



Peer Affiliate Zoom Meeting January 21, 2021

Topic: How are You Recruiting With An Eye To DEI?

Attendees: David Factor (ESCSC), Carol Leigh (OneSource), Julia Johnson (OneSource), Lorna Zwerin-Parson (OneSource), Janet McIntyre (ESCSC), Julie Crockford (ESC), James Rather (ESCH), Michael Towers (NESC), Craig Kowalski (OneSource), Joel Greenbaum (ESC-SOFL), Nadela Offre (ESC), Wendi Wilson (ESCCO), Darlyne Koretos (OneSource), Jody Yetzer (OneSource), Connie Hinitz (OneSource), Yvonne Van Haitsma (Covestro), Kerry Raquel (ESC-Triangle); Jan Burrell (501 Commons)

Participants shared their experiences with the following:

- What's your greatest challenge in recruiting with DEI in mind?
- What strategies have you tried, and how are they working?
- Is there anything you've tried that you suggest others should avoid?

Discussion Points, Challenges, Strategies

Kerry opened with concrete and heartfelt advice as to how to recruit with DEI in mind, to which many others contributed. Some captured points are set forth below:

- Involve people of color in recruiting and have a person of color make “the ask” so there is immediate knowledge of shared experiences, which serves to expedite deeper connections.
- “Like attracts like”.
- Strive for “similarity or familiarity”.
- Communication is everything and how one does that matters.
- Need self-awareness, understanding and sensitivity. Need to understand “white normalcy” and an understanding of oneself in a white privileged world. Need to understand where our assumptions come from. Educate yourself and know your own biases and find ways to acknowledge those when they arise. This is hard work.
- Do your homework. Research. Understand the culture, race, disabilities you are recruiting for before you approach an individual or organization. Know your audience.
- Scrutinize the culture of your organization and expectations to make sure it is inclusive and equitable. Look for your organization's gaps (board, consultants, staff, etc.) then research potential people to fill those gaps; if they are people of color then make sure you have the right person from your organization making the ask. Look for ways where you can offer equity to all.
- DEI should be a given in every organization. DEI needs to flow from top of the organization down, cascading, and also horizontal.
- Equity is leveling the playing field for everyone. It's not enough to just “add” people of color to staff, volunteers, board. They must be welcomed and have a seat at the table.

- Be mindful of micro-aggressions that make people of color feel unwelcome and not “like us”. Think about whether one’s traits are derived from personality or culture. Don’t make assumptions or overgeneralizations.
- Don't wait until you have the “perfect” DEI protocol in place to start - JUST START! Build trust and long-term relationships.

Useful Materials and Successful Strategies & Programs

Many good ideas were shared. A few captured are set forth below:

- Connie shared a tool on Diversity and Inclusion Implementation from the American Management Association. Steps to ensuring success: define, align, execute.
- Julie shared recent her hiring experience: wouldn’t consider a candidate pool without at least one-half people of color. This is one A step taken in conjunction with Empower Success Corp’s Board actionable DEI goals in its strategic plan. Another effort being taken is the development of a pipeline of talented people of color through a paid fellowship program.
- Organizations’ mission, vision and values need reexamination in light of this summer’s surfacing of issues of racial inequality and inequity.
- Employment and recruitment policies should be reviewed with a race and equity lens.
- Kerry shared information on ESC of the Triangle’s Board Leadership Bootcamp and very successful DEI training/programs addressing topical issues such as anti-racism.
- Yvonne found useful “Awake to Woke to Work”, Equity in the Center’s resource.
- Be purposeful in outreach and recruitment e.g., reach out to higher education institutions and big corporations for candidates of color for Board positions

A closing takeaway from an attendee: “Good and important meeting. Let us continue to share strategies and outcomes.”