, and make sure, that the level, speed, social elements etc of the onboarding fits the cognitive and personality profile of the new employee. Generally speaking, the cognitive level tells us something about an employee's potential for speedy learning, and the potential for abstract learning. The personality profile can tell us something about the level of social interaction, curiosity and types of tasks, that suit the new employee the best.

## 12. Document the process:

An element to be aware of through the whole process is to document your processes, take notes, and be aware of what influences the process and the decisions in the process. This way it is easier to learn from the process and where can you focus the next time to ensure an even more bias-free recruitment process. Also, it makes it easier to give constructive feedback to the rejected candidates, and if you get questions regarding the diversity of your process, it will facilitate the discussion regarding bias-free recruitment.





# 11 IDEAS

## ON HOW TO WORK WITH DIVERSITY

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### COMPANY POLICIES

Create company policies and employee policies, that appeals to diverse candidates.

### MISSION STATEMENT

Define a mission statement, that reflects your goal for diversity.

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### JOB CRITERIA

Set objective job criteria, when creating the job profile.

### DIVERSE LANGUAGE

Be aware of the language you use in your job adds. Research has shown that there are words keyed to appeal more to one gender over another.

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### PLATFORMS

Seek out new opportunities to source in diverse candidates.

### MOTIVATION

Motivate all candidates to apply for the job, instead of only including some.

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### SCREENING

Use blinded screening, where you don't subjectively evaluate the applications.

### INTERVIEWS

Focus on behavior and experiences tied to defined Job Profile.

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### CURIOSITY

Be curious as to how your assessment processes can become more bias free.

### FEEDBACK

Focus on the things the candidate can change or develop in the future.

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### DOCUMENT THE PROCESS

Document your processes, take notes, and be aware of what influences the process and the decisions in the process.

## Author

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## References

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