

**From:** Britto, John  
**Sent:** Monday, December 14, 2020 8:25 AM  
**To:** DITF Members  
**Subject:** Readings on Hiring Discrimination

**Communication : C2**  
**Diversity and Inclusion Task Force**  
**December 17, 2020**  
**Item # 3**

Good morning all:

Please see below message from Councillor Tony Carella, Chair, Diversity and Inclusion Task Force:

Dear All,

The attachment includes some of the highlights of what I took away from the articles circulated to you a few days ago regarding hiring discrimination.

You will note that there are a number of recommendations (which we may wish to consider for adoption in our final report) along with an excellent example of blind recruitment at the TSO and the actual cost of discriminatory hiring at Imperial Oil.

Have a wonderful day

Tony Carella

### **Racism in Hiring: Why “No Canadian Experience” is Unacceptable**

1. Remove Name Bias: Applicant tracking systems (ATS) should be blind. They do not need a candidate's name. No name required, and assign each candidate a number before you make contact automatically after they submitted your applicant form;
2. Remove Address Bias: ATS systems do not require candidate addresses prior to hiring: eliminate this entirely;
3. Remove Brand Bias: Brand bias is a huge part of racial bias in hiring. Those who do or have worked for big North American brands are far more likely to receive an interview than those who did not. Most interviewers feel it is critical to know the “brand” a candidate worked for prior to outreach. A “black out” of the name of corporation prior to reviewing the skill stack should be the initial application, specific work experience can be covered in the interview;
4. Remove Educational Bias: It is not essential to know which school a candidate attended, or which year they graduated. Eliminate the space for the school name and date they attended. The school name can indicate North American experience vs. foreign; and the date requirement creates an age bias. All that is required is the credentials acquired (e.g. master's degree);
5. Remove Skill Lists: Instead of vague job descriptions that list things like “able to inspire teams”, “able to multitask”, the skill stack should be specific — intermediate level of excel, able to lead up to 50 people, etc.;
6. Stop defining jobs by arbitrary experience levels such as 3 years of this, 10 years of that. Adopt consistent standards — entry level, junior, intermediate, and senior. This is not necessarily a racist issue specifically, but it is also a huge part of discrimination overall for candidates;

7. Ensure ATS forms only permit jobs that go back no more than 10 years;
8. Remove all references to citizenship status and replace with: "Are you eligible to work in Canada?"

### **Canada Among Top Countries for Racist Hiring In 9-Country Survey**

Quillian suggests that one solution to the problem may be to emulate how hiring is done in Germany, the country with the lowest incidence of discrimination. There, job applicants are typically required to provide very detailed job applications that often include high school grades. The idea is that having a very detailed picture of an applicant leaves less room for hiring managers to "fill in the blanks" with their own pre-conceptions about that person, which may include racial prejudices. "We suspect that this is why we find low discrimination in Germany — that having a lot of information at first application reduces the tendency to view minority applicants as less good or unqualified," Quillian said.

### **Could a 'blind recruitment' policy make Canada less racist?**

When the Toronto Symphony Orchestra began to audition musicians blindly in 1980, putting them behind a screen, the result was profound. While the hiring committee could hear an applicant's performance, they could not see what he or she looked like. They even put down a carpet so high heels couldn't be heard. Now the orchestra — which was made up almost entirely of white men in the 1970s — is almost half female and much more diverse. "It's had a huge impact from the beginning, when screens came in," says David Kent, the TSO's principal timpanist and personnel manager.

### **Employer ordered to pay \$120,000.00 for discriminatory hiring practices**

Almost a year later, the HRTO finally issued its decision on what penalty Imperial Oil would face for its hiring practice discrimination. Imperial Oil sought to reduce its liability by arguing that Haseeb's dishonesty during the hiring process [claiming he was a permanent resident, when he wasn't] should disentitle him from any remedy. The HRTO disagreed, pointing out that such a defence, if allowed, may set a dangerous precedent to allow employers to discriminate by proxy. As explained by the Tribunal: ...could an employer ask a prospective employee whether he is gay or whether she is pregnant, be told no, later find out otherwise, and fire or refuse to hire the person not because of their sexual orientation or because they are pregnant but because they lied about it? **In my view, the answer in these situations is clearly no, on the basis that the initial question itself is prohibited by the Code.** [emphasis added]