

Do we really need to think about DEIB? We're good people – surely this isn't an issue for us?

Being well meaning is a good start, however, a real difference is made when Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) is integrated throughout an organisation and its systems. Diverse organisations not only have happier, more engaged and productive employees, research also shows they are more competitive. In short, it just makes good business sense.

Shouldn't we be hiring the best candidate?

Yes, however, bias can often drive decision making. For example, the underlying message of this question creates an association between minority groups being less qualified or lower performers and as such, you must choose between having a great, high-performing team and diversity. This reflects bias – conscious or unconscious. By knowing, acknowledging and building systems to counteract biases, you not only build a wider talent pool with greater depth, but your recruitment process will also improve through more thoughtful hiring decisions.

Won't I then be excluding non-minority people?

The goal of DEIB to encompass all human differences and exclude no one – full diversity, equity and inclusion cannot be achieved without the participation of any group. DEIB isn't about excluding one group or the other, or creating an us vs. them mentality; it's about leveling the playing field so all candidates can be in the mix.

What about cultural fit?

Focusing on diversity is not about getting them into your culture. Diversity is about creating a culture where everyone can thrive and contribute to your organisation and serving your increasingly diverse customers. Looking for differences creates a cultural add, providing value, broader perspectives and more nuanced understanding.

How can we avoid unconscious bias?

While you can't avoid holding unconscious biases, you need to try and identify those that you may have when it comes to decision making. Research also shows that unconscious bias is more likely to affect decisions when people are tired, stressed, have low blood sugar, unclear information or need to make a decision quickly. By recognising your own unconscious biases and being aware of when you may be more susceptible to unconscious bias in your decision making, don't react on first impressions, allow yourself more time to make decisions and request more information for clarity if needed.

How can we improve DEIB within the recruitment process?

Improving DEIB in the recruitment process starts with a conscious effort to reduce the risk of bias within sourcing and selection methods. There are multiple ways to do this including the language of job descriptions and advertisements, anonymised candidate presentation, scorecard interviewing processes and merit-based skills testing.