

The Importance of a Diverse Organization: It Goes Beyond Recruitment

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It's no secret that there are a number of benefits to fostering a diverse work environment. Each individual possesses a unique blend of identities that influence how they see and act on the world around them, including race, gender, sexual orientation, country of origin, socioeconomic status, ability, and so much more. In any organization, a variety of perspectives and ideas is crucial. By emphasizing diversity and intersectionality of identity, organizations can successfully cultivate diversity of thought. In a time so heavily defined by collaborative work environments, there is no such thing as too many ideas or ways to solve a problem. Beyond just a variety of perspectives, a diverse workplace also has many other benefits including increased productivity, creativity, and overall employee/member satisfaction.

While the positives of diversity in the workplace are extensive, it is imperative that any organization goes beyond valuing diversity at the recruitment level alone. Interviewing a variety of candidates of different backgrounds is a great first step, but giving candidates from minority identities the proper tools to succeed in the recruitment process and workplace itself is also necessary. Particularly in environments that are historically dominated by white, cis-het individuals, it is part of the organization's responsibility to ensure that employees/members of other identities feel safe and supported. Any person joining a new organization can feel intimidated at first, let alone someone who does not see themselves reflected in the people they work with. It is not enough to view diversity as a box to be checked and forgotten about; if an organization values diversity, it must be considered in all aspects of the workplace.

This raises the question of just how to support all employees/members and create an inclusive workplace every step of the way. Forté has implemented a number of strategies this year that have been incredibly effective, however there is still a long way to go. For recruitment, offering pre-recruitment events such as resumé reviews or interview workshops can help candidates prepare adequately for the interview process. Additionally, it is impossible to have a diverse environment without a diverse applicant pool. It is important to prioritize reaching out to organizations focused on diversity or specific identities, such as student unions for BIPOC or LGBTQIA+ individuals. During actual interviews, try having more than one recruiter conduct the interview. Much like any project, diversity of thought is crucial and having a variety of perspectives can help organization members keep their unconscious biases in check. Once applicants become members of the organization, it is incredibly helpful to establish connections to ensure they feel valued and heard. This can be done through one-on-one meetings, mentorship programs, or a strong HR department that is clear on the importance of diversity. Members of minority groups are not part of an organization to meet a quota, but to contribute to an organization or workplace. If a member raises an issue, it is extremely important that there is a designated person who can validate their experience and work through it with them.

Above all, remember the wonderful benefits of diversity in not just the workplace, but in our world as a whole. Every person is shaped through an inimitable cocktail of biology and life experiences that influence who we are each day. Each individual has something special and valuable to contribute to every room they enter. Every voice deserves to be heard and amplified. Diversity is not a statistic to be flaunted, but a value to be practiced and prioritized.