



DIVERSE HIRING: PRACTICE BEYOND THEORY
A ROBERT WALTERS RECRUITMENT GUIDE

Introduction

Diversity and inclusion are not interchangeable terms. Diversity within an organization without inclusion is just many different people in the same place at the same time with no engagement or connection. Most of us will know that diverse hiring is hiring with special care to ensure procedures (like hiring) are free from biases related to a candidate's culture, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, physical cognitive ability, veteran status, or any other difference seen or unseen that makes each of us unique. A diverse organization that is also inclusive is continually seeking ways to ensure all team members' opinions are heard, that their unique perspectives are valued, and that they belong to one cohesive unit.

Everyone has unique characteristics that set them apart from the crowd, but not everyone has to deal with exclusion or discrimination. Furthermore, individuals themselves are not "diverse". By labeling an individual "diverse", you are, as a result, implying that a "default" or "norm" exists as a dominant identity. Diversity instead must be looked at as something that can only exist relationally within a group. A diverse group will be composed of people from many different backgrounds. A diverse and inclusive group can achieve equity by recognizing that some underrepresented groups have to overcome more barriers and have less access to opportunities than more dominant groups. A company must actively seek out ways to reduce barriers in order to create an even playing field for all potential candidates or current team members.

So how are companies doing in 2021? COVID-19 has forced Americans and Canadians to look at disparities in our healthcare system and in the workplace (death rates are higher among Hispanic and Black Americans, and job loss as a result of COVID more common). The killing of George Floyd and subsequent Black Lives Matter protests and rallies have been the catalyst for many companies to recommit to DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) practices and policies. While this is a positive step forward, it's imperative that businesses take into account the difference between performative and active allyship. There is both a moral and business case for businesses to incorporate more diverse and inclusive hiring processes.

The purpose of this guide is to help hiring managers understand how their hiring practices may be biased, and exactly what steps they can take (tools and technologies included) to tackle discrimination, enable equality, and foster belonging in the hiring process and beyond.



CONTENTS

2. Introduction

5. The Shift From CSR to ROI

6. Tackling Gender Bias

8. Tackling Ethnicity Bias

13. Tackling LGBTQ+ Bias

14. Tackling Disability Bias and
Neurodiversity Bias

16. Tackling Age Bias

18. Promoting Social Mobility

20. Supporting Our Veterans

22. Resources for Meaningful Change

27. Conclusion: 5 Action Steps

“



Businesses benefit from prioritizing diversity and inclusion in more than one way. Engagement increases, and so does retention. The bottom line has been shown to increase time and time again. **Liz Boston, Certified Diversity Recruiter, Robert Walters**

”



If you have a brain, you have bias. It would be wonderful if we could just remove all biases from the hiring process, but the reality is that we can't. What we can do, though, is create systems that mitigate the biases of individuals and the hiring team. **Ashley Schwedt, Leadership Training & DEI Lead at LifeLabs Learning**

”

The Shift From CSR to ROI

The corporate social responsibility (moral) case for diversity in business is strong enough to stand on its own, but it's certainly punctuated by the business case. To elaborate, companies who make the commitment to build a diverse and inclusive workforce are more likely to have above-average profitability than those who don't. In their latest **report, McKinsey** found that companies with top levels of gender diversity and ethnic and cultural diversity in corporate leadership were 25% more likely to have above-average profitability than companies who weren't taking their DEI efforts as seriously.

As humans, we tend to be attracted to people who are similar to us. This is where the idea of culture "fit" becomes tricky. When hiring managers make the mistake of hiring people just like themselves, they inadvertently create a homogenous culture where everyone thinks exactly the same. As a result, innovation is limited and the environment quickly becomes stale. Beyond the impact on the bottom line, hiring with diversity at the top of mind will result in a larger range of skill sets and backgrounds. When your workforce is diverse, you're able to empathize with a wider variety of individuals (your customers), and this deeper understanding is what drives the impact on the bottom line.

Companies with top levels of gender diversity and ethnic and cultural diversity in corporate leadership are 25% more likely to have above average profitability than companies who weren't taking their DEI efforts as seriously.

Globally, legislation that protects workers from discriminatory behaviors varies. However, legislation and policy can only do so much. What truly drives change is when leaders in a workplace make it a priority to understand and address their unconscious biases. In turn, they ensure their hiring practices are inclusive in every way possible, by reassessing how job ads are written, how candidates are sourced, and how candidates are evaluated during the interview process. Robert Walters Group has led several pioneering projects to re-engineer our recruitment process to be more inclusive. However, like you, we are still learning everyday how to create an equitable and inclusive work environment. All humans possess bias, so it is safe to assume your hiring managers and recruiters are no exception. In this guide, we'll share research on how best to take action on diversity and inclusion initiatives.



Diversity without inclusion is useless. A workplace can be diverse, but if its employees don't feel safe, valued, respected, and accepted, then an organization can't operate at its fullest potential. **Neil Wittensleger, Senior Manager, Robert Walters New York**

Tackling Gender Bias

Women in the workplace are underrepresented globally, and gender diversity is still a challenge for many businesses. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, global leaders have sprung to action to minimize economic consequences.

While relief programs have mitigated the number of workers needing to file for unemployment in some countries, other countries have seen double-digit increases in unemployment including Canada, Israel, Ireland, and the United States. It seems that women are bearing the brunt of this global devastation, leading media to coin the term “shecession” to describe the disproportionate way that job and income losses are affecting more women than men.

“Women accounted for 55% of the 20.5 million U.S. jobs lost in April, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.”

This so-called “shecession” is a huge setback for businesses that have invested in the development of a more diverse workforce. Women make up a large percentage of occupations that were affected by layoffs, such as Social Services, Education, and Office & Administrative support. They are also more likely to have been forced to take time off in order to care for children away from school during the pandemic. In fact, **women as primary caregivers during Coronavirus** stand to incur a 7% compensation penalty upon return to work.

Women as primary caregivers during Coronavirus stand to incur a 7% compensation penalty upon return to work.

Pay gap

Businesses can stem gender diversity damage from COVID-19 by implementing policies around wage parity (see: **How to Conduct a Compensation Analysis and Avoid Mistakes**), paid family and maternity leave, and/or subsidized childcare.

Job advertisements

On a smaller scale, businesses that are growing as a result of COVID should approach hiring in a thoughtful way. Job ads should avoid using gendered language that discourages female applicants.

Consider using tools that identify biases in writing, such as the tool that Robert Walters uses, **RW Adify**, a tool that assesses readability, gender bias, and discrimination within client advert writing.

Interview process

Formalize your interview process so that all candidates are asked the same set of questions and measured on the same criteria.

Flexible working

Finally, instead of returning to a strict colocation policy in the post-COVID work, expand your flexible work policies to support working mothers.



Allowing more flexibility in the workplace is essential right now, as much of the burden of childcare has been placed on women struggling to find a balance between work and home life. **Feven Yeshanew, Senior Manager, Robert Walters Canada**



Implicit bias training is a start. We need it to permeate all topics because there are places for bias everywhere. Listen carefully to people during exit interviews because this is the only time that you will get the pure unvarnished truth. At Netflix we have “nudges” every month or so to review some aspect of implicit bias that you might not be thinking of, or learn how to be a better advocate instead of a passive consumer of this information. **Lisa Smith, Engineering Manager, Netflix**



The Say:Do ratio compares the rate at which people say the things they are going to do and follow-through. All companies always have room to improve in accountability and we rarely get it right at every point across the board. Typically there will be some areas that are better than others. We need to make sure that what we are doing inside our companies mirrors what we say externally. **Valerie Jackson, Chief Diversity Officer, Zuora**



Tackling Ethnicity Bias

Example 1: A hiring manager reviews two candidate resumes for the same position. Both candidates have the exact same qualifications, but one candidate's last name is unfamiliar or difficult to pronounce. The hiring manager chooses to interview the candidate with the easier name.

Example 2: A company wants to start a diversity and inclusion program after a company-wide discussion around the Black Lives Matter movement. The CEO selects the only woman of color in the office to head the program without asking if she'd be interested, thereby putting the obligation on people of color to teach their white coworkers about race.

Example 3: A white employee tells a person of color during an interview that "they are so articulate", the implication being that non-white individuals are generally "less articulate" than their white counterparts.

Despite a decrease in overtly prejudicial beliefs across the globe, discrimination based on race and ethnicity still affects virtually every country in the world. Unequal treatment persists on a systemic level, and in the workplace, that inequality shows up in the form of **unconscious bias** and racial stereotypes.

A study by Northwestern University in 2003 showed that employers are more likely to consider white candidates with criminal records than black candidates with no criminal history. Black Americans are **grossly underrepresented** in high-paying jobs and severely underrepresented at the top of corporate hierarchy. Just two years ago, black women were shown to earn **just 66%** of what the typical white male made. Women of color have also been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, due to the fact that they are more likely to hold a job that is deemed essential (putting them at a higher risk to become ill), or in an industry that has experiencing big losses such as leisure, hospitality, and retail.

Just two years ago, black women were shown to earn just 66% of what the typical white male made.



Combating Racial Inequality in the Workplace

Policy change

This is the first step in preventing discrimination in the workplace and should not be overlooked. Develop an **employee handbook** that defines clearly your no-tolerance policy for racial discrimination. Have a protocol for how discrimination complaints are handled and reported.

Analyze pay

In the United States, some legislation has already been put into place to prevent wage gaps. In some states, this includes the elimination of salary history inquiries and the requirement of businesses with over 100 employees to submit wage information to the **EEOC**. Similarly, Canada has **The Pay Equity Act** and the **Employment Equity Act**, which requires that employers remove barriers to the workplace for women, Indigenous people, members of racialized groups, and people with disabilities. To ensure pay is fair regardless of race, ethnicity, or gender, conduct a **pay gap analysis**.

Establish mentorship programs

The Harvard Business Review reported in a **case study** that the share of management roles within one business increased the proportion of black male managers by 8% and black female managers by 9% when a college recruitment program was implemented. Create a mentorship program that matches individuals with different cultures and backgrounds and be transparent about the objectives of the program.

Fair performance judgement across the board

Identify key performance objectives for each role and document those while also linking employee goals to business priorities. A lack of objectivity during performance reviews can easily lead employees to be judged unfairly. Digital technologies and tools can help keep performance management easy to track.

■ People Analytics by McKinsey & Company

Diversify your hiring panel

People typically like to hire people that are similar to them. Ensure your hiring panel is composed of more than one person and is diverse itself. This can help eliminate potential racial bias during the interview process. **Goodtime** is software that can help you diversify your interview panels.



Affinity bias is the tendency to get along with people who are like us. This bias often comes up in the hiring process, where we favor individuals because of their perceived ability to “fit in”. Unfortunately, too many people with the same background and point of view limits new ideas and growth. **Lucky Nguyen, Senior Manager, Legal, Compliance, and Risk Recruitment, Robert Walters New York**

Culture fit makes for homogenous culture

Many hiring managers make the mistake of hiring individuals on gut instinct instead of a clearly defined set of values. By failing to define a clear set of values that represent your company culture, they may also inadvertently allow their prejudices to deem someone a “poor” culture fit. Define a series of 5-6 key performance objectives for that specific role. If a potential candidate has experience that matches these objectives, then they are likely a good fit for the role.

- **3 Simple Templates for Managers**
- **5 KPI Measurement Tools to Help Entrepreneurs Keep the Pulse of Their Small Business**

Limit employee referral hires

If the majority of your workforce is one demographic, then hiring solely on referrals alone may perpetuate a homogenous culture. Ensure employee referral programs are open to the entire organization and not just certain groups, track your channels to identify discriminatory patterns and evaluate all applicants (referrals and non-referrals) on the same qualification materials.

Blind resume

Manually remove identifying information so that resume review is not impacted by implicit bias. Consider removing home addresses, as well, as they are a possible proxy for race and income. There is also technology that can assist in resume review, such as **GapJumpers**, which helps hiring managers screen candidates for job-readiness, **Unbiasify Chrome Extension**, which eliminates names and images from sites like LinkedIn, or **Textio**, which helps companies create more inclusive job descriptions.

Talk about it

Make it a business priority to talk more frequently and openly about race. Encourage employees to share their cultures and passions (if they choose to). Ensure your business has a mechanism to resolve and respond to discrimination cases in a timely manner and hold individuals accountable when they have behaved in a discriminatory way.

Monthly inclusion events

Implement diversity training programs that are run by an external educational program or an ally. Organize a monthly opportunity for employees to share something relating to their own culture, such as a food item, piece of art, or tradition that is meaningful to them.

- **Pearn Kandola - Diversity and inclusion training program**

“



There is an incredible amount of momentum right now driving businesses to broaden their efforts to promote diversity and inclusion within their businesses. There is no time better than the present to reassess what's really important. **Alfonso Tiscareno, Director, Head of California, Robert Walters**

”



Inspect what you expect and measure what matters. In tech we are data driven; We would not ship a product unless we've done lots of tests. It's important to measure performance towards a goal at beginning, middle, and end of a process and to set key metrics. The same should be true for inclusive hiring processes. Track throughout the funnel your pass-through (interview) rates by demographic to determine where there is fallout. **Michael Kyle, VP, Talent Acquisition, Volta Charging**

”



With COVID and social unrest, what has the company done to ensure the individual safety of employees? That is paramount. That is something people will be asking in the future. How did you handle things during the pandemic and what did you do to support your employees as the nation and the world were watching? Do those people feel like they are recognized and seen when they bring their whole selves to work? If they do, then you are doing some of the right things, but not all. Leverage those experiences and don't just leverage your ERGs as a dumping ground for all your problems. Make sure ERGs are empowered to support people but also that people have support, because people experiencing trauma are not going to be able to then support other humans. **Lisa Smith, Engineering Manager, Netflix**



Ask applicants what pronouns they use, and make sure interviewers and the hiring team use the correct pronouns. If you want candidates to feel like they could see themselves at your company, the first step is to show that you see them. **Ashley Schwedt, Leadership Training & DEI Lead at LifeLabs Learning**

Tackling LGBTQ+ Bias

The global pandemic may have put a dampener on many Pride events globally, but the need to attract, engage and nurture LGBTQ+ talent has never been greater: from Poland's symbolic roll out of 'LGBT-free zones' to the Gap pay gap in the UK, there is still much progress to be made. Additionally, one-fifth (20%) of LGBTQ+ Americans have experienced discrimination when applying for jobs, and one-third of Canadians don't see their work as LGBTQ+ inclusive.

Audit your process for bias

Bias in recruitment is largely unconscious, so it is essential to analyze your processes for common mistakes. In the resume submission process, there is often a question that asks applicants to select their gender, offering "male, female, transgender, or prefer not to say" as options. This question is often intended to be inclusive, but forcing transgender candidates to identify as transgender, rather than their gender, is offensive to many trans people

One-fifth (20%) of LGBTQ+ Americans have experienced discrimination when applying for jobs, and one-third of Canadians don't see their work as LGBTQ+ inclusive.

Humanize your equality statement (and avoid quoting legislation)

Most companies have an equality statement on their careers pages as well as job adverts. This can send a reassuring message, but this is an opportunity to engage with LGBTQ+ talent by showing that they are genuinely welcomed, embraced, and can bring their whole selves to work. Rather than stating "we welcome applications from all communities and conform to all legislation...", tell the story of why diversity makes your business better and all employees happier. **Accenture** does this brilliantly.

Be authentic (so ditch the stock photos)

A Shutterstock photo of a Pride flag on your careers page shows some intention to be inclusive but gives talent no real indication about how current employees bring their whole selves to work. Photos of real employees at real events have much more impact than glossy photoshopped corporate images. Transparency and being a genuine ally to the LGBTQ+ community 12 months of the year (not just Pride month) is key. Avoid changing your logo to a rainbow in June unless your business has made an effort to contribute in some way to the LGBTQ+ community.



Today, 93% of Fortune 500 companies in the U.S. have included "sexual orientation" in their nondiscrimination policies, and 85% include "gender identity" (**HRC: Corporate Equality Index 2019**). Despite these important changes, fear and ostracization in the workplace persists. **Pip Wells, Robert Walters Innovation, Robert Walters Group**





Tackling Disability Bias and Neurodiversity Bias

Thirty years ago, The Americans with Disabilities Act became law in the United States, with the intent to provide equal employment opportunity to persons with disabilities and prohibit discrimination in recruitment, hiring, and compensation. Canada saw a similar act (The Canadian Human Rights Act) in 1977. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, as of July 2019, over 47% of individuals over 16 with a disability were not employed at all. Of those individuals, many reported that the reason for their lack of employment was due to a barrier of entry, such as lack of transportation, a need for special features at a job, lack of education or training, or poor attitudes from coworkers. Even with protections in place, people with disabilities are still impacted negatively by unconscious bias in the recruitment process, hiring process, and in the workplace. Here are a few examples:

Example 1: Failure to provide reasonable accommodations

An employee has a visual impairment that requires a larger screen with the ability to invert the text on the screen for readability. The employer claims this is too costly, thereby limiting the employee's ability to perform their job as quickly or effectively as an able-visioned employee. The visually impaired employee is frequently passed over when it comes to promotions, as they are not meeting the standardized KPIs.

Example 2: Indirect discrimination

An employer writes in a job description that candidates should have a driver's license in order to drive to different locations for that role. This rules out individuals who are unable to drive due to their disability, such as an individual with epilepsy or multiple sclerosis.

Example 3: Direct discrimination

An employee is off for several weeks due to a depressive episode. The employee is given a formal warning about taking too much sick leave, and won't receive an annual bonus this year because of it.

Creating an inclusive culture

Some disabilities are visible, but others are not immediately obvious. Disabilities come in all shapes and sizes, whether it be a physical or intellectual disability, a mental health condition, visual or hearing impairment, or people on the autism spectrum. These individuals compose a critical and underutilized portion of the talent pool. Businesses who employ and create an inclusive environment for people with disabilities are not just fulfilling an ethical duty; In fact, companies who make it a business priority have been shown to have **28% higher revenue and 30% higher economic profits than businesses who do not**, as well as increased innovation and productivity.

Make access a priority

Prioritizing access for people with disabilities goes beyond building ramps that can accommodate wheelchairs or ensuring access to elevators. While these are important considerations, businesses must also make web content accessible by providing auditory guides, keeping contrast sensitivity in mind, and adding alt text to images. **This is a great resource** to refer to build a more accessible website.

Actively reach out to candidates with disabilities

Candidates who have faced discrimination or bias in the hiring process before may be hesitant to apply for roles they are perfectly qualified for. Actively source candidates via dedicated LinkedIn groups, college career centers, or organizations that actively support individuals on the job hunt living with disabilities. **This website** has a list of these organizations for exactly that purpose.

Inclusive job ads

Ensure that your job ads and website are welcoming to diverse applicants by including a statement about being an **equal-opportunity employer**, as well as your commitment to diversity and inclusion. Many individuals will not apply unless they meet 100% of the job requirements listed. To encourage a wider range of applicants, separate out job requirements into categories that include “must-haves” and “nice-to-haves”. If the role requires lifting of heavy equipment, a valid driver’s license, and frequent travel, you may include what kinds of reasonable adjustments you’d make, should an applicant need them to do perform the job.

Companies who make it a business priority to employ and create an inclusive environment have been shown to have 28% higher revenue and 30% higher economic profits than businesses who do not, as well as increased innovation and productivity.

Educate & build awareness

Much like how talking about our other differences in the workplace helps foster understanding and community, talking about disability does the same. Don’t assume your workforce knows what’s appropriate. For example, a blind individual may not want to be touched or guided, and an individual on the autism spectrum may have difficulty with certain sensory experiences. Asking individuals how they would like to be treated is paramount. This also applies to the interview process. Instead of imagining how a person with a disability may perform a role, why not ask them yourself? You may be surprised by their answer.

“



Never assume you can understand someone else’s experience, particularly if you’ve never walked in their shoes. Instead of making assumptions, ask questions to better understand how to foster an environment that makes everyone feel safe and included.
Nick Louca, Director, New York ”



Tackling Age Bias

The impact of the global pandemic has impacted individuals and communities in different – and unequal – ways. The careers of older workers and younger workers are significantly more likely to have been impacted than the overall working population. The number of older workers has been increasing over recent years, but COVID-19 is forcing some workers to retire. By 2024, workers over 55 will account for 25% of the nation’s workforce. According to a recent survey, 58% of workers in their fifties or older have experienced discrimination because of their age.

58% of workers in their fifties or older have experienced discrimination because of their age.

Analyzing job adverts to identify bias

Job adverts are often the very first touch point a candidate has with a business. To minimize bias in job ads, ensure that phrases such as “ideal first job”, “young company” and “dynamic organization” are avoided. Also consider removing a requirement for “years of experience”, replacing it instead with a thorough description of what kinds of skills are ideal for the role. Finally, remove any form requirements that force a candidate to submit age-related information, like birthdate or graduation year.

Acknowledge misconception

A major concern that is often brought up is the idea that a potential employee may not be a good culture fit because of their age. In fact, in 2019, Google agreed to pay \$11 million to end a **class-action lawsuit** accusing the company of discriminating against potential candidates over the age of 40 because they weren’t a good “culture fit”. On the contrary, older employees offer a unique perspective and years of experience and wisdom. For this reason, they make strong mentors for younger employees. A monotonous workplace composed of only recent college grads will make for tunnel-vision in decision making and a lack of new inventive ideas.



Employer branding

Take a moment to review stock images dispersed throughout your website, employee group photos, as well as employee imaging on websites like Glassdoor. If you're seeking to attract candidates of all ages, then your marketing materials should reflect individuals of all ages.

Fostering a multigenerational culture

Age is often overlooked in diversity and inclusion statements, policies, and training programs. Taking age bias into consideration is the first step in creating an inclusive culture. Ensure older (and younger) workers aren't being excluded from projects, harassed, or being subjected to disparaging comments. Educating employees on unconscious age bias is the number one way to prevent age discrimination in the workplace, as well as distributing anonymous surveys to identify any problems before they escalate.



The idea of culture fit is somewhat toxic, particularly when it comes to age bias in the workplace. Different perspectives add to culture and make it more rich.

**Martin Fox, Managing Director,
Canada**





Promoting Social Mobility

Removing barriers to improve economic equality

One of the least talked about aspects of diversity and inclusion is the role that economic inequality plays in the workplace. The United States is built on the ethos that no matter what kind of wealth you are born into, everyone has equal access and opportunity to move up the “invisible ladder”. This ethos, also known as “The American Dream” proposes that no matter what your background, an individual can achieve some version of success if they just work hard enough.

Despite this rosy outlook, economic inequality in the US is currently very high. Where income inequality remained stable from the 1940’s to the 1970’s, it has steadily increased since the mid-1970’s, with families in the top quartile of economic fortune earning eight times their counterparts by 2014. Hence, the rich get richer while the poor get poorer. While the reasons for this disparity aren’t well understood, many researchers agree that globalization and access to education play a major role. We also know that income levels vary widely between men and women (see: gender wage gap) and ethnicity (see: racial pay gap).

As a hiring manager, you have the power to reduce barriers to economic inclusion. Here are a few ways in which you drive change.

Stop recruiting from a narrow pool

Over half of Facebook employees and 30% of Google employees attended one of the top 10 nationally ranked universities. Coming in at #6, Stanford had a measly 4.7% admission rate in 2019. To put that into perspective, Stanford admitted only about 2,000 students out of 44,000 applicants. While holding a degree from one of these universities is an impressive accomplishment, it’s fair to say that admission is granted only to a privileged few. There are exceptionally intelligent individuals who did not have the privilege of attending a top university. By removing “attended a top university” from your qualifications, you are removing a huge barrier for individuals without the economic means to attend a top school (or any school at all, for that matter).

Workplace location

One of the many lessons we've learned as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic is that location is somewhat irrelevant. We have all the technologies to ensure business continuity with a remote workforce. From 2000 to 2012, jobs were shown to grow in distance from low-income neighborhoods. For example, the highest paying positions in San Francisco are typically located in city-proper, but the cost to live in San Francisco itself is 80% higher than the national average. Thus, employees wishing to work in the city but have a lower cost of living are subject to long and costly commutes. If you haven't already, consider a balance of remote and in-person work that would ultimately expand your talent pool.

Review your benefits

Women experience a huge decline in pay after the birth of their first child. This phenomenon is often referred to as the child care or motherhood penalty. Do your benefits policies go above and beyond legal requirements to make jobs more stable for individuals in a parental role? For example, expanded paid leave and access to affordable childcare helps employees responsible for the care of small children retain their jobs.

Close the gap within your company

Audit your salaries internally by race and gender to reveal wage gaps. Ensure employees performing similar work are paid the same. If you don't already have it laid out in a clear way, be sure to document and agree on exactly what factors go into determining compensation as well as the "whens", "hows", and "whys" of how individuals are promoted. Finally, destigmatize negotiation for women. In a study by LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Co, women were perceived as "too aggressive" or "bossy" should they negotiate in the same way as their male counterparts when it came to base salary or salary bumps. Checking your biases in this area can help all individuals feel valued, safe, and understood within the workplace.



Not everyone has the same access to education. Alma mater does not determine the value that an employee will bring to a company. Character and personal achievement a far better measurement of future success. **Bethan James, Manager, Consumer Go To Market, Robert Walters San Francisco**



Focus on knowledge and skills rather than experience. If your job descriptions require a certain type of or amount of experience, you'll only get candidates who have already benefited from specific opportunities. Experience is a proxy for knowledge and skills. Just because someone had a similar job for 5 years doesn't mean they're actually good at it! **Ashley Schwedt, Leadership Training & DEI Lead at LifeLabs Learning**

“



One major misconception is that service members are rule and procedure followers to a fault. When you think about the military, you think about policies, processes, and bureaucracy, but from my experience in the military, you also have to be incredibly resourceful within the requirements. Many communities within the military are not as well-funded as people think. The mission always has to get done, but how you execute a mission doesn't have to follow a rigid path or the same way that something had previously been done. **Molly Laufer, Director of Offline Marketing, HomeLight** ”



It's important to build well from the beginning. We all have biases because we all have brains. The Project Implicit bias test by Harvard can help us see the pervasive stereotypes we might be leaning into in a hiring process or interview. **Valerie Jackson, Chief Diversity Officer, Zuora** ”

Supporting Our Veterans

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the unemployment rate for American veterans rose from 4.1% to 11.7% between March 2020 and April 2020. Veterans impacted the most from the onset of COVID-19 were post-9/11 veterans between the ages of 18-24, illustrated by an unemployment rate percent increase of 31.2% (from 4.9% to 36.1%). As of July 2020, there were 18,450 unemployed veterans in the United States. One explanation for this alarming statistic is the fact that a large number of veterans work in five industries that have been majorly impacted by COVID-19, including travel, oil and gas, transportation, and warehousing, according to the Bob Woodruff Foundation.

Lack of inclusion

Lack of inclusion for veterans is a problem that has existed prior to COVID-19. Veterans may experience discrimination during the hiring process because of a disability sustained in the line of duty. Many veterans are assumed to suffer from mental health conditions (such as PTSD), and are treated as a potential liability—a stereotype that likely resulted from portrayals of the military in movies and television. Other reasons that veterans are discriminated against include a lack of understanding around military skills and how they translate in a civilian landscape, and concerns about potential future deployment (for guardsmen or reservists).

The unemployment rate for American veterans rose from 4.1% to 11.7% between March 2020 and April 2020.

Major misconceptions

“One major misconception is that service members are rule and procedure followers to a fault. When you think about the military, you think about policies, processes, and bureaucracy, but from my experience in the military, you also have to be incredibly resourceful within the requirements. Many communities within the military are not as well-funded as people think. The mission always has to get done, but how you execute a mission doesn’t have to follow a rigid path or the same way that something had previously been done,” says **Molly Laufer**, Director of Offline Marketing, HomeLight

A unique world perspective

55% of transitioning service members are interested in pursuing a career outside of their military profession, according to the **Institute for Veterans and Military Families**. Veterans have a unique world perspective that has the potential to increase diversity of thought within a workplace. Military personnel are trained to perform under pressure, be strong team players, and have a goal-led mindset. They are also trained to be incredibly adaptable and to change or improvise at the drop of a hat. This makes them ideal for roles that are highly ambiguous and shift from day-to-day, a highly sought-after trait for startups in the tech arena in particular.

55% of transitioning service members are interested in pursuing a career outside of their military profession

Further resources:

- **Shift**
- **Breakline**
- **Tech Qualified**

Additional DEI Tools by LifeLabs Learning

Inclusion Audit Tool

Is your business on the right track? **LifeLabs Learning** has developed an DIY Inclusion Audit Tool that provides criteria to evaluate how your business is doing in terms of DEI. This is a small sample of the full tool. You can access the tool [here](#), and evaluate your company in more detail.

	Driver	Evaluation 0-5 (5 = all criteria met) 0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
Benefits and Work Conditions	Paid time off: We encourage our employees to take personal time off (e.g., use of PTO days, family leave).	
	Mental health: Employees have coverage for mental health services. Sick days can be used for mental health recovery.	
	Benefits: Benefits take into account the different needs of different employees.	
	Flex time + clear deliverables: Employees have flex time options available along with clear deliverables / ways to measure work output (e.g., start work earlier in the day, take longer breaks).	
	Work hours: We set expectations of “dark time” or time when employees are not required to be monitoring digital communication (e.g., before 9am and after 6pm).	
	Codes of conduct: We share codes of conduct with all employees so it is clear what behaviors are considered unacceptable (e.g., harassment, hate speech).	
	Escalation / complaint process: Employees know what steps they can take to safely share a complaint about unsafe work conditions, harassment, or discrimination in the workplace.	
	Average score	
Assessment and Promotion	Performance criteria: We have clearly articulated performance expectations and metrics for each role.	
	Inclusion expectations: Specific behaviors of inclusion (e.g., “My manager asks for my perspective”) are set as performance criteria.	
	Behavior-based evaluation: We use a performance review system that collects and evaluates specific behaviors and outcomes (e.g., Good = “provides project updates at the beginning, middle, and end of each project.” Bad = “communicates well.”)	
	Distributed decision-making: Decisions related to promotions, salary increases, and terminations are made by more than one person (e.g., panel, committee).	
	Manager skills: Our managers have received training on how to provide actionable, specific, equitable feedback and how to have development conversations (e.g., coaching, 1-1s, career growth).	
	Inclusion skills: Our managers and employees have received training on behaviors of inclusion.	
	Self-evaluations: If self-evaluations are used, employees are trained how to write them and assess them well.	
	Recognition: Employees are recognized for their work, including tasks indirectly related to their role (e.g., participation in voluntary task forces, committees, think tanks, equity/belonging initiatives).	
	Access to opportunity: When there are opportunities for new roles and responsibilities, everyone knows about it.	
Compensation: We have a clear and transparent compensation structure (e.g., salary band structure, benchmarking).		
	Average score	

Sample Skills to Use During Difficult Conversations

Conversations about diversity and inclusion can sometimes be difficult, but we can't bring about positive change with silence. LifeLabs Learning has provided the below tips to engage in productive conversation, which is an excerpt from their [DEI Playbook](#).

Questions to ask direct reports in 1-1s, during moments of difficulty or societal tension

- What would be the most helpful use of this time?
- Where are you getting support?
- What's one thing I can do to make work easier for you right now?
- Would it feel good to brainstorm actions you'd like to see us take as a team or as a company?

When listening, use the 'triple a' method:

- **Acknowledge:** Thank you for sharing this.
- **Affirm:** This is a really important conversation for us to have. I care very much about x.
- **Ask:** Can you share more about x?

And a few things to not say

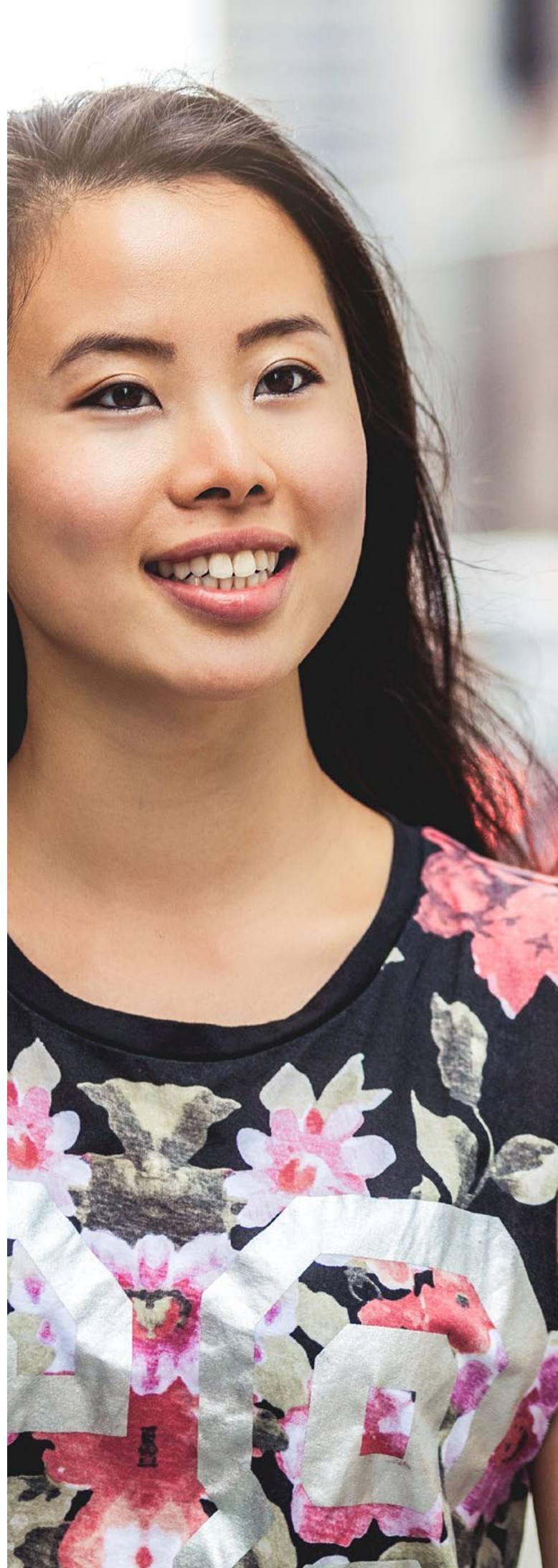
- I know exactly what you're going through.
- I felt left out when you didn't come to talk to me about it.
- It could be worse. (At least you have a job.)
- At least racism isn't happening at work.
- I'm sure it will get better soon.

LifeLabs⁷ Learning

About LifeLabs Learning

Learning is the go-to leadership skills accelerator for 1,000+ innovative companies (like Warby Parker, TED, GoPro, and The New York Times). Their learning experiences are short, fun, science-based, and immediately practical.

Training Resource: [LifeLabs Inclusive Culture Program](#)





Enhanced Diverse Hiring Services

Robert Walters Diverse Hiring Inclusivity Audit

The Robert Walters Diverse Hiring Inclusivity Audit is the first diverse hiring initiative of its kind as it applies the findings of over 60 respected academic research papers and studies to identify which of your careers content and hiring processes are perpetuating bias. Auditing over 150 data points, we're able to make specific actionable recommendations to nurture inclusive hiring. Whilst data is key, recruitment is a human business, so we have applied behavioral science to understand behaviors as well as understanding diversity data.

Delivered by Diverse Hiring Practitioners from our in-house Innovation Team, the Inclusivity audit is an end-to-end audit of the current recruitment media, and process. This independent audit analyses the impact of the current process using multiple candidate lenses:

- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Disability & neurodiversity
- LGBTQ+
- Age
- Faith
- Socio economic

Robert Walters Adify

Robert Walters Adify, our bespoke, in-house tool, ensures that job adverts adhere to diversity and inclusion best practice. This innovative, machine learning software identifies bias wording in job advertisements and replaces it with more neutral language, ensuring that your advert appeals to a wider, more diverse talent pool of candidates. The analysis improves overall reach of your adverts by removing gendered wording, ensuring mobile friendliness and advert readability so it attracts a more diverse audience.

“



Take time to understand alternative ways in which skills can be developed. Not everyone takes the same path to get to the same destination. **Mary McKinley, Senior Manager, Robert Walters, San Francisco** ”

”



We need to create equitable opportunity so we are mitigating for different starting points. When we are looking at careers pages or job postings, are we looking at companies that are trying to dismantle systems internally and be part of the future for change? Or are they doing the status quo, by including the compliance checkbox equal opportunity option?

Michael Kyle, VP, Talent Acquisition, Volta Charging ”

”



Our North Star is the experience of our employees because it drives everything else in our ecosystem: the experience of our customers, partners, and potential employees. When we are designing well, educating sufficiently, leading the way, and embodying the changes that need to happen internally—only then should we be celebrating what we're doing on the outside. **Valerie Jackson, Chief Diversity Officer, Zuora**



Conclusion: 5 Action Steps

Driving real change in the workplace is not about organizing a workshop and checking a box. As a business, we pledge to continue learning about how to help the businesses we work with build better diversity and inclusion processes, as well as look internally at the areas that can be improved. Here are 5 action steps for change:

- 1.** Encourage discussions that have the potential to be uncomfortable.
- 2.** Audit your current workforce and identify areas in which you can improve.
- 3.** Educate your employees about unconscious bias and hidden prejudice.
- 4.** Rethink every aspect of your hiring processes; from the places you source from to the way in which you assess candidates.
- 5.** Acknowledge that equity is not the same as equality; Equality is giving everyone the same opportunities despite the fact that we all have different abilities, backgrounds, and privileges. Equity is treating people differently depending on their needs to create an even playing field for all involved.

Contact us

To discuss this eguide, request other titles or talk about your recruitment needs in more detail, please contact your Robert Walters recruitment consultant, email us at getintouch@robertwalters.com or get in touch with one of our offices below:

Robert Walters San Francisco

575 Market Street
Suite 2950
San Francisco
CA 94105
USA
t: +1 415 549 2000

Robert Walters New York

7 Times Square
Suite 4301
New York
NY 10036
USA
t: +1 212 704 9900

Robert Walters Los Angeles

1925 Century Park E
Suite 1700
Los Angeles
CA 90067
USA
t: +1 213 233 2018

Robert Walters Toronto

145 King Street West
Suite 720
Toronto, Ontario
M5H 1J8
Canada
t: +1 647 288 2438





AUSTRALIA
BELGIUM
BRAZIL
CANADA
CHILE
CZECH REPUBLIC
FRANCE
GERMANY
HONG KONG
INDIA
INDONESIA
IRELAND
JAPAN
LUXEMBOURG
MAINLAND CHINA
MALAYSIA
MEXICO
NETHERLANDS
NEW ZEALAND
PHILIPPINES
PORTUGAL
SINGAPORE
SOUTH AFRICA
SOUTH KOREA
SPAIN
SWITZERLAND
TAIWAN
THAILAND
UAE
UK
USA
VIETNAM