

The Culturally Competent Leader and Inclusive Workplace

Instructor: Tim Cynova

Module 3 Activity

Re-Imagining the Dusty Hiring Process

Overview

Like last week with our special guest Lauren Ruffin, this week I'm excited to introduce you to a brilliant colleague of mine, Katrina Donald. Over the years, Katrina and I have spent a great deal of time studying, exploring, and experimenting with various approaches to hiring. Together, we take a "building the plane while flying it" approach that we've found better enables organizations to understand and adapt processes to explore the actual knowledge, skills, and abilities of a role.

The videos below are meant to help spark ideas about how we can craft more values-aligned processes for bringing people into our organizations. The videos are pulled from both my own 10-module online course about hiring (a more or less "traditional" approach), videos from the Values-based Hiring Course Katrina and I taught, and also videos we recorded on distinct topics.

Resources & Lesson Materials

- 3:1 [Introduction to Inclusive Hiring](#)
- 3:2 [KSA Overview](#)
- 3:3 [Inclusive Sourcing](#)
- 3:4 [Introduction to Interviews](#)
- 3:5 [Crafting Interview Questions](#)
- 3:6 [Hypothetical Questions](#)
- 3:7 [Testing Interview Questions](#)
- 3:8 [The Rubric, Part 1](#)
- 3:9 [The Rubric, Part 2](#)
- 3:10 [The Chronological Crawl](#)
- 3:11 [Reference Checks](#)
- 3:12 [The Offer](#)
- 3:13 [Onboarding](#)

Also Required

- [Read] [Cognitive Biases in Decision Making](#)

- [Read] Tema Okun's "[Characteristics of White Supremacy Culture](#)"
- [Read] Sins Invalid's "[10 Principles of Disability Justice](#)"
- [Review] [Opera Philadelphia's Posting for their VP of HRI Search including application package](#)
- [Review] [The Behavior Dashboard](#) matrix ([high resolution image](#))
- [Mind Map] [Sourcing Schematic](#)
- [Mind Map] [Hire with Confidence](#)
- [Case Study] [GeneratorTO](#)

Exercises

Part 1 - Cognitive Biases

Reflecting on the extensive list of "[Cognitive Biases in Decision Making](#)," which do you think are most challenging or problematic when trying to craft an inclusive and equitable hiring process?

Response

Cross examining the ginormous list of biases I see more than a few that reside in me. Better than average, Dunning-Kruger Effect (those 2 seem to contradict), Illusion of Control, Rhyme-As-Reason. Many of the listed biases can be problematic to equitable hiring. A few are:

- Ambiguity Effect - avoiding unknown outcomes by straying away from unknown cultures or peoples. Keeping the status quo.
- Blind spot bias - not reflecting regularly on your own bias because you think you're not.
- Confirmation bias - searching for proof that you're correct about a certain type of person's ability or inability to do the job. I think it is very common and definitely problematic.
- Declinism - the old ways were better. Seems akin to nationalism. Very regressive and problematic to culture change. Seems pervasive in the world now.
- Conservatism Bias - undervaluing new evidence slows or down right stops the ability to assess and change.
- Framing Effect - view the same information differently from frames - points to the importance of consistency in the interview process. Use the same framing as much as possible to increase equity.
- Functional Fixedness - this is an issue more in my work. I think Adam Savage coined it best with his recent book title "Every Tool's a Hammer". Professional craftsmen fixate on the singular purpose of a tool and shame newbies for "inappropriate" use. This stifles creativity. A tool is used for what is called upon at the time.

- Mere Exposure Effect - Fear of change - another sticking to the status quo
- Stereotyping - pretty self explanatory.

Part 2 - Inclusion Scan

Using either Tema Okun's "[*Characteristics of White Supremacy Culture*](#)," and/or Sins Invalid's "[*10 Principles of Disability Justice*](#)"

- *"Decode" a position description or job posting from your organization (or one from a publicly-posted position) using either or both of the articles as a guide. Please insert the copy at the end of this document or link to the job posting.*
- *What surprised you?*
- *Where were you challenged?*
- *How did this provide insights into the way your organization (or the organization you reviewed a posting for) conveys the role/opportunity?*
- *Are there any ways you might consider doing things differently based on this experience?*
- *What other questions does this raise for you?*

Response

I took a look at my place of work's job board, Trinity University. The posting I looked at is for an Administrative Support Specialist - Events, in the Alumni Relations and Development department.

Certainly a few of surprises:

- The only mention of disability awareness is a disclaimer at the end.
 - It occurred to me that hearing or visually impaired are very excluded from the opportunity.
- The overall tone is lazy, uninviting, and robotic. A list of requirements and duties with a finale statement of "Performs other duties as required".
- There is also a sense of urgency in the posting. Explicitly stating that "Maintaining and satisfying minimum attendance requirements are an essential requirement of this position..."
- The listing is only written. Implies worship of the written word style. There are no links to express the vibrant culture of the community and the links are inaccurate (a couple of the programs offered in the professional development tab no longer exist)
- There is no discussion of the hiring process and what all is involved.
- It really doesn't reflect the accommodating and accepting culture of our community.

Things I would consider doing differently:

- Lighten up the writing style and open with a statement of Trinity's vibrant and accepting culture. We go to great lengths to provide for all types of students. We should show that staff are included.

- Include a map of the bus and bikes route, so that people that do not rely on cars can see how to access the campus.
- The section listing how staff receive instructions can be expanded to include accommodations for the hearing or visually impaired.
- The required experience of 1 year is low but seems unnecessary for an entry level job. Experience can be gained on the job.
- Similarly the Skills needed can be learned on the job and this should be stated
- Add in a video, with sign language, and audio of the posting. Include the KSA's, the process, our diversity equity & inclusion commitments and why Trinity is a great place to work.

Questions I'm left with:

- Why does an entry level position require experience and skills up front? Skills that can be learned on the job.
- The salary range also seems arbitrary. There's a %20 difference between the low and high end. How does one determine who falls where in the pay scale?

Overall I am a bit surprised. We are an open and embracing community and it's not really reflected in our HR approved job postings.

Part 3 - KSAs & Key Anchors

Consider the knowledge, skills, abilities, and what might be the key anchors of the role you reviewed above. List 3 for each category – Knowledge, Skills, Abilities – as well as two key anchors for the role.

Response

Knowledge

- Arithmetic
- Clerical and office systems
- management principles

Skills

- Basic computer navigation skills
- Data entry
- Active listening

Abilities

- Ability to communicate effectively in writing
- Ability to maintain a schedule
- Ability to support a team environment

Key Anchors

- Communicates well
- Willingness to learn and adapt

(honestly, I'm kind of confused in this section. I keep questioning what real KSA's are required for this type of role. If I'm hiring, I'm inclined to train on the job. I would look for a person that is willing to learn and comfortable being themselves. And that's it.)

Part 4 - Network Map

Consider your own network and possible sourcing options. Review your network and connections in relation to the KSAs and key anchors of this particular role:

- *Current/Previous Jobs*
- *Family/Friends/Mentors*
- *Community (e.g., Sports, Charities, Religious affiliations, Neighbors),*
- *Alumni/Professional affiliations*
- *People with whom you interact on a regular basis (e.g., Barista, Neighbor)*
- *Does what you notice in this map start to surface a strategy for you?*
 - *Might you need a hiring committee or other members of the team to also do this activity?*
 - *Is there a list developing of the people you would email, send a note on LinkedIn, etc.?*
 - *Are there people in your network (or others) who might know people who are interested in this job?*
 - *Where might people aligned with this role might be "hanging out" (where might you post)?*

Response

Prior to Trinity, my main work area and community was on the Westside of San Antonio. Traditionally, the "rough" less affluent part of town, and my living community has been the opposite. Alamo Heights, the wealthy, white, elite community in town. My run group, my discgolf crew, and my cycling compadres are all doctors, professors, or upper mid career management types. I could easily spread the word through them, and I still have connections to the west through the SAISD, the aircraft community hubs, and the Guadalupe cultural arts center. I would definitely post at those locations plus recruit their input on alternative postings around town.

Part 5 - Crafting the Interview

Consider what questions or scenarios would help you understand/build confidence in the knowledge, skills, and abilities as articulated above that are required to be successful in this role.

- *Generate a list of 5-7 questions and scenarios that get to what you are trying to learn:*
 - *How might you assign them to each of 3 interview rounds?*
 - *Is there a way to identify helpful resources or information that you might share with candidates in advance to help test or aid being able to better understand how*
- *Draft the interview script for your first interview that allows it to be highly structured.*

- Develop a rubric for the first interview to help you assess the candidate responses to your questions.

Response

I put together a three part interview Rubric with interview three scripted questions for each interview

INTERVIEW RUBRIC							
POSITION TITLE: Administrative Support Specialist - Events, in the Alumni Relations and Development department							
INTERVIEW ROUND:	1		2		3		
INTERVIEWER'S NAME(S)							
SCALE=	1= UNSATISFACTORY	2= BELOW AVERAGE	3= AVERAGE	4= ABOVE AVERAGE	5= EXCEPTIONAL	INTERVIEW ROUND	
KSA FACTORS	CANDIDATES						
	CANDIDATE 1	CANDIDATE 2	CANDIDATE 3	CANDIDATE 4	CANDIDATE 5		
ARITHMETIC KNOWLEDGE						1	What would you do if asked to calculate a math problem outside of you knowledge scope?
CLERICAL & OFFICE SYSTEMS KNOWLEDGE							Your supervisor assigns a large amount of extensive data entry, plus papers to write, and pamphlets to print out. Basically more work than you can do in the given time. What do you do?
MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES KNOWLEDGE							A deadline is hours away and your computer is frozen up. What do you do?
COMPUTER SKILLS							
DATA ENTRY SKILLS							A student worker that you oversee is coming in late regularly and doing very little work. How do you handle that?
ACTIVE LISTENING SKILLS							The University President asks you to write and send out a university wide announcement that she dedicated to you very quickly and then leaves. What do you do?
COMMUNICATION ABILITIES							An affluent alumni strolls into the office and demands that they be the president immediately. What do you do?

SCHEDULING ABILITIES							
TEAM FIT						3	Give an example of a high point in your life. An accomplishment you feel really proud of. It can work , school, or personal.
WILLINGNESS TO ADAPT							Provide an example of a low point that presented an opportunity to learn
ROUND 1							Please share anything else you would like us to know.
ROUND 2							
ROUND 3							
TOTAL SCORE:							

Part 6 - The Offer

How might you re-imagine the offer and negotiation phase of the search process to shift the often one-sided power differential?

Response

As discussed in the class lessons, I would schedule a meeting (phone, zoom, or in person) with the offeree and iterate the desirable traits that were observed through the interview process. Why the team feels like the candidate would be a good fit. What kind of training they would receive. I would invite questions and follow up with the monetary offer, benefits, and an explanation of the promotion or assessment process to increase pay.

PLEASE INCLUDE THE LINK TO THE PUBLICLY-AVAILABLE JOB POST YOU REVIEWED, OR PASTE BELOW THE COPY FOR ONE YOU REVIEWED IF NOT LINKED PUBLICLY.

<https://www.trinity.edu/human-resources/employment-opportunities/staff/41011>

Reflection Prompt

Reflect on the content from this week and share with your colleagues in Canvas. You can find additional tips for completing this activity in the video embedded below.

Prompts —

- **What have you experimented with and/or found works particularly well in your current hiring processes that you think might be of interest to this group?**
- **What are you taking with you from this module that will influence how your team and organization creates a (more) inclusive process to recruit, hire, and onboard team members?**
- **Where are you still challenged in this work?**
- **What support can those in this group offer in service of this work?**

Response

I have to admit that I kind of struggled with this week's assignment. I suspect it is because I don't really hire at this level very much, so all of this is fairly new to me. I struggled with defining the KSA's for my theoretical applicant for an entry level job. I feel like the KSAs needed for most entry level jobs can be acquired and cultivated on the job. I kept asking myself if a particular KSA was really required or just desired.

I do get to experiment with hiring and training a fair amount with the 7-8 student workers I recruit each year. The recruitment/interview process is super simple. Some have known skills and abilities that I observe as they use the space, so I recruit them. The students that I'm not familiar with, I just let them know up front that they will learn on the job and to be open and flexible. I haven't had a bad student yet and if I did, they move on after graduation. The risk is low.

What sticks with me, aside from the need to experiment and be flexible, is the need for consistency across the process that is anchored by the KSAs. Essentially removing as much bias as possible. Additionally, I see more clearly now how the presentation of the job, and how it's posted can limit who applies. The need to include multiple forms of communication, outreach and clearly stating the emphasis on inclusion. As our makerspace student worker population increases I will try to work with students to craft a position KSA rubric and have them conduct future interviews for team additions. Thank you for sharing this Tim