

A large, thick circular graphic made of watercolor paint, with a color gradient from yellow at the top to red, then purple, and finally blue at the bottom. It is partially obscured by a blue arc from the top right.

INCLUSIVE ATTRACTION

how to attract more diversity
to your organisation

People power
businesses and
having a diverse
range of talent is
what gives them
a competitive
advantage.

About this guide

Designing an inclusive process

This guide is the first of a three-part series on how to create an inclusive recruitment process. The series will include:

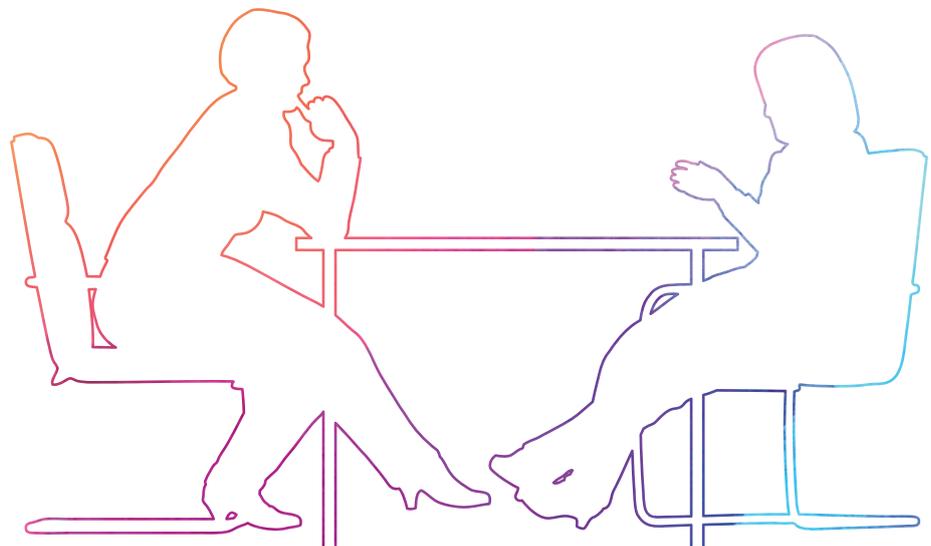
- **Inclusive Attraction**
how to attract more diversity to your organisation
- **Inclusive Selection**
how to ensure that your selection methods are fair
- **Inclusive Onboarding**
how to support new employees and make them feel included

As part of our Inclusion 360 initiative, we met hundreds of employers from across the UK to hear about their experiences in hiring and to discuss practical ideas on inclusive recruitment. This guide combines these stories, our expertise, and feedback from a series of workshops delivered by our Leadership Consulting team. We hope you find it useful and we encourage you to share it with your teams and networks.

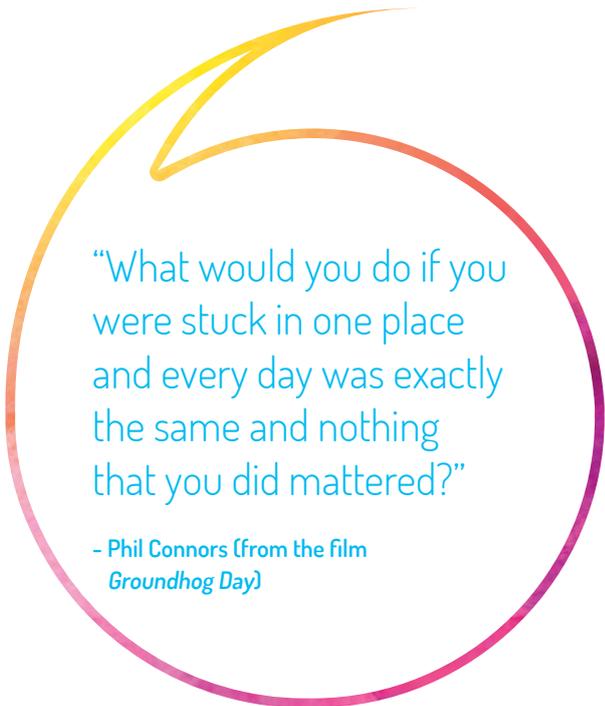
About Inclusion 360

Inclusion 360 is a movement by the Harvey Nash Group to create better-balanced and inclusive workplaces, working with organisations to share ideas and change practices and behaviours so there are no barriers to people reaching their full potential.

- > Visit our website www.inclusion360.co.uk
- > Connect with us on LinkedIn
- > Join our LinkedIn community
- > Follow us on Twitter
- > Listen to our podcasts
- > Get in touch



Foreword



“What would you do if you were stuck in one place and every day was exactly the same and nothing that you did mattered?”

- Phil Connors (from the film *Groundhog Day*)

Attracting talent in a changing work environment

The world is changing and so is the workforce and how we operate, yet many organisations are stuck in a recruitment Groundhog Day – they keep doing the same thing over and over again.

To move forward, innovate and adapt, they need to pay attention to how they can attract people who bring difference: people with difference in their social make-up (both visible and invisible), intellectual capabilities (thinking style) and potential (not always relying on a previous track record).

To attract and retain people with diverse talents, employers must first look to themselves: to hold up a mirror to their own practices, culture and expectations – not their aspirations, but the realities of everyday organisational life.

This can be initiated by spending some time walking in the footsteps of candidates and new starters. What is it really like to go through your recruitment process or to join your organisation? How people-centric and inclusive are your behaviours, processes and cultural symbols? How do you help employees build social capital and a genuine sense of belonging? What is the narrative you want to create and – when it works well – how do you share the stories and successes both inside and outside your organisation?

It is better to start small and start somewhere than to stand still. So why not make today different?

Rachael Hanley-Browne

Head of Leadership Consulting
Harvey Nash Leadership Services



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Diversity, inclusion and belonging



“The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, but expecting different results.”

– Albert Einstein

It's time to rethink and redesign talent attraction strategies to recruit people with difference

People power businesses and having a diverse range of talent is what gives them a competitive advantage. Failure to provide diversity has measurable financial implications on productivity, brand image and recruitment.

Research from McKinsey found a correlation between diversity of the executive team and profitability. Those companies with greater ethnic and cultural diversity are 33% more likely to outperform their peers at the lower end of diversity.⁽¹⁾ Similarly, those with more gender representation at the top have a 21% likelihood of outperformance. Despite these findings, women and ethnic minorities continue to be under-represented at executive level.

Attracting and retaining people with different ways of thinking and skill sets is one of the biggest challenges businesses face today; and hiring the wrong person can be very costly. A hiring mistake at mid-manager level with a salary of £42,000 can cost over £132,000.⁽²⁾

It is more important than ever for organisations to invest in their recruitment practices in order to widen the diversity of their candidate pool and find the best person for the job. This means rethinking your current approach with diversity in mind and understanding that one size doesn't fit all.

It also means acknowledging that recruitment is one part of a much bigger culture change programme. You only truly gain the value offered by tapping into a diversity of perspectives if there is a culture of inclusion, where everyone feels they can express their views in the knowledge that they will be respected.

A global issue

Diversity, inclusion and belonging are moving to the top of the agenda according to a 2018 LinkedIn survey of nearly 9,000 recruiters and hiring managers from 39 countries on trends in recruitment.⁽³⁾

Global diversity demands

51% believe diversity is an extremely high priority.

Inclusion and belonging

57% said inclusion and belonging are very or extremely important.

Motivations for diversity, inclusion and belonging:

78% to improve corporate culture

62% to improve business performance

48% to better represent customers

Authentic and inclusive culture

As expensive as it is to lose someone, it is equally costly when individuals are not working to their full potential. Candidates will look for ambient cues about what the workplace is really like for people like them, which may or may not deter them from applying for jobs. This may also affect performance within those jobs.

Research suggests that people draw motivation from a sense of belonging.^[4] When people are not certain that they belong, they expend a lot of mental energy worrying about not belonging. Employees who are confident that they do belong, on the other hand, are better able to handle daily stressors and to direct mental energy to their work. As people become more confident in their sense of belonging, performance improves.

Belonging is created through the culture of the organisation. People who work in a more compassionate and collaborative culture are more satisfied with their jobs, more committed to the organisation, and more accountable for their performance.^[5]



“Diversity is being invited to the party.
Inclusion is being asked to dance.”

– Verna Myers, Inclusion Strategist

Tips for creating an inclusive culture

- ✔ **Set the tone at the top** – Leaders of businesses have a huge role to play in creating an organisation that lives by its values, leading by example and being seen to do the right thing. For example: Do your executives work flexibly? Do the male employees share their experiences of paternity leave? Do your executives regularly communicate their support of diversity and inclusion?
- ✔ **Engage at all levels** – It is important to engage widely so that everyone understands that diversity is a real business issue and that they can and should make a difference.
- ✔ **Measure it to manage it** – Knowing the numbers on diversity and being open about them means you can take steps towards making a difference.
- ✔ **Be a role model** – Everyone makes an impact and has influence, not just those in management. Recognise and promote those who lead inclusively and encourage others to follow.
- ✔ **Recognise talent and support advancement** – Businesses should identify high-potential individuals from minority backgrounds and invest in their progression.
- ✔ **Remove systemic barriers** – We all have biases that are hard-wired, so manage what you can (systems and processes) rather than trying to change individuals, e.g. do away with informal interviews and introduce competency-based questions and assessments.
- ✔ **Create networks and communities** – Companies that develop strong networks and promote a culture encouraging senior people to sponsor diverse talent can have a really positive effect.
- ✔ **Connect with the full talent pool** – Move beyond recruiting in one's own image and improve engagement with a wider talent pool through schools outreach and working with networks and job boards for under-represented demographics.
- ✔ **Stay focused and committed** – Don't expect a silver bullet or an easy solution, as it will take a number of interventions to create a sustainable change. Commit yourself fully to what you are about to do.
- ✔ **Keep it simple** – Find some simple actions, measure them and celebrate success.

CASE STUDY

Harvey Nash created a culture of inclusion

Culture change takes time, effort and commitment from all levels of the organisation. Although Harvey Nash was already widely recognised for its leadership in promoting diversity and inclusion to its clients, Albert Ellis, the Group CEO, pushed for an external review to ensure the Group was living those same values.

In 2015, Harvey Nash signed up to the National Equality Standard (NES), committing to a rigorous audit conducted by EY against 49 competencies within Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). The Group's vision is to be a place where everyone has the opportunity to succeed, where there are no barriers to people reaching their full potential. Part of this included building a culture with greater awareness about EDI and a zero tolerance for behaviours counter to its vision.

In 2017, Harvey Nash was the first recruitment company to achieve the NES, owing much of its success to the dedication and visible commitment of the executive and senior management teams. Now equality, diversity and inclusion practices and behaviours are just 'business as usual' for all staff.



How Harvey Nash created a fair and inclusive culture

Measuring respect for diversity – A new performance review process was introduced, with assessments for both job-based and behavioural competencies, including valuing diversity.

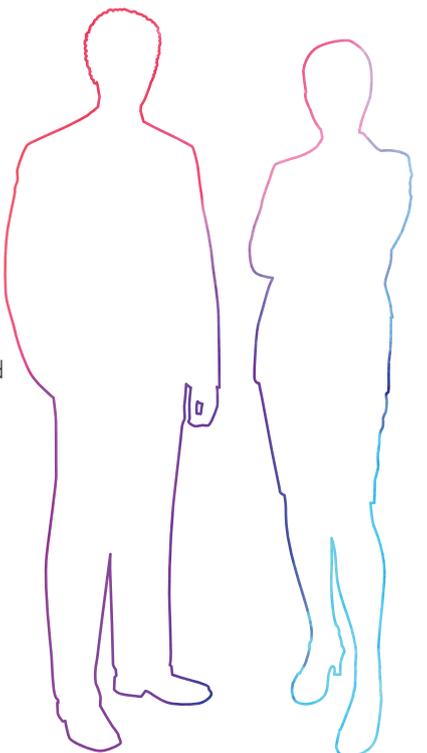
Identifying high potential – A formalised mechanism was introduced in the annual appraisal process to identify high-potential talent and to track and invest in their development as inclusive leaders.

Seeing from different perspectives – More than a dozen inclusion workshop sessions were organised, from LGBT and disability awareness to race awareness and stress management, with attendees from all levels of Harvey Nash.

Casting the net wide – A new requirement was introduced for recruitment partners to provide diverse and inclusive shortlists of the very best people, asking in every hiring decision "Have we looked beyond just the 'obvious' candidates?".

People systems – Harvey Nash invested in a global system, which allowed it to report much more accurately on how diverse and inclusive the company really is.

Feedback and engagement – The Harvey Nash 2018 Employee Engagement survey found: 90% of employees feel comfortable to be themselves in the workplace and 86% feel that they are treated fairly regardless of gender, age, ethnicity or sexuality.



Before you start – goals, planning and your employer brand



“The only limit to the height of your achievements is the reach of your dreams and your willingness to work for them.”

– Michelle Obama

Know where you are and where you want to be

Finding great talent and keeping them is a challenge in today’s candidate-driven market. Add to that the many changes in how people search for jobs, and companies need to be much more proactive, particularly when it comes to attracting specialist skills or individuals from under-represented groups.

Before investing in expensive software or time and effort into recruiting via social media platforms, you need first to understand your goals and objectives and how you will measure success. You also need to better understand your employer brand and what about it would appeal to those you wish to attract.

Being clear about who you want to attract, and why, will not only help set a more targeted strategy, but it will also ensure that everyone is on the same page and understands the message and the business imperative. This is crucial because recruiting outside your typical mould will take more effort and time, and you will need everyone on board.

Ask yourself:

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- Why is diversity important to you?
- Who is driving this agenda?
- What needs are you trying to address?
- How do these align with business objectives?
- What are your timescales?

SPONSORSHIP & SUPPORT

- Have you engaged key stakeholders?
- How much sponsorship do you have?
- Who is responsible and accountable for diversity in your organisation?
- Are key decision-makers aligned?
- What tools and resources do you have to achieve this?

STARTING POINT

- How well do you know your culture and environment?
- What needs to change in behaviours or environment to attain your goals?
- Where can you influence in the short and medium term?

REVIEW & INSIGHTS

- What have you done to review your external reputation and image?
- Have you asked for feedback on your website and social media from the demographics you are trying to attract?
- What is the diversity make-up of your organisation?
- What does the data tell you about your current attraction methods?

Listen and learn through feedback

As important as understanding how individuals engage with your brand is understanding its appeal among both your current employees and those you are trying to attract. Your employer brand is not something you can just write down; it has to be lived and breathed throughout the organisation. How would people describe your culture and the working environment: 'fun', 'laidback', 'high-pressure' or 'supportive'?

A great brand will mean different things to different people at different stages in their life and career. It is about finding out what you offer and the value propositions that matter most to individuals from a range of backgrounds. Once you understand your appeal, you need to ensure it is communicated consistently throughout all channels and anywhere you might come into contact with a potential candidate.



“Your brand is what people say about you when you aren't in the room.”

- Jeff Bezos, CEO Amazon



How to uncover your 'truths'

The best sources for insights about your company are the people who work for you, as well as those who have left. Many companies run an annual engagement survey, which can be useful on a surface level but not necessarily in capturing some of the more granular views or why someone left. Engage focus groups and use exit interviews to dig deeper into the lived experience of employees at different levels within the organisation.

-
- ① **What do your employees like most about your company?**

 - ① **Why did they join?**

 - ① **What keeps them coming back each day?**

 - ① **What are your employer value propositions (EVPs)?**

 - ① **What don't people like about your company?
How can these be changed?**

 - ① **What is the perception of those at entry level, management, different age generations, parents and those who have been with the company the longest?**

 - ① **Would your staff recommend you as a great place to work?**

 - ① **What do review sites like Google and Glassdoor say about your culture?**

 - ① **How do you compare with similar employers?**

 - ① **What is the perception of candidates from your target groups?**

 - ① **Do you collect candidate feedback on the recruitment process?
What does it tell you?**

Use these insights to understand not only the reality but also how to communicate in a way that attracts the right people to work for you. This is not about disguising reality, but portraying the best about working for your company and building more accurate expectations of where you are now and planned improvements for the future.

Candidate touchpoints

Opportunities to communicate your culture

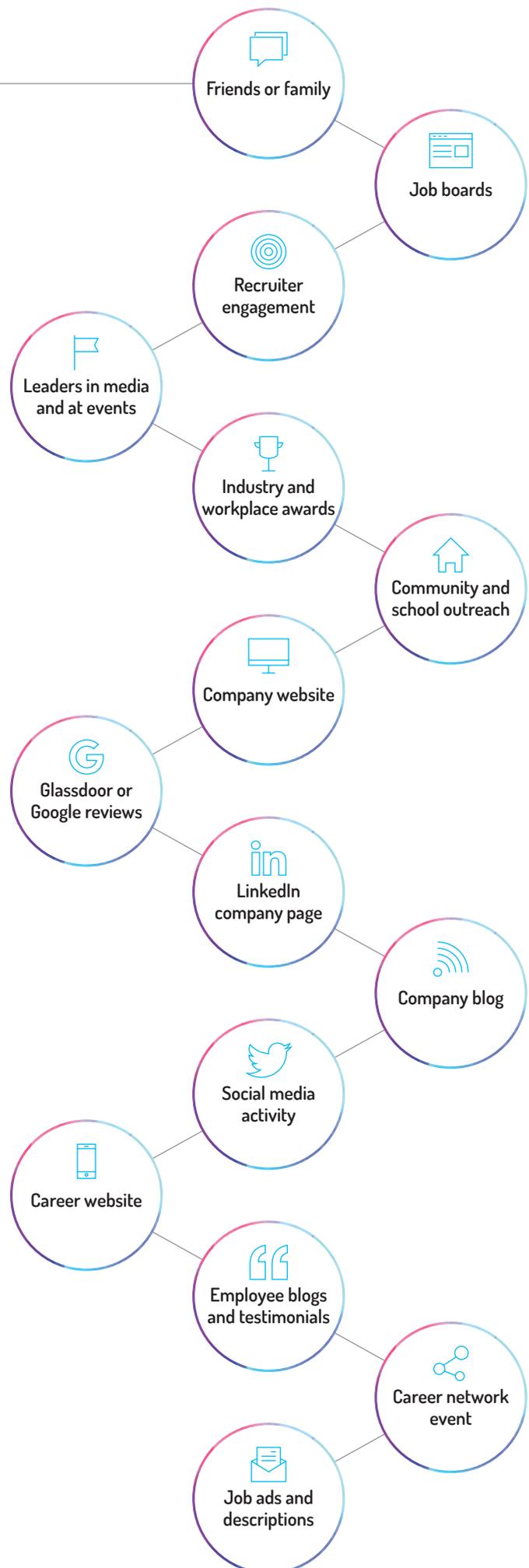
Time to review your candidate attraction journey

Next, it is time to review your candidate journey and the experience. There are many ways an individual might engage with your brand before they decide whether they want to apply. Do they know someone who works for you or a past employee? Have they seen you listed for an award? Did you sponsor a charitable event? Do you have leaders who give talks at schools or network events? Do you advertise on specialist job boards for diverse demographics? Does your company website share employee stories?

Test yourself

Find a blank wall and map it out with post-it notes. What are all of the possible routes that could lead a candidate to your brand? Note down those aspects that work well and where there is room for improvement. It is quite useful to ask someone outside of your organisation or from your target group to give their impressions and share what they would research if they were interested in applying.

- ① What is your typical candidate journey?
- ① What about the atypical candidate?
- ① Do you collect and review this data?
- ① How are you engaging with your target talent?
Does your approach mirror their preferences?
- ① Where and how are you advertising your roles?
Is it right for your demographic?
- ① How do you reflect your target audience in your employer brand?
- ① Are you passive in your approach? What else can you do?



Attracting talent



“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

– Maya Angelou, Poet and Civil Rights Activist

Recruitment marketing materials, imagery and video

Let candidates know you value diversity. It may seem obvious, but many companies often forget the basics. Individuals will look for cues about your culture and whether it will be an environment they can thrive in. Even if you think you have a strong employer brand that is revered for being inclusive, do not assume everyone will be aware of this or believe it.

Take out the guesswork and show and tell potential candidates how your company supports individuals from all backgrounds and practises inclusive values and behaviours. The most important thing is to be consistent and carry the same message across all media and throughout the entire recruitment process.

Seven ways to show you are an inclusive brand in your marketing communications

1. Promote your commitment to diversity and inclusion and encourage diverse candidates to apply.
2. Let your employees do the selling. Give them space to talk about what they do and why they love working for you. Include photos, videos and blogs of their experiences and achievements.
3. Promote your policies that support diversity, e.g. flexible or agile working; shared parental leave; LGBTQ health cover and insurance; accessibility and reasonable adjustments.
4. Share information about your employee resource groups and networks.
5. List awards, partnerships and initiatives you support related to diversity and inclusion.
6. Share examples of your corporate social responsibility and employee volunteering activities.
7. Include positive reviews from Google and Glassdoor on your career site.

The power of language – adverts and job descriptions

Your language is just as important as the images and stories you share in your marketing materials and online channels. The words and phrases used, ranging from your mission statement to your job descriptions, send conscious and unconscious signals about your culture and who you want to attract to your business. It is important in your brand review to look everywhere a prospective candidate would look and ensure the message is consistent and will not turn them off.

Watch your language

Consider the impact of changing simple words and phrases, for example, 'working mums vs working parents', 'mothers' room vs parents' room' and 'employees with a disability vs disabled employees'.

One word in a job description can send a signal to candidates about the image of who you are trying to attract.⁽⁶⁾ It is important to check that your language is inclusive and to remove any gender-coded words when writing your job descriptions and adverts. If you are unsure, check your language on one of the online tools such as Textio (<https://textio.com>) or Gender Decoder (<http://gender-decoder.katmatfield.com>).

Focus on 'growth' rather than 'fixed'

Increase the gender mix of your talent pool simply by changing your language. The machine learning company Textio measures gender bias in language by looking at whether a language pattern changes the proportion of men and women who respond to a job post containing it.

Its recent research with Paradigm analysed the hiring outcomes from more than 60,000 job descriptions and the use of 'fixed' and 'growth' words and phrases, finding a significant impact on the number of both men and women who apply.⁽⁷⁾

Those jobs where women were hired are twice as likely to contain growth language (*striving, driven, highly motivated and commitment to improvement*). Those with a higher number of fixed phrases (*best and brightest, super smart, high performer and highly intelligent*) performed worse with both men and women and were filled 11 times more slowly than those without.

The long and the short

Most hiring managers will have a long list of requirements for a role, but often only half a dozen are actually required to do the job. Including all of these in the job description does not mean you will attract more qualified applicants; in fact, it might have the opposite effect and actually limit your talent pool.

Research shows that women, more so than men won't apply for jobs where they don't feel they meet all of the qualifications, because they don't want to waste their time and energy.⁽⁸⁾ This might baffle hiring managers who would consider individuals that don't meet all of the criteria but would bring other expertise, skills and experiences beneficial to the job.

Level the playing field by removing unnecessary requirements and separating what is actually required from skills and experience that would be desirable. Part of this requires working to shift the mindset of hiring managers to focus on potential, so they do not miss out on qualified candidates who would otherwise not apply.

Time-to-fill is
1.5x faster
with more growth
mindset language ⁽⁹⁾

Career websites – would you want to work here?

Your career website and how it represents your organisation is crucial. It is one of the first places a jobseeker will go to in order to research your company. Millennials and Generation Z now comprise most of the current workforce and they expect diversity throughout all levels of the organisation. What is said and what is displayed on your website will give them an idea about your values and culture and whether a career with you is right for them.

Learn from what others do

NETFLIX

The Netflix jobsite includes beautiful documentary-style films featuring employee stories, such as one employee who requires a motorised wheelchair. Also included are dedicated sections for 'Inclusion & Diversity' and 'Work Life Philosophy', where Netflix promotes flexible working and vacation time. The organisation's parental leave policy encourages new parents to take the time that is right for them.



The online shoe and clothing retailer Zappos is building a future talent pool through 'Zappos Insider', a unique way to keep potential candidates engaged through a career newsletter: "Zappos Insiders are simply people who might want to work for Zappos someday... now, tomorrow or sometime down the road." Candidates are encouraged to sign up and keep in touch.



Hubspot, a developer and marketer of software products for inbound marketing and sales, has adopted a visual and engaging approach, with pictures of a diverse range of employees. The home page features the company's 'Culture Code', explaining: "This document is part manifesto and part employee handbook." Jobseekers will need to scroll to the bottom of the page before they see open positions, requiring visitors to read and watch employee stories and guides on how to grow your career.

Feature commitment to diversity and inclusion

If you are an all-embracing employer do not let this message be a footnote in the job description. Candidates from under-represented groups might be looking for reasons they will not belong, so do not give them one. Move your statement about your company's culture to the top and express more than just your equal opportunities policy.

Examples from real job descriptions



AutoTrader

"Everyone is unique in their own way and we are looking for people from all walks of life to become part of our inclusive culture. We're committed to making Auto Trader a diverse and inclusive environment for everyone. Diversity for us means respect for and appreciation of differences in: gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, race and ethnic origin, religion and faith, marital status, social, educational background and way of thinking. Our dedication is to ensure you get the chance to be the best that you can be, showcase your full potential and make the right choice for you."



ThoughtWorks®

"We proudly, passionately and actively strive to make both ThoughtWorks and our industry more representative of the communities we serve. We promote diversity in all its forms and reject discrimination and inequality. Our diversity and award-winning culture inspires our thought leaders and serves to nurture and develop amazing ideas. We believe this makes us a world-leading destination of choice for all technologists."

CASE STUDY

University of Hull – Creating an international and civic university

The University of Hull is a public research university in Kingston upon Hull founded in 1927. It is committed to operating as a sustainable organisation and to eliminating discrimination on all grounds. As a civic university embedded in the region with an international outlook, it recognises the importance of remaining as diverse as possible in the student and staff it attracts and their research.

The university seeks talent in all its shapes and sizes and promotes a culture that is open, friendly and ambitious; reflective of its values of being “open, connected and excellent in all we do”. It has taken a particularly proactive approach towards creating a gender-balanced leadership team. Women now hold two out of four Dean positions and Hull is one of only a few universities with a female Vice Chancellor.⁽¹⁰⁾



How the university attracts top talent

Unique recruitment process

Engagement starts very early in the process – candidates are welcomed to attend a familiarisation session, which includes meeting key stakeholders, a campus and facility tour, and the opportunity to ask questions and learn more about the role and institution. For senior posts, this is mandatory.

Investment in staff and facilities

Staff receive generous support and benefits including relocation packages, cycle-to-work schemes, awards ceremonies, discounted degrees and learning opportunities, holiday allowance, pension schemes, and a world-class campus and facilities that have received £300 million in improvements.

Positive action

To advance its equality and diversity agenda, the university is committed to Athena SWAN (www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan), a charter established in 2005 to encourage and recognise commitment to advancing the careers of women in science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine (STEMM) employment in higher education and research.

Steps taken towards gender equality

- Featuring female and ethnically diverse case studies and imagery in recruitment marketing
- Signalling opportunities for senior roles earlier to give women more time for consideration and how it could work with caring responsibilities
- Allowing women more time to complete applications, adjusting for the research that shows women are put off by lengthy or onerous job descriptions
- Eliminating single-gender interview panels and introduced EDI training for all panellists
- Introducing gender-neutral toilets on campus.

Finding talent



“I have confidence in an employer who has paid to advertise on a site like Evenbreak, who only target disabled candidates like me, and I’m more likely to apply and tell them about my impairment because I feel I can trust them.”

– Evenbreak Candidate⁽¹⁾

How to find diverse talent

If you are not already a known brand or a magnet for your desired talent pool, it will be even harder to attract high-quality talent. Candidates are 40% more likely to apply for a job at a company they recognise, compared with a lesser known brand.⁽²⁾ Equally, if you do not broadcast your commitments to diversity and inclusion, individuals from diverse backgrounds will pass you over for those brands that do.

Go to where they are

Work with specialist job boards, professional associations, networking groups, alumni associations, publications, conferences and networking events that cater for diverse populations. These partnerships will not only build greater awareness about your brand and opportunities but will also send a signal to these communities that you are open to people like them.

Diversity jobsites

- **Diversity Job Board**
www.diversityjobboard.co.uk
- **Women on Boards**
www.womenonboards.net
- **Evenbreak** (“Helping talented disabled candidates and inclusive employers to find each other”)
www.evenbreak.co.uk
- **Proud Employers** (“Jobs with LGBT-inclusive employers”)
www.proudemployers.org.uk

Look beyond the obvious

Diverse candidates may not always fit your typical mould – be open to individuals from different industries, skill sets or outside normal degree programmes, as well as returners to work and career shifters. Often employers want to fill a role with a like-for-like replacement rather than redraft the position considering how the role has changed and what would complement the team. Seek candidates looking to take a step up in their career, ultimately leading to more diverse shortlists.

Candidates are
40% more likely
to apply for
a job at a company
they recognise

Open your doors

Invite candidates to your events, networking or open days to give them a sense of what your brand is all about and the physical space. Ensure that you have representatives from within the organisation on hand to meet and greet, particularly from your leadership team. Consider hosting an event centred on aspects of diversity and inclusion, inviting a known speaker in this space or a role model that might attract a more diverse demographic.

Social media

Social media plays a huge part in most people's daily lives and increasingly employers are tapping into these channels for recruitment. The youngest people entering the workforce are a generation that were given handheld smart devices before they could walk. If they cannot apply for a job through a mobile device, they are unlikely to apply.

Social media is not just used to look for positions, but also to learn more about the company in question. Many organisations now have accounts dedicated to celebrating and promoting their culture and sharing stories and achievements of individuals and teams.

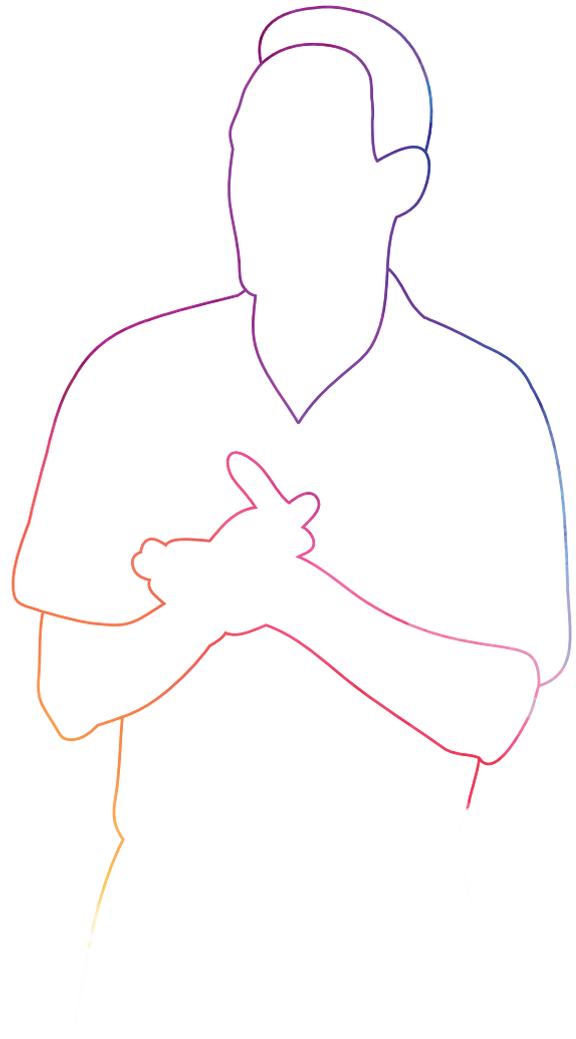


With more than 1.2 million 'likes' on its careers Facebook page, Marriott has used social media to establish a strong employer brand with an extensive network. Using the chat feature, candidates can enquire about roles and get real-time feedback. The company posts regular content showcasing employees, and what it's like to work in different parts of the business and activities from across Marriott's international locations. <https://www.facebook.com/marriottjobsandcareers/>

59% of candidates use social media to research companies they are interested in⁽¹³⁾

74% of Glassdoor users are more likely to apply for a job if the employer actively manages its employer brand⁽¹⁴⁾

36% increase in applications if job posts are accompanied by a recruiting video⁽¹⁵⁾



Future-proof talent pools

Where talent does not exist yet, grow your own. The UK's tech talent shortage is well documented. Research from the UK Commission for Employment and Skills shows that 1.2 million new workers will be required to meet the growing demand in digital content and services skills by 2022.⁽¹⁶⁾ Technology also has a gender imbalance, with women making up just one in seven people working in tech.⁽¹⁷⁾

Harvey Nash has created solutions and partnerships to grow future talent and bring more individuals into the tech industry, from school leavers to career shifters and returning mums.

Future Skills Programme

The Harvey Nash Future Skills Programme makes use of the UK Government's Apprenticeship Levy Scheme to train a new generation of software engineers. By bringing high-potential talent from outside the sector, and building their skills through a unique training and development programme, the programme promises to get brand-new engineering talent working with businesses productively, and quickly find out more. <https://www.hnrecruitmentsolutions.com/what-we-do/workforce-solutions-payroll/future-skills-programmes/>

#YouEqualTech

Launched by Mortimer Spinks, #YouEqualTech is a campaign grounded in over 10 years of research into diversity and inclusion in the technology industry. Its monthly Meetup for women in digital and tech, aims to dispel common misconceptions of what a career in tech looks like, by shining a light on diverse role models and highlighting the potential for positive social change that a career in tech can provide. Within just one year, the community has grown to over 2500 people. <https://www.youequaltech.com/>

Tech Talent Charter

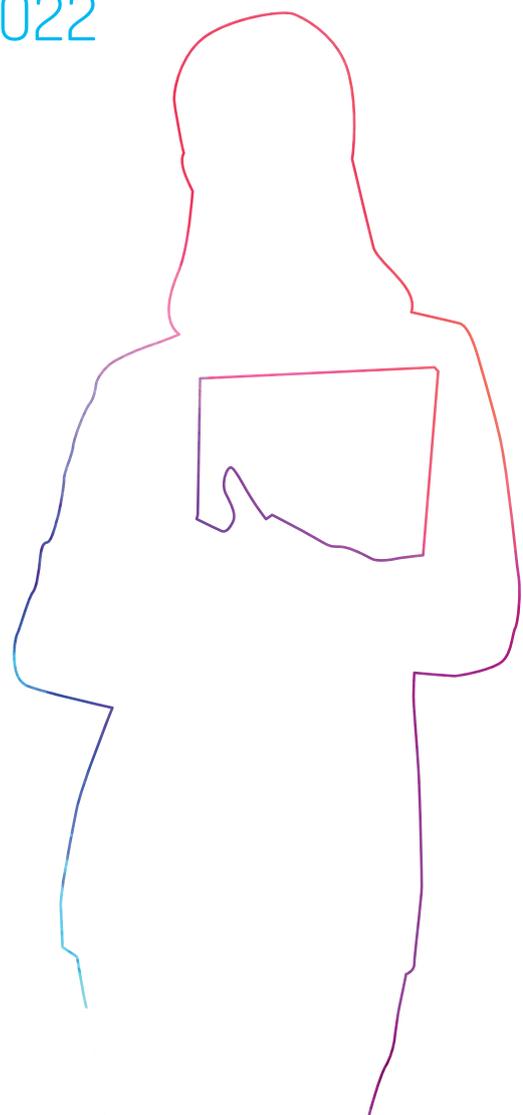
Harvey Nash is working together with other industries and organisations to drive diversity and address gender imbalance in technology roles, by pledging to adopt inclusive recruitment processes, and employment policies and practices that support the development and retention of an inclusive and diverse workforce. To find out more visit: <https://techtalentcharter.co.uk/>

Inspire and Engage networks

Founded by Harvey Nash in 2008 and 2015, respectively, Inspire and Engage bring together senior board-level women and leaders from all cultural and ethnic backgrounds to share and exchange ideas and experiences. The networks give individuals greater visibility and help advance their careers at the executive and board level.

1.2 million

new workers in digital
and tech will be required
by 2022



Artificial intelligence in recruitment



“Like all technologies before it, artificial intelligence will reflect the values of its creators. So inclusivity matters – from who designs it to who sits on the company boards and which ethical perspectives are included.”

– Kate Crawford, Principal Researcher, Microsoft Research New York

Diversity friend or foe?

Emerging technologies and artificial intelligence (AI) have been making their way into HR and recruitment, not necessarily as a replacement for the ‘human’ element, but to improve the efficiency of the process and let recruiters focus on building better-quality relationships.^{[18] (Seseri, R)}

An increasing number of companies are tapping into the huge amounts of available candidate and employer data to create innovative solutions in talent acquisition, from administrative tasks to ways of finding and attracting the right talent.^{[19] (Ignatove et al.)}

Enthusiasts of AI argue that the automation of recruitment processes is able to bypass unconscious biases and therefore to assess top talent based on technical ability alone, hence making for fairer recruitment processes. However, critics of AI suggest that AI-based recruitment software and machine learning environments can only work by drawing from pre-existing data, and the reality is that this data may mimic real-world biases.^[20] Second, there is a limited pool of diverse candidates as you move further up organisations, and in order to truly address inequalities, and promote diverse candidates into more senior positions, change needs to occur at the macro, societal level.

Finding and engaging passive candidates

Programmatic advertising to target ideal profiles

What if you could advertise your job to your ideal candidate wherever they are online? This is not a new concept – advertisers have been using programmatic advertising for years – but it is now revolutionising the recruitment industry. Based on AI and an intelligent algorithm, programmatic advertising allows you to specify parameters for your ideal candidates and programme your job ads to appear in front of the ‘right’ people in the ‘right’ places at the ‘right’ time. It builds on the data you input and on online profiles and behaviours to match similar profiles across all online media and sources, so you are tapping into passive as well as active candidates.^[21,22]

The appeal is obvious: you can be much more efficient in your candidate outreach and programme a search based on data about your successful hires or adjust for a more diverse range of demographics. Platforms such as ENGAGE (www.engagetalent.com) suggest that their predictive analytics are able to more than double candidate engagement rates. Of course, the AI relies on the quality of your data; it should be combined with a candidate tracking system that measures the journey from apply to hire of your successful candidates.

Hyper-personalised candidate outreach

Increasingly, candidates want to work in environments and for employer brands that fit their personal and professional interests and motivations. The more personal your candidate outreach, the more likely you are to get a response, but researching individuals and their interests and crafting tailored messages takes a lot of time. One of the biggest pressures on many recruiters is time, so they are often forced to rely on generic messages.

Companies like Crystal (www.crystalknows.com) have created a platform that allows you to use data about the persona and behaviours of ideal candidates to customise your messages in a way that matches these interests. The tool searches the public web to glean insights about hobbies, interests, personality and communication styles and helps you to draw on these to communicate in the best possible way.

This could be a very effective tool to understand what matters to individuals and draw their attention to those attributes and EVPs that would be appealing rather than the standard company line. If you are trying to engage a more diverse candidate pool, you could quickly communicate about some of your policies or aspects of your culture and activities that promote inclusion.

Screening and nurturing candidates

Chatbots fill in the gaps

Recruitment is time-consuming when there are hundreds of applicants to sift through and no capacity for any personalised interaction in the pre-application stage. A lot of time could be saved for both candidates and employers by using chatbots to help filter those with a genuine interest.

Used not as a replacement for humans but as an enhancement, chatbots can be useful for doing time-consuming work like fact finding, scheduling interviews, filling in gaps in CVs and being on hand to answer candidate questions. Programmes like Mya (<https://hiremya.com>) do all the pre-assessment tasks such as handling phone screening and creating candidate profiles and shortlists. They also answer candidate questions, and provide feedback and guidance on the application process.^[23]

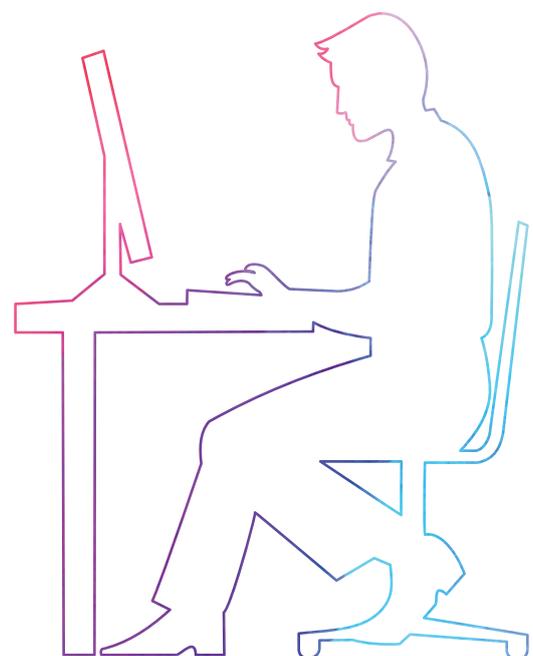
Critics are concerned that, like other AI processes, chatbots could replicate human biases because they work on pre-programmed filters. On the other hand, they could be used to better understand candidate needs, to share information about the company's values and culture and how individuals are supported in their career progression, and to direct people to stories of employees and your company's activities about inclusion. This extra touch could encourage more applications from those with the right skills and a diversity of thought who might otherwise be discouraged from applying.

The verdict

With the potential for AI to remove the heavy lifting from recruitment, companies can invest more in building human relationships and creating a better and fair candidate experience. AI and candidate data should be reviewed regularly to test the impact on the successful and unsuccessful profiles to ensure the systems are not biased.

Many services rely on individuals keeping their public profiles up to date and being open in expressing their interests, hobbies and aspirations online. This could disadvantage those with less knowledge about the impact of a digital footprint or who choose to have a more private online profile. It is important not to rely solely on online outreach for new candidate pools.

60% of all occupations have at least 30% automatable activities^[24]



Working better with recruitment partners

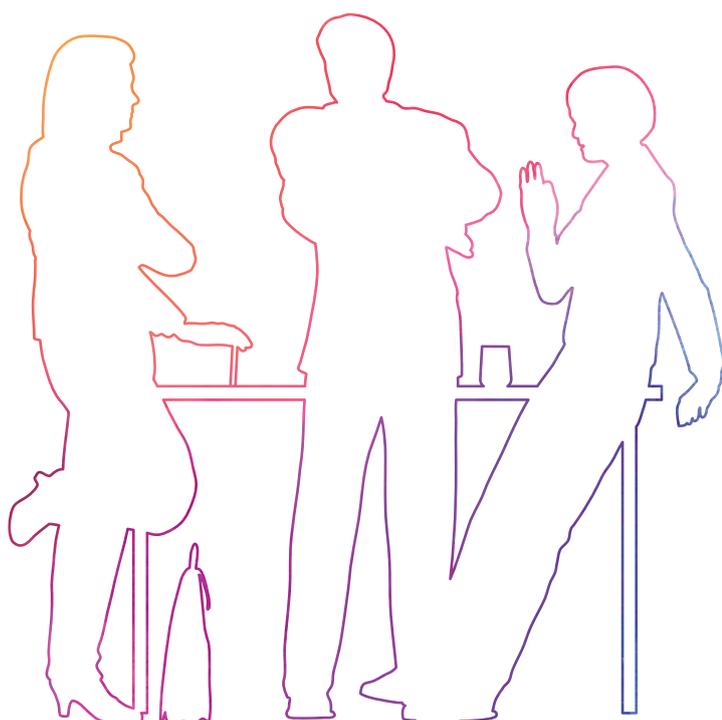


“You need to have a collaborative hiring process.”

– Steve Jobs, Apple

Many companies partner with recruitment firms to manage anything from a specific role to a complete outsourcing model. In any situation, the optimum relationship is where the recruiter acts as the extension of your employer brand and as a trusted adviser. With increasing time pressures and costs, employers often miss an important step – which is communicating what makes their brand so great, particularly for those from diverse backgrounds.

As we discussed in Section 2 in relation to communicating the same message and EVP across all channels, too often this is rushed or missed when working with agencies.



How to increase diversity by working with your recruitment partners



Teamwork

Treat your agency team with the same care given to your internal teams; ensure they are fully briefed about the messages you want to portray to the market and how you want to position your organisation.



Communication

Hold briefing calls or meetings about specific policies or employee benefits to build awareness and help your recruitment partners communicate these effectively to candidates. Some companies have created simple guides or one-pagers about their diversity efforts that they share with both internal recruitment teams and their recruitment partners.



Share

Include recruitment partners on emails about company activities and events, particularly those related to EDI and corporate social responsibility. Similarly, attend events held by your agency partners where you have direct access to their network and the opportunity to pick up thought leadership and gauge ideas from representatives from other organisations.



Advice

Recruitment partners possess a wealth of information and expertise about diversity recruitment simply by the nature of their job. If you are working with a recruitment partner, this is all included as part of the service. Meet with them frequently and use your time to seek advice and insights about experiences with comparable and competitor organisations recruiting diverse teams.



Connectivity

Work with those recruitment agencies that share similar values for diversity and inclusion and have connectivity with networks and associations for diverse demographics.



Shortlists

Challenge your recruitment partners to supply diverse shortlists. Do not be afraid to ask them to demonstrate examples of track record or the networks they would use to source candidates. Do bear in mind that in some sectors and career paths there are known diversity shortages, so it might be difficult and take more time to recruit a diverse shortlist.

CASE STUDY

Increasing women on boards in STEM

A leading blue-chip engineering consultancy approached Harvey Nash to conduct an executive search assignment for a new member of their senior leadership team – diversity and inclusion was high on their agenda and they hoped they could use this as an opportunity to improve the gender balance of their top team. In STEM careers it is recognised that there is often a shortage of diversity in the pipeline, so the client was very open to ideas about how to rethink the role and consider relevant experience and skill sets.

With a long track record and expertise in improving diversity at board level, Harvey Nash was successful in placing a highly skilled female leader who perhaps would not have put herself forward or may have been overlooked had Harvey Nash and the client not taken conscious steps to create a more inclusive process.

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The Power of Talent

Harvey Nash's approach

Unpacking the brief

We worked with the client to understand fully the scope of the role and to differentiate between those skills and experiences that were essential and those that were desirable. For example, while this was a leadership position, they would consider candidates without management experience who could be mentored within the organisation to gain the support to develop into the role.

Inclusive job descriptions

We removed gender-biased language and ensured the job description focused on only those essential requirements. We encouraged applicants from diverse backgrounds with the potential to grow into the position if they met most of the qualifications.

Flexible working

We were able to understand how the organisation would make accommodations around international travel commitments and flexible working for those with caring responsibilities.

Diverse talent pools

We generated an additional talent mapping and candidate identification search, tapping into our senior board networks Inspire and Engage to source qualified women and individuals of minority ethnic background. We also advertised on specialist job boards and organisations such as Women on Boards, WES (Women's Engineering Society) and WISE (Women in Science and Engineering).

Coaching

To people outside the industry, engineering is often perceived as a more masculine environment so considerable time was spent coaching women in particular throughout the process to make them more aware of the organisation and its culture.

Diverse shortlists and interview panel

We ensured the final shortlist submitted to the client was gender-balanced with more than one female candidate and conversely that the panel conducting the interviews reflected the same.

The future: a 360 approach



Whether you are a start-up business recruiting your first team member or a global listed organisation, you will share similar challenges in attracting and hiring the best talent. One reason is that most organisations have been too stuck on the same image of what 'good' looks like and fishing from the same places time and again.

Are you recycling job descriptions from two years ago? When was the last time you asked for feedback from your candidates, hiring managers or employees who left? It is time to start thinking not about what worked last time, but what needs to change to work this time. Where organisations have reflected on their hiring data, unpicked their processes and implemented small changes like using different photos or changing their word choices, their candidate pools grew and reflected a more diverse mix.

It starts with the motivation to change and not be afraid of trying something different. The most encouraging observation throughout the process of creating this guide has been the complete openness from all of the companies that took part and a willingness to share and collaborate. Some admit they are just starting out on their diversity and inclusion journey, and even the leaders say they have a lot to learn. Inclusion 360 started with this mission: to bring organisations together to swap ideas and work on solutions to create a business community that truly supports individuals both in the workplace and in society.

There is still a long way to go for everyone and correcting the presentation of your external image will only take you so far. Individuals hired for their difference need to be supported throughout their whole career life cycle, otherwise you may never gain the value of their perspectives.

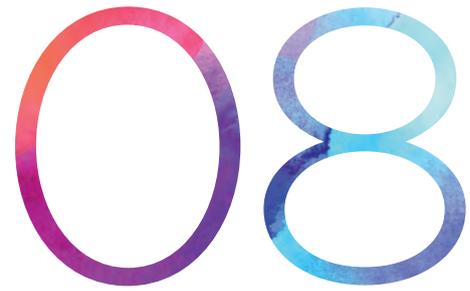
Our next guide will explore what to do after you have managed to attract a diverse pool of candidates: how to ensure your selection and assessment methods are fair and do not unintentionally disadvantage anyone.

Inclusion 360 started with this mission: to bring organisations together to swap ideas and work on solutions to create a business community that truly supports individuals both in the workplace and in society.



It is better to
start small and
start somewhere
than to stand
still. So why not
make today
different?

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The team give their time voluntarily and invested in this project because they are committed to facilitating knowledge sharing with other organisations, and also raising awareness internally and embedding good practice into the Harvey Nash Group and how we recruit and develop our own talent.

We would like to thank and acknowledge their efforts in organising events and participating in the research, as well as all of the businesses that so openly shared their experiences with us.

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Attracting talent

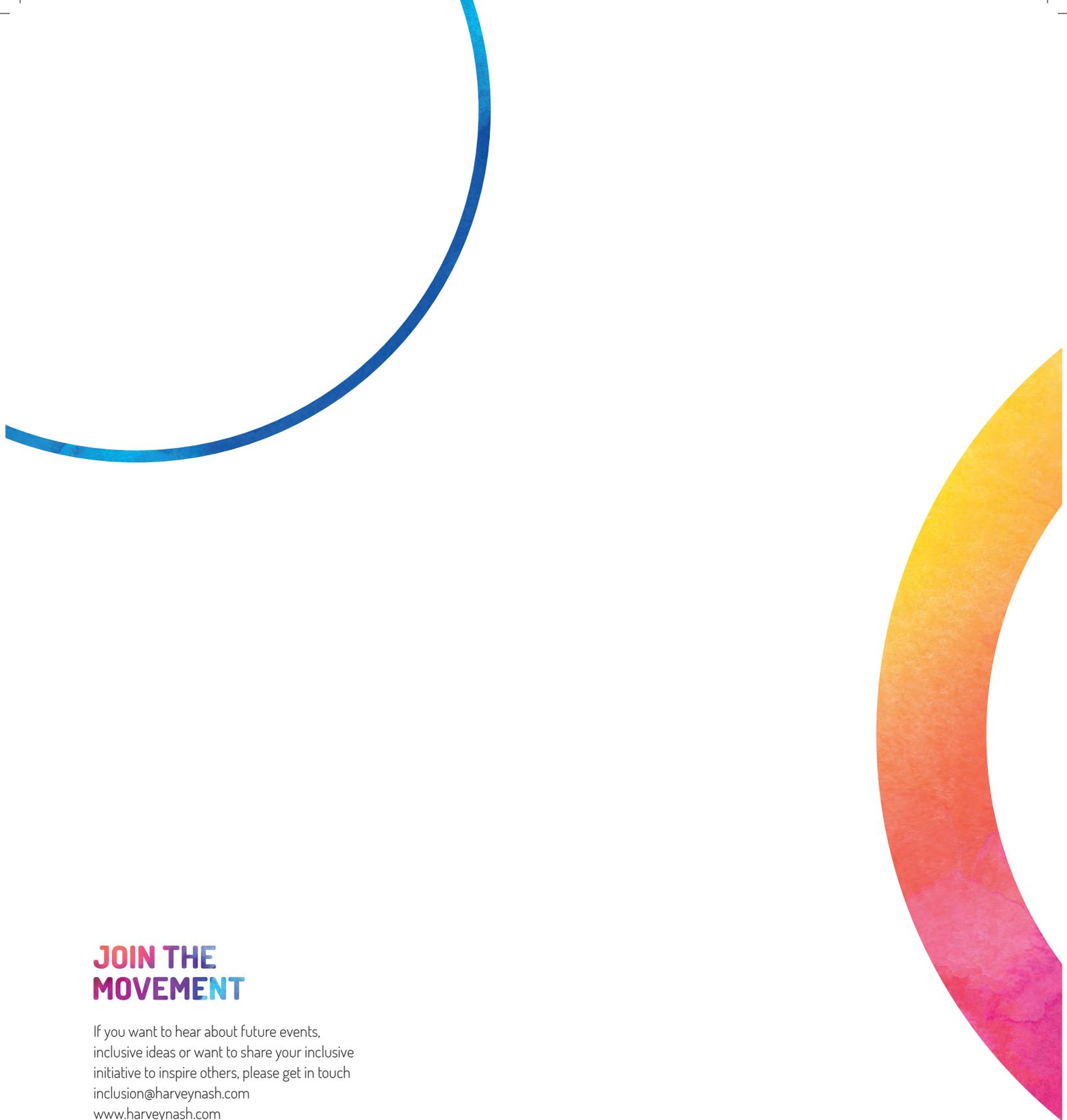
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