



## **Diversity Career Fairs**

A How To Guide

*Concrete and Practical Guidelines to Help You Organise A Diversity Career Fair  
in Your Own Country*

### ***What is the Issue at Stake?***

Often, discrimination occurs from the moment a curriculum vitae is submitted for consideration. A person's name, age, picture or address can be key indicators of an applicant's ethnic origin, gender or economic background and this can influence the recruiting choices of employers. For example, an Arab man in France is five times less likely to be interviewed than a Caucasian man. A senior is three times less likely to be interviewed than a junior candidate. Furthermore, it is not at all unusual for potential candidates to censor themselves by failing to apply for employment or internship positions in large companies.

Discrimination begins in early stages of education and continues at the University level. Proportionately, there are significantly fewer minority students in top-ranking universities and business schools, and it is from these pools that candidates for top companies are usually drawn. Therefore, if companies want to combat workforce shortages while engaging well-qualified candidates, it is imperative that companies commit to developing positive practices for creating and maintaining equal opportunities during the recruitment process.

The first step toward accomplishing this goal is to diversify recruitment sourcing and to meet and employ these qualified applicants.

## QUICK FACTS

### What are the objectives of the Career Fair?

The main objective of diversity career fairs is to challenge discriminatory hiring practices and to establish equal recruitment practices; to provide potentially discriminated candidates an opportunity to meet recruiters face to face. Career Fairs also inform candidates about opportunities in the labour market, provide improved access to the business world in a manner that encourages applicants to fight the impulse to censor themselves from consideration for employment opportunities.

### Who are the Partners Involved?

From the very beginning, it is necessary to create partnerships among different actors, who take on different and specific responsibilities in order to ensure the success of the event.

- Companies of all sizes and from all sectors, especially those who have faced recruitment difficulties on specific positions;
- Dedicated Associations, which specialise in providing support to potentially discriminated populations in order to ensure that they have access to employment opportunities; and
- Public and Private Employment Structures, including temporary employment agencies, as well as established national and/or local structures.

### Which Populations are Engaged?

All Types of Populations Can Be Involved, Including, but not Limited to:

- Ethnic Minorities
- Young People from Under-served Areas
- Seniors
- Disabled Individuals

It is important to focus on no more than two specific types of candidates per career fair. For example, an event can be devoted to ethnic minorities or to those who live in under-served areas, while another event can be coordinated to recruit seniors. Additionally, it is helpful to remember that positions themselves can be diversified. For example, positions can be created and recruited for interns, junior candidates and senior positions as the workforce and company needs evolve.

### What are the Ways that Diverse Recruitment Benefits Companies?

- ✓ Helps Meet Recruitment Needs;
- ✓ Enlarges Pool of Candidates;
- ✓ Actively Fights Against Discrimination;
- ✓ Facilitates Contact with Potentially Discriminated Candidates Who Would Not Have Otherwise Dared Apply;
- ✓ Effectively Communicates an Image of the Company as a Responsible Recruiter;
- ✓ Creates Strong Networks with Other Companies;
- ✓ Encourages Change toward Progressive and Positive Mentality;
- ✓ Establishes Meaningful Involvement in Local Communities;
- ✓ Highlights Position Vacancies; and
- ✓ Stimulates the Recruitment Pool.

### What are the Benefits for Candidates?

- Encourages Candidates to Overcome the Harm Incurred by Self-Censorship;
- Provides the Opportunity to Meet Recruiters and Secure Interviews;
- Establishes Networks with Companies, Dedicated Structures and other Candidates; and
- Offers Special Support and Coaching Sessions For Most Effective Interview Strategies

## Steps For Creating a Successful Diversity Career Fair

1. Select the Potentially Discriminated Population to Engage

- Open each Career Fair to No More than Two Target Groups

2. Create a Partnership with an Association that Sources and Selects Candidates, along with 15-20 Companies that Have Actual Employment Vacancies

- Ensure all Partners Play the "Rules of the Game;"
- Enlist a Leading Company to Host the Event
- Organise a Preparatory Meeting for All Participating Companies, and Explain that the Candidates Are Drawn from Diverse Backgrounds, not Traditional Grandes Ecoles.

3. Communicate with Potentially Discriminated Candidates

- Target Specialised Press, Universities and Structures that are dedicated to assisting specific populations.

4. Match Candidates with Positions

- Select a Small Pool of Candidates (160-180) based on their abilities; and
- Transmit CVs to Companies for Section and Validation with Respect to Technical and/or Specific Vacancies

5. Prepare Candidates for Interviews

- Offer "Interview Workshops" Prepared by Professional Recruiters; and
- Disseminate Relevant Materials to All Candidates Prior to Workshops to Ensure Preparedness

6. Raise Recruiter Awareness by Asking Questions

- What is Diversity?
- What is the educational profile and experience level of candidates?
- What should be understood about different attitudes and behaviors?
- What is the best way to conduct successful interviews?

7. **At the Event**, Assign a Person to Greet All Candidates at the Companies Stand, even if no 30 minute Individual Interview has been Scheduled

- Give Candidates for Specific Vacancies Appointments for 30 Minute Interviews;
- Ensure all Candidates Understand and Respect the Allotted Times for Interviews; and
- Avoid Long Queues and Waiting Times Candidates Regarding Vacancies that do not Correspond to their Abilities.

8. **After the Event**, Organise a Meeting with Individual Recruiters to Follow-up the Results of the Career Fair and Ask Probing Questions

- How Many Candidates Progressed to the Next Interview Stage?
- How Many Interviewed Candidates were Recruited?
- How Many Company Vacancies were Filled through the Career Fair?

9. Create Evaluation Criteria for the Diversity Career Fair, including

- Number of Participating Candidates;
- Number of Involved Companies;
- Number of Vacancies Advertised; and
- Number of Interviews Conducted

## ANNEX:

### *Facts & Figures on Success Previous Career Fairs*

#### **Diversity Career Fair—February 2007—France**

Co-Organisers: IMS- Entreprendre Pour La Cité & L'Oréal

Targeted Candidates: Young Graduates from Under-served Areas with Foreign Backgrounds and/or Physical Handicaps.

- ❖ 19 Companies
- ❖ 105 Vacancies
- ❖ 253 Applicants
- ❖ 180 Candidates Present
- ❖ 21 Successful Recruitments

#### **Diversity Career Fair—October 2007—France**

Co-Organisers: IMS- Entreprendre Pour La Cité & Danone

Targeted Candidates: Young Graduates from Under-served Areas with Foreign Backgrounds.

- ❖ 15 Companies
- ❖ 80 Vacancies
- ❖ 189 Candidates Present
- ❖ 256 Interviews
- ❖ 35 Successful Recruitments

#### **Senior Job Fair—April 2008—France**

Co-Organisers: L'Oréal, Alain Gavand Consultants, Monster, If Consulting, Quinquas Citoyens

Targeted Candidates: Senior Candidates

- ❖ 11 Companies
- ❖ 60 Vacancies
- ❖ 800 Applicants
- ❖ 200 Candidates Present
- ❖ 800 Interviews
- ❖ 5 Successful Recruitments

#### **Diversity Career Fair—May 2008—Italy**

Co-Organisers: L'Oréal, Unar, Sodalitas, the Adecco Foundation for Equal Opportunities, JEIA, IL Sole 24 Ore

Targeted Candidates: Young Graduates from Under-served Areas with Ethnic Minority Backgrounds and/or Physical Handicaps.

- ❖ 18 Companies
- ❖ 102 Vacancies
- ❖ 420 Applicants
- ❖ 319 Candidates Present
- ❖ 5 Successful Recruitments