



Improving recruitment and selection processes to diversify your workforce

- **Where we recruit:** consider where you are advertising and recruiting. If your current network is not reaching a diverse audience reach out to new groups and your contacts for candidates and suggestions.
- **System justification:** people are more likely to define the status quo by construing the current process/system/situation as natural and desirable.¹ Be on the alert during recruitment and selection rounds and be prepared to challenge behavior that may impede the selection of particular candidate groups. This may include bias, unrealistic expectations, etc.
- **Prevailing inequality:** female participants who perceive a prevailing inequality in their field subsequently defined this inequality as desirable and natural².
 - Sexist beliefs that perpetuate gender stereotypes can then further inhibit the recruitment of diverse candidates.^{3,4}
 - Be prepared to challenge existing systems that have developed around a majority group, but which may impede the recruitment of diverse candidates.
- **New channels:** advertise and recruit through new channels. Look for new contacts and areas to advertise that reach underrepresented groups (e.g. www.womeninhpc.org/resources) and post to relevant social media groups (e.g. on LinkedIn).
- **Develop policies to promote pathways to technical careers.** These policies should aim to encourage diverse candidates, promotion of internal employees and workforce inclusion.
- **Modify your announcements.**
 - Ensure job adverts/descriptions reflect the flexibility present in the selection process.
 - Only criteria that are essential should be ‘required’, others should be listed as ‘preferred’.
 - Allow ‘nontraditional’ evidence (e.g. is a Ph.D. really necessary or is it just a way to demonstrate key traits)?
 - Look out for gendered job wording⁵ and biases in your advert.
- **Identify your personal implicit biases:** we all have biases and it is impossible to completely rid ourselves of them. Being aware of your biases helps you improve your decision making.

About Women in HPC

Women in HPC (WHPC) is an international network created with the vision to address the underrepresentation of women in the HPC community by providing fellowship, education, and support to women and the organizations that employ them.

Through collaboration and networking, WHPC strives to bring together women in HPC and technical computing while encouraging women to engage in outreach activities and improve the visibility of inspirational role models.

www.womeninhpc.org

¹ Jost, J. T., Banaji, M. R., & Nosek, B. A. (2004). *A decade of system justification theory: Accumulated evidence of conscious and unconscious bolstering of the status quo*. *Political Psychology*, 25, 881–919. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9221.2004.00402.x

² Kay, A. C., Gaucher, D., Peach, J. M., Laurin, K., Friesen, J., Zanna, M. P., & Spencer, S. J. (2009). *Inequality, discrimination, and the power of the status quo: Direct evidence for a motivation to see the way things are as the way they should be*. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 97, 421–434. doi:10.1037/a0015997

³ Glick, P., & Fiske, S. T. (2001b). *Ambivalent stereotypes as legitimizing ideologies: Differentiating paternalistic and envious prejudice*. In J. T. Jost & B. Major (Eds.), *The psychology of legitimacy: Emerging perspectives on ideology, justice, and intergroup relations* (pp. 278–306). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

⁴ Kay, A. C., Jost, J. T., Mandisodza, A. N., Sherman, S. J., Petrocelli, J. V., & Johnson, A. L. (2007). *Panglossian ideology in the service of system justification: How complementary stereotypes help us to rationalize inequality*. In M. P. Zanna (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 39, pp. 305–358). San Diego, CA: Elsevier. doi: 10.1016/S0065-2601(06)39006-5

⁵ Gaucher, D., Friesen, J., & Kay, A.C., 2011. *Evidence that gendered wording in job advertisements exists and sustains gender inequality*. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 101(1), pp.109–128.

Common **assumptions** affecting progress towards diversifying teams followed by documented **realities**:

Despite widely accepted egalitarian ideal women continue to be underrepresented throughout STEM. Addressing our assumptions why this is true is necessary to bring about useful and positive change.

ASSUMPTION. “There are no women or minorities in our field, or no qualified women or minorities.”

REALITY. Though women and minority applicants may be scarce in some fields, it is rarely the case that there are none. It may help to present actual data on the numbers and percentages of women in your discipline. Such data are available from the National Science Foundation’s (NSF) “Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED)” available on its SED Tabulation Engine or from various professional organizations.⁶

ASSUMPTION. “Recruiting women & minorities diminishes opportunities for white males.”

REALITY. A study examining the experiences of scholars who earned doctorates and won prestigious fellowships (Ford, Mellon, and Spencer) found no evidence of discrimination against white men. Indeed, white men who had some expertise related to diversity had a significant advantage in the job market.^{7,8}

ASSUMPTION. “Women end up leaving our organization anyway due to family obligations.”

REALITY. One large-scale study found that after about 12 years, approximately 50% of women had left their jobs in STEM fields—mostly in computing or engineering.⁷ Only 20% of the women who left large private sector companies left to take time out of the workforce. Research suggests that women are not exiting these careers primarily for family concerns—and even when they are, they might have made different “choices” if more flexible options to support these competing responsibilities had been available.⁹

ASSUMPTION. “It starts early with young girls’ interest in math and science...the problem is so massive that I don’t believe we can have any meaningful effect.”

REALITY. Despite these larger societal barriers, there are still significant changes that organizations can, and do, make to increase diversity.¹⁰ See resources below for more information.

⁶ Fine, E. (Women in S. & E. L. I., & Handelsman, J. (Women in S. & E. L. I. (2012). Searching for Excellence & Diversity: A Guide for Search Committees at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Madison, Wisconsin.

⁷ Smith, Achieving Faculty Diversity, 4, 95.

⁸ Glass, J.L., Sessler, S., Levitte, Y., & Michelmore, K.M. (2013). What’s so special about STEM? A comparison of women’s retention in STEM and professional occupations. Social Forces, 92(2), 723-756.

⁹ Ashcraft, C., Mclain, B., & Eger, E. (2016). WOMEN IN TECH : THE FACTS 2016 UPDATE // See what’s changed and what hasn’t.

¹⁰ Ashcraft, C., Dubow, W., Eger, E., Blithe, S., & Sevier, B. (2013). Male Advocates and Allies: Promoting Gender Diversity In Technology Workplaces.

Additional resources:

- Best Practices For Recruiting STEM-Women and Diversity Candidates <https://www.ere.net/looking-for-bold-recruiting-approaches-best-practices-for-recruiting-stem-women-and-diversity-candidates-part-1-of-2/>
- National Center for Women in Information Technology (NCWIT): Avoiding Gender Bias in Recruitment/Selection Processes <https://www.ncwit.org/resources/how-can-reducing-unconscious-bias-increase-women%E2%80%99s-success-it/avoiding-gender-bias>
- Women in Science and Engineering Leadership Institute (WISELI), <http://wiseli.engr.wisc.edu/pubtype.php>
- Project Implicit: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>