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Real Deal Diversity & Inclusion: A Quick Checklist

3 min read



Diversity and inclusion are finally at the forefront in today's business world and a focus on D&I is crucial to winning the right candidates. Most hiring managers say they have a culture that supports diversity and inclusion. But do they really?

Diversity and inclusion (D&I) has been a hot topic of late, especially in tech industries where the workforce is disproportionately male and

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WRITTEN BY:
**Darren
Bounds**

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good to be a
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DIVERSITY

HIRING

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white. We all want to hire the best talent, and as [Atlassian's 2018 State of Diversity in US Tech report](#) reveals, roughly 80% of people say they care about D&I.

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But when it comes to recruiting diverse candidates, we need to get one thing straight: caring is not enough. We need action.

The Atlassian report also found that almost across the board, diversity efforts have stalled, with a nearly 50% drop in individual participation in diversity initiatives year-on-year. And the inclusion side of the picture doesn't fare much better. Less than 30% of underrepresented groups reported a sense of belonging at their companies.

We took an in-depth look at [Aubrey Blanche's experiences](#) creating a powerfully practical approach to D&I. The Global Head of Diversity & Belonging at Atlassian is a forerunner in this area and a big part of the reason Atlassian was able to boost its female tech hires by 80%. Based on her rock-solid D&I insights, we whipped up a quick checklist to help you close the gap.

Have your reasons

Diversity is not a box to check off. If you're only thinking about D&I practices because 'you're supposed to', that's not good enough. You need to know [the reasons behind your D&I strategies](#) so you can keep your team focused on the goal.

Consider these questions:

Do I truly believe having diverse teams working in our company makes a difference?

Are D&I initiatives vital for our business? If yes, why? If not, why not?

Keep testing and trying

The good news is, we're not supposed to have all the answers. Blanche's system is based on using research to make "small tweaks" as you grow as a company. It's ok to try and keep trying. "This is a 10- to 20-year problem, you can't solve structural racism by throwing together a year-long program with a few targets," Blanche points out.

Ask yourself:

How do I currently engage with the people in our company and talent community?

How do my strategies and policies account for their experiences?

Understand the role of privilege in recruitment

People matter. And cultivating human potential is huge. As employers, we need to use our privilege to advocate for our people and grow our teams into truly exceptional talents.

Think about:

What does it mean to be 'qualified' for a role?

What are the things that got you where you are today?

Do all your applicants and candidates have access to those same resources?

Recruit for balanced teams (not stats!)

The problem with reporting at the company level is you get representation without distribution. “That’s because the team level is where you’re really going to feel the impact of diversity. It doesn’t matter if 30% of your company is made up of women if they’re all in marketing or HR and the men are in engineering,” says Blanche.

Take a hard look at your numbers.

Are underrepresented groups equally distributed across the company?

How many people are working with colleagues who are different than themselves?

How can you help underrepresented groups connect across teams?

How would that benefit the company?

Source beyond gender

For Blanche, it’s necessary we see diversity as something that moves past gender. Many of us fall into the trap of *diversity equals women* — and what women come to our mind if not white, cisgender and economically stable? Intersectionality means we all have layers that need to be embraced.

Take some time to reflect:

Do I associate the concept of diversity with hiring more women?

Do I know where and how to source talent from all working groups?

Revamp your job ads

A [2011 study](#) published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* found that masculine and feminine-themed words were an unacknowledged mechanism for maintaining inequality. Get 'em [out of your job ads](#) and you'll immediately attract a more diverse pool of applicants.

Do underrepresented candidates have the opportunity to apply to my open positions?

Is my EEO statement truly encouraging?

Do my job ads contain jargon and cliches (rockstar, ninja, etc.)?

Am I actively seeking out underrepresented groups and encouraging them to apply?

Re-focus your recruiting

If you dig deeper into your recruitment process, there's a high chance you'll find inherent bias. So drop the 'hiring based on experience' scheme and get better at spotting useful skills candidates gained from non-linear experiences.

Think about:

Am I looking for skills from a short-term perspective?

Can employees grow in their role at my company?

What are the hidden benefits of hiring someone who doesn't have a strong background in a specific area?

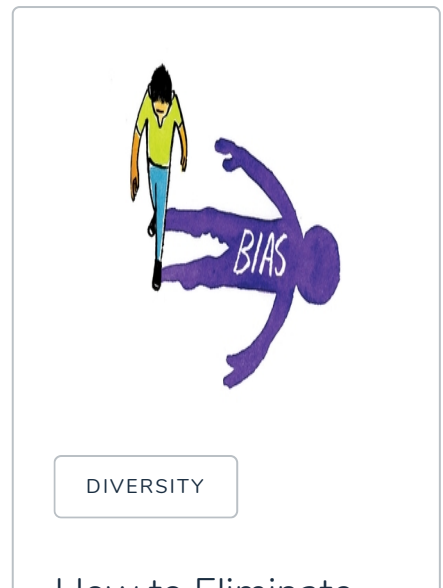
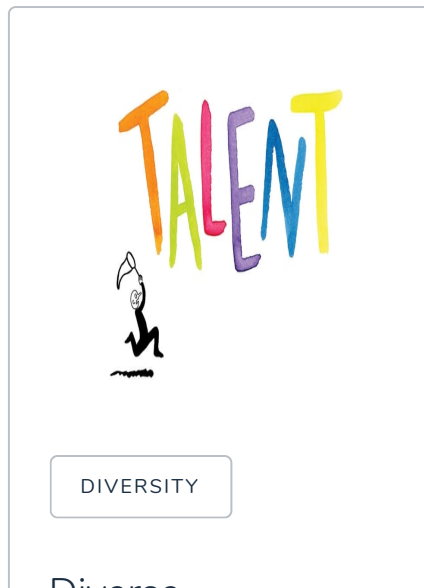
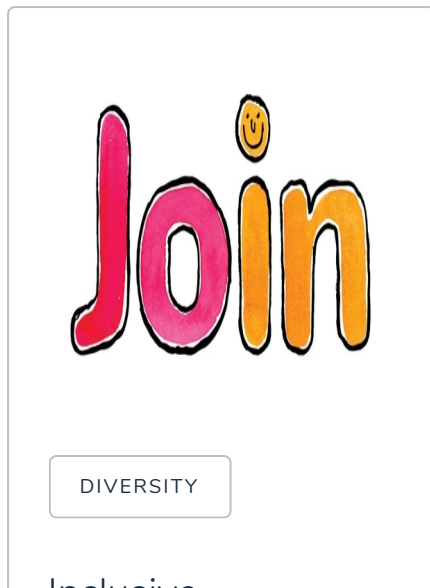
In the end, it's about how high you're willing to raise the bar. When you set the goal to design a recruiting process that's efficient, objective and genuinely focused on securing the best talent — diversity will follow.

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