

Some Best Practices in Establishing and Maintaining a Diverse Workforce

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The Silver Bullet

- Looking for the proverbial silver bullet is like searching for unicorns
- The road to establishing a diverse workforce demands *commitment*

Hard Work

- Your *actual* commitment is demonstrated by hard work and extra effort
- As you will see, all of the best practices require extra effort

Advertising

- Think of your vacancy as an ***opportunity***
- Don't just pull out the same announcement you used last time you had the vacancy
- Do the hard work: think about the position in light of:
 - Framework to Foster Diversity
 - Affirmative Action Goals
 - Mission Statement
 - Future direction of the unit

Make the Announcement a “Statement”

- Marketing 101: *Demonstrate* Penn State and unit commitment to diversity
- Use alternative sources for posting
- Cover Letters?

Passive v. *Active*

- Advertising a position is required, and it can be creative, but it is passive
- Remember! You are not the only employer competing for diverse applicants

Recruit - - *Aggressively*

- This is where the real work begins and the commitment is fully demonstrated
- **Network!!!**
 - Phone
 - Conferences
 - Set contact goals
 - Personal follow up: letters, calls, emails
 - Business cards

Don't take NO* for an Answer

- Always keep in mind that recruiting is an on-going process— building relationships now pays dividends later

***(At least not the first one or two)**

***Search* Committees**

- Use them!
- Charge them!
- Train them!
- Ensure that your search committee has diverse representation
- If necessary, go outside the unit
- Committee members are also recruiters

Avoid Unintentional Cognitive Errors When Screening

- Elitism
- Gaps in record
- Raising the bar
- Assumptions
- The higher education trap
- The objectivity myth
- The meritocracy myth
 - Consider potential

The Color (Gender) Blind Bind

- Legally race or gender can never be the factor: When the unit is underrepresented, race or gender can be a factor
 - Race and gender can be used to ensure diverse short list
 - When underrepresented, race and gender can be used to break ties between two otherwise equally well qualified candidates (at the short list phase, at the selection phase)

Interviews

- Always ask a behaviorally based question regarding diversity
- *Offer* the candidate the opportunity to meet privately with faculty or staff of color or women
- Maintain an environment that visually demonstrates your commitment to diversity

Retention

- The color (gender) blind bind (again)
- Plan for change in the department culture and practices
- Protect new hires from excessive service assignments
- Identify and address signals by existing employees of their discomfort working with new hires whom they see as different than themselves
- Address critical incidents promptly
- Develop some simple guidelines when addressing problems with new hires

Development

- Develop (and reward) an instrumental mentoring program within the unit
- Help new hires make relevant connections outside the unit
- Identify leadership roles for new hires
- Ensure that new hires are afforded professional development opportunities

Culture Shift

Behind all of the concrete best practices must be a larger conceptual realization that universities, like the social and economic sectors upon which they are built, are still structured to favor the success of the dominant majority- particularly the presumption of competence