Minimizing Bias When Evaluating Candidates

Determining a plan to minimize bias when evaluating candidates can help to enhance diversity and increase the opportunity for objectivity and equity within a faculty search process. Practicing these tips can help enhance diversity and increase objectivity when hiring. Contact the Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Recruitment Program Manager (teresa.hernandez@colorado.edu) or Affirmative Action Officer (david.pacheco@colorado.edu) in Human Resources with questions or to learn more about minimizing bias in the

Become Informed About Bias

Review schema charts, articles, case studies & tips about implicit bias as reminders to reduce bias.

Learn bias types & cognitive errors to avoid mental shortcuts.

Diversify the Applicant Pool

Seeking applicants with broadly diverse backgrounds & experience can enhance the department's ability to solve problems & identify creative solutions.

Advertising to a broad audience & personally inviting people to apply is crucial to diversifying the applicant pool!

Set Objective Parameters

Focus on candidates' qualifications vs. subjective information such as where credentials are received or who mentors are.

Discuss and determine concrete parameters for subjective and vague concepts such as 'excellent research record.' Discourage use of "fit" to avoid finding the same type of person each time.

Evaluate Candidates

Do's

- Review applications individually, then have a discussion with the hiring committee to gain multiple perspectives.
- Use a rubric. Tie each applicant's qualifications to the criteria listed in the qualifications.
- Slow down and give yourself adequate time to evaluate applicants when you are alert, have some time, and are rested.
- Identify one commonality with each applicant.
- Run mental simulations by substituting a different organization or gender in place to see if this changes the decision to move the candidates forward or not.

Don'ts

- Avoid using social media to learn more about an applicant. This helps prevent finding unreliable, job irrelevant, and potentially protected class information.
- Avoid making assumptions about an applicant's motivation. The interview can help to explore interest in the position.
- Don't reject applicants for being "overqualified." Applicants are either qualified or not to do the work.

Make a Decision

Talk through decisions with someone who challenges your perspectives.

Be able to explain the reasoning behind your thinking to avoid gut feeling decisions.