

Home

IDEAS Applied to the Hiring Process

What is IDEAS?



IDEAS, is an acronym for Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Access & Sustainable-Solutions. Incorporating IDEAS into the hiring process can engage underserved and underrepresented communities in the workforce by removing barriers and addressing structural inequities. Organizations that embrace IDEAS foster cultures that promote belonging and minimize biases.

Below are some examples of how organizations are learning how inclusion, diversity, equity and access can improve the work place for all.

Inclusion: All feel welcomed and valued

Inclusion is the act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, represented, supported, and valued to fully participate.

Example: An organization learned from a survey that it wasn't welcoming to older adults. As a result, it hosted a focus group with older citizens who provided feedback on what the organization could do to make it more welcoming.

Not every suggestion could be implemented all at once and some were costly, but it was clear that some action could be taken. Making *small changes, and showing commitment by gathering feedback, goes a long way to creating a welcoming space. (*Changing labels to large print, creating an accessibility committee, reviewing program participation by demographics.)



Diversity: All the unique ways we differ



Diversity includes all of the ways in which people differ, and acknowledges that even when individuals or groups appear similar they are uniquely different, encompassing the many different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. While diversity is often used in reference to race, ethnicity, and gender, we embrace a broader definition that also includes age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, physical appearance, geography, and any other identifiers that make one individual or group different from another.

At an organizational and decision making level promoting diversity requires the engagement of multiple perspectives by those closest to and/or most impacted by the outcome.

Example: An organization was asked to describe the diversity of its community. They first began to explore the racial diversity of their community only to realize that they had never provided members within their community an opportunity to share or celebrate their diversity. The organization quickly learned that there were many ways that individuals and groups of people differ including gender, socioeconomic and educational background, age, and physical abilities to list a few.

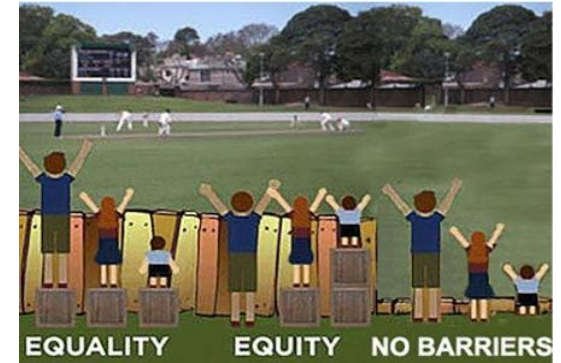
Home IDEAS Applied to the Hiring Process

Equity: Everyone has the opportunity to fully participate

Equity encompasses the policies and practices used to ensure the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time trying to identify and eliminate barriers that have historically prevented the full participation of some individuals or groups.

Example: Equity is not equality. Equality is the assumption that everyone benefits from getting the same supports or same treatment. In the picture to the left, and in the piece of pie scenario we see this is often not the case. When we equally share a pie, everyone gets the same size piece of pie, even though some people may not be hungry or want a piece of pie and some people are really hungry and very much appreciate receiving their piece of pie. Sharing the pie equally, in this case doesn't make sense. How could we make sure that no pie goes to waste and that it is distributed equitably? Give pieces of pie to those that want it and need it most.

Applied to the arts, let's consider an exhibition that is open to the public - everyone is welcome to attend. Free is a great start. Equity in this case means creating policies to ensure greater and more meaningful participation by recognizing that not everyone comes from the same access point (they may need free access to attend, transportation, a ramp to get into the exhibition, large print signage, or translated materials).



Adapted from

Access: For any and all abilities

Access refers to the commitment for everyone to be included in all programs and activities. It goes beyond creating an inclusive physical environment to encourage attitudes, behaviors and procedures that facilitate equity and diversity to optimize the contributions of everyone.

Example: An organization offers arts classes for youth, but classes aren't full and the same students from the same demographic backgrounds seem to participate. To create greater access to a broader youth audience, the organization developed a relationship with a youth-serving organization. Together, they identified barriers (\$ and transportation) to participation, hatched and executed a plan to address the barriers, and as a result, more students from varied backgrounds begin to participate.



Why? Because the organization developed a pathway of (access) by asking for input from those working with and better know the young people they wanted to engage.

More important they listened to the feedback and made changes so a more diverse group of youth could participate.

Home IDEAS Applied to the Hiring Process

Sustainable-Solutions: Diverse perspectives - Better solutions

Although sustainability is often associated with environmentalism, embedded in most definitions of sustainability today we often find concerns for social equity and economic development. Within the IDEAS construct sustainability refers to the liberating and more impactful nature of collaborative solution-building. When diverse perspectives and the engagement of those most impacted by or closest to the issue are given voice and a seat at the decision making table better solutions are generated.

Example: An organization has come to the conclusion that their traditional hiring strategy and workplace operating systems are not working and in fact are creating a barrier to gaining access to the untapped diverse talent pool in the Canadian labour market? Recognizing that this barrier to inclusion, diversity, equity and access is costing companies billions, they asked what kind of workforce hiring and workplace systems could create a more people-centric and sustained equity experience instead of sustained pressure?



IDEAS	How do you apply IDEAS in your workplace?	Your thoughts for how to incorporate IDEAS principles into your Hiring Strategy?
INCLUSION <i>All feel welcomed and valued</i>		
DIVERSITY <i>All the ways we differ</i>		
EQUITY <i>Everyone has the opportunity to fully participate</i>		
ACCESS <i>For any and all abilities</i>		
SOLUTIONS <i>Diverse perspectives - Better solutions</i>		