Hiring Manager Guidelines and Promising Practices for Recruiting Individuals with Disabilities

Lille Bose
Emma Geach
Lora Hassani
Datasha Hudson
Heather Killeen
Juana Reyes

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Executive Summary

Tasked with producing guidelines for a UC Riverside hiring manager and documenting the promising practices for recruiting individuals with disabilities, our group had two deliverables: a brochure for hiring managers and recommendations of best practices to be incorporated on the Human Resources, Affirmative Action and Academic Personnel sites.

To begin, the group researched various laws, regulations, current practices and definitions of disabilities. We also discovered current practices reaching out to and hiring individuals with disabilities from UC Riverside, other UC campuses and a private franchise.

With the goal of becoming experts on the following topics, we divided our research. We found the following resources:

- A list of local community organizations serving individuals with disabilities.
- Definitions of what qualifies as a disability (i.e., visible, invisible and perceived)
- Private industry practices for recruiting individuals with disabilities
- Current federal and state regulations governing discrimination, disabilities and accommodations as related to recruitment and hiring.
- Current campus and system policies related to job postings, discrimination, accommodation and disabilities.

We also contacted other UC campuses to research their practices for recruiting individuals with disabilities. Currently, faculty and staff at UC Riverside have resources through the disabilities management department including reasonable accommodation, ergonomic assistance, transitional return to work assistance and reassignment.

During the completion of this project, our group faced some challenges both as a group and independently. While conducting research, some members had difficulty reading through legal jargon and finding the most current and accurate information. Other challenges involved finding time to work individually as well as a team. It was an effort to coordinate our schedules and find the time to come together as a group while balancing full-time jobs.

Description of the Deliverables

Our team has two deliverables – a brochure and a website. The deliverables will provide hiring managers with guidelines and promising practices for recruiting Individuals with Disabilities (IWD). The website will contain a comprehensive list of disabilities; appropriate / inappropriate interview questions to ask Individuals with Disabilities; hiring best practices; the benefits of hiring Individuals with Disabilities; a complete list of community organizations that provide job search assistance to Individuals with Disabilities; disability etiquette guidelines; links to the UCR recruiting policies; PDF of the brochure. The brochure will have the same information as the website, but with condensed samples for quick reference.
Both the brochure and the website are designed for hiring managers to assist with recruiting Individuals with Disabilities. The website will be housed in the Diversity Recruitment Resources page on the UCR Human Resources website. A PDF brochure will be kept on the website and hard copies of the brochures will be kept in Human Resources. The Human Resources Employment Analysts will be responsible for updating any information on both the website and the brochure.

**Challenges**

*Recruitment Resources Awareness*

Hiring managers may not be aware of available resources and skilled labor in the market specific to individuals with disabilities. Available community recruitment resources targeting job-seeking, qualified individuals with disabilities may not be known to hiring managers. Establishing the connection between UCR and community resources could open up a new group of skilled and qualified individuals for open positions on campus.

*Bias*

Overcoming perceptions and biases may be another challenge faced. Hiring managers may have concerns that individuals with disabilities will yield higher employment costs, lack necessary job skills or have less experience. There may also be concerns that hiring individuals with disabilities could result in an increase in worker’s compensation claims and sick leave, or that individuals with disabilities may even be less productive than other employees without a known disability. As a result, it may be challenging for hiring managers to keep an open mind in considering a candidate with a disability using the same assessment criteria as other candidates without a known or visible disability.

*Cost*

With most programs, there are associated costs for training and implementation. To effectively train hiring managers, a training specialist associated with hiring individuals with disabilities will need to be hired and compensated. Costs will also be incurred in updating training resources such as existing training programs to include hiring practices for IWDs. Implementation costs pose another challenge since a large portion of this program will require additional training for individuals with hiring responsibility. These costs include personnel and wages, fees for training materials, maintenance of website, and training location.

*Measuring Success*

Initially, campus applicant tracking systems, iRecruit for staff personnel and Academic Personnel (AP) Recruit did not effectively capture applicant metrics associated with disabilities. These systems are currently being updated to capture information on individuals with disabilities. We anticipate data being available by the end of 2014. Data on our current employees, new hires and applicants with disabilities was only captured recently with the campus disability survey in March 2014. Collection of this self-identifying data may present a challenge in measuring the effectiveness of the project deliverables.
Solutions

Training & Development for Hiring Managers
One of the most effective tools to break down barriers in recruiting individuals with disabilities is cultivating a team of well-trained hiring managers. First round training would be mandatory and include an online introductory module that sheds light on disability and dispel myths. Ideally, subsequent in-person trainings would offer fundamental approaches for interviewing IWDs, addressing accommodation in a legal and ethical way, disability etiquette, learning best practices for hiring IWDs and knowing where to go for help. Through education and training, hiring managers will learn tools to attract and recruit qualified IWDs in a competitive job market, learn mechanisms to assist with varying levels of support and infuse elements of IWD training into the existing Recruitment and Selection training program at UC Riverside. Fundamentally, the first round trainings can be taught online, while the in-person training can be administered by a 2-year contracted IWD specialist in close collaboration with Human Resources Employee Analysts, Disability Management Coordinator or experienced team members of the Diversity Education Leadership Initiative (DELI) in the human resources training room. Deployment of ongoing training sessions and informational meetings would reinforce growth and development among professionals on campus.

Partnerships with Community Based Organizations
The University has established itself as an institution that fosters a diverse, inclusive, and equitable workplace. Moreover, the campus welcomes collaborative partnerships with community organizations to solve issues in our shared community. Holding fast to these principles, hiring managers should invite community-based organizations with similar goals of excellence and professionalism UCR values, to conduct presentations on campus to discuss job placement services and other programs such as job shadowing, temporary employment opportunities, student internships, and implementing sustainable IWD programs. Likewise, hiring managers can tap into a pool of potential IWD candidates by participating in job fairs and other promotional events that foster diversity in the workplace. In sum, launching meaningful partnerships align the university with organizations that are trusted by candidates with disabilities for potential hiring.

PDF Brochure / Online Resources
Hiring managers across campus should be knowledgeable of the Americans with Disability Act and have access to guidelines and best practices for recruiting IWDs. To make this information accessible and reduce the cost of printing, a descriptive brochure summarizing best practices and guidelines for hiring IWDs can be found on the human resources website. If a hiring manager needs more information about an item they see in the brochure, full length documents would be available including, but not limited to, benefits of hiring IWDs, appropriate/inappropriate interview questions, campus contacts and reasonable accommodation. As important updates are released, an email blast to subscribers will follow.

Self-Identification & Reporting
Effective March 24, 2014, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) has established a new disability rule which require contractors to offer applicants the opportunity to self-identify as an IWD both pre-offer and upon hire. To comply with the updated regulation, campus administrators
should work closely with Computing & Communications to integrate a Self-Identification form on the iRecruit portal to capture IWD applicants. Additionally, UC has implemented a Voluntary Disability Survey (VDS). This survey has been made available to faculty and staff across the UC system encouraging employees to disclose their disability this year and every five years. From the data collected, reports can be generated and results shared with campus officials to measure recruitment and retention efforts specifically for this population.

**Measures**

UCR Learning Center’s Learning management System (LMS) would be used to assign mandatory training to all hiring managers; both online and instructor-led sessions. The LMS would facilitate the tracking of attendance and/or completion of assigned activities, thus providing an overview of hiring managers participating in the disability training and recruitment efforts. Additionally, an online questionnaire/survey would be developed and dispersed to all hiring managers after training is completed to ascertain whether the training was of any benefit.

Community organizations would be a huge contributor in furthering efforts to hire a more diverse group of individuals, to include those with disabilities. As a main point of contact for said population, statistical information would be gathered from several of these cohorts to identify the number of applicants who apply for a position and comparing that to the number who are hired. Based on this figure, an adequate assessment would be made as to how effective the proposed deliverables are. Information provided would solely be for information purposes, and would not include any personal identifiers, such as name, birthdate, disability, etc.

To see an increase in the hiring of individuals with disabilities, the brochure and website will advertise to hiring managers the benefits of implementing internship and mentoring opportunities dedicated specifically for disabled individuals. One way to create these opportunities is for hiring managers to reach out to and partner with local disability organizations, and even student services, to recruit and place those seeking employment. The internships and mentoring opportunities will allow participants to obtain valuable work experience and give them access to full-time employment positions on campus. By reviewing the outreach and recruitment efforts of hiring managers, we could assess the success of the deliverable, and the internships/mentoring practices.

Finally, an individual with a disability may opt to disclose their disability at any stage of the hiring process. This number would be tracked to establish a relationship before and after the implementation of the deliverables. To assist with this measurement, UCR can utilize the current Voluntary Disability Survey (VDS). This survey is available to all UC employees this year and every five years thereafter, and obtains statistical data to help identify the number of individuals with disabilities on campus. Another approach would be to have a campus climate survey both pre- and post-program implementation and training. If UCR were to adopt the proposed deliverables, the campus could use the data from VDS and a campus climate survey to gauge the impact of the deliverables on hiring individuals with disabilities.
Resources


http://arcanet.org/initiatives/employment/reasons-to-hire.html

ADA Best Practices Tool Kit for State and Local Governments: Chapter 1.  
http://www.ada.gov/pcatoolkit/chap1toolkit.htm

http://www.eeoc.gov/policy/docs/preemp.html

http://eeoc.gov/facts/jobapplicant.html

The Associated General Contractors of America, “OFCCP’s Disability and Veterans Rules Effective March 24, Mandatory Self-ID Form Released.”  

UC Net. “Disability survey coming to your email soon.”  
http://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/2014/03/Disability-survey.html