

Diverse Referral Guide

Ideas to help foster a more diverse pipeline

Fostering a more diverse hiring pipeline is a critical challenge for any company. Employee referrals are a critical element of this process but often are a pain point due to the lack of diversity in the referred populations. Below are some suggestions for things that can be done immediately, and in most cases for free, to help foster a more diverse pipeline.

* Remember, we are seeking a communal increase of 5 to 10 percent at the top of the funnel, so every little bit will help tremendously.

Individual

- **Build a “woke list”** of people that you are ready to reach out to regularly with jobs — each employee should create a special contact list of thoughtful contacts who can be reached out to regularly with job openings / solicitations.
- **Set individual goals** for the year in terms of referrals — an employee can set a personal goal — say, two referrals a month, at least one who meets an inclusion standard — and then measure their own success.
- One meeting a month with someone you might not ordinarily have met with — **taking the time to network once a month** with someone who might not ordinarily have warranted a meeting will increase the diversity of your network dramatically.
- **Build a sample email** - Holistic can help! - that you can use to reach out to people — by having some canned language it will greatly reduce the time needed to make referrals.
- **Get comfortable sharing your goals / numbers** — sharing the company’s numbers and goals around DEI will really help foster more interest.

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Company

- **Share data internally and externally** — as part of a comprehensive DEI strategy the company should share not just diversity numbers for the staff but also referral numbers.
- **Share DEI mission statement** — sharing the company's DEI mission statement is a valuable tool to help Foster understanding.
- **Collective goal** — setting a collective goal — say, 100 referrals a month, and at least 50 percent who meet an inclusion standard, will really help galvanize the efforts.
- **Define the top of the funnel objective** — the company can clarify that the focus around referrals is specific to the top of the funnel, so that employees understand that there will not be a decline in quality or seriousness.
- **Industry transfer guidelines** — clarifying information about how employees can look to other industries for candidates, and why that is encouraged, can be beneficial.
- **Inclusive language in job descriptions** — thoughtful inciting job descriptions are valuable for helping with referrals.
- **Celebrate successful referrals** — whenever a candidate of color or a female candidate comes through a referral process, they should be celebrated, and the referrer should be recognized.

Incentives

- Referred candidates guaranteed at least an interview — guaranteeing at least an interview to any referred candidate takes out some of the risk from the process for the referrer.
- **Extra referral bonus for POC / women** — many companies offer a 4x referral bonus if a candidate who meets an inclusion standard is hired.
- Collective goal — it is also very advisable to offer a collective incentive — like a 50 dollar gift card for everyone in the company — should the company meet its referral goals.
- **Referral profile considered in promotion / raise discussions** — promising individual current employees that the information about who they referred will be considered in promotion/ raise/ bonus discussions is advisable as well.