

Inclusive Interviewing: Expanding The Reach



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“Inclusive Interviewing” is a workshop that highlights the importance of understanding cultural differences to ensure selection of the best candidates for the 21st century.

THE FOCUS

This course focuses on the critical ability of relating to potential candidates from an array of different backgrounds. The class looks at the learnable skills which are necessary to connect with a wider scope of applicants – causing a marked improvement in interviewing and selecting a more diverse team to reach a more diverse constituency.

Introduction

The “Inclusive Interviewing” workshop is framed in the context of creating a user-friendly environment for everyone regardless of differences. The importance of “expanding the reach” has everything to do with attracting the next generation of students as well as staff and achieving successful outcomes.

Biases That Shape The Interview

The subjective elements of hiring are examined – even when objective criteria have been established. The organizational handbook might state “candidate must have strong communication skills” but what does communication look like to someone who is younger or of a different culture? Participants gain an understanding of biases and assumptions that are built into the process itself. Ways to

overcome these tendencies are discussed in order to make better selections that ensure the future strength of the organization? Most interviewers hire people they feel comfortable with and that often means a pool of candidates that are remarkably alike – but surprisingly unlike the people they are hoping to serve.

Culture Styles That Distinguish The Candidates

Various tools are used to learn about cultural conditioning and expectations regarding behavior as it relates to the interviewing process. People are asked to evaluate themselves on a spectrum of 6 different dimensions including values, etiquette and relational preferences. They are then asked to locate the “prototypical” candidate as well as future constituents. Significant gaps become apparent and participants are taught how to adjust for differences as they assess potential candidates for selection. The goal is to broaden the perspective on how success is defined and who can achieve it without lowering the standard of excellence.

Strategies for Inclusive Interviewing

After various activities and small group discussions, attendees engage in a brainstorming session on ways to improve their own recruiting, interviewing and hiring practices. Without attempting to dismantle ongoing efforts, current systems are re-examined with a wider lense that incorporates a better understanding of personal bias and cultural differences. Some skill practice occurs on being more inclusive in interacting with others and the session ends with specific strategies to begin immediate application.