

# Resources for brands



# Key steps to establishing an ERG/DE&I council

This tool will help you think through how and when to create a DE&I council or Employee Resource Group (ERG) to advance your DE&I strategy. While ERGs and DE&I councils are used for different purposes, there are similarities in how you go about setting them up.

## TAKEAWAY:

- DE&I councils and ERGs are used as tools within a DE&I strategy. DE&I councils and ERGs have different, yet complementary purposes that, when used together, help accelerate your organization's DE&I strategy goals.

DE&I councils and ERGs are committees made up of passionate employees, dedicated to their organization's DE&I efforts. They both aim to foster a diverse and inclusive workplace that aligns with the mission of the organization, but are they the same?

**What is an ERG?** An ERG is an employee-led group that helps employees feel a sense of equity and belonging at their workplace.

**Who are members?** ERG is grouped by affinity. Employees share social identifiers such as gender, ethnicity, or religious affiliation.

**What is their purpose?** They function as a voice for underrepresented employees and a safe space for members of the affinity group. They often create cultural and educational programming and strategize on how to better their conditions within your organization.

**What are the benefits?** Aids in retention, lateral moves and promotions, developing community partnerships, assisting in attracting diverse talent, boosting innovation, providing cross-functional teamwork.

**What is a DE&I council?** A DE&I council is a board or task force that functions within the advisory or strategy capacity.

**Who are members?** A DE&I council consists of senior leadership members that have influence and status within an organization.

**What is their purpose?** A DE&I council functions as a governance body to advise, approve and assess progress of your organization's DE&I efforts. They often work to place your organization's DE&I efforts within the business strategy.

**What are the benefits?** Encouraging professional development, growing high-potential leaders, cultivating mentorship or sponsorship programs, providing capstone projects to further skill development.

## WHEN TO USE DE&I COUNCILS VS. ERG



# 57%

of organizations have an active Diversity Council and/or Employee Resource Groups with complementary functions.

([Brandon Hall Group](#))

While DE&I councils and ERGs are often connected in furthering DE&I strategy and efforts, they play a different role within an organization and bring different benefits.

**ERG:** You would choose an ERG when more public-facing programming and engagement is required.

**DE&I council:** When planning a strategy, you would choose a DE&I council to oversee how to progress DE&I at your organization.



## Key steps to establishing an ERG/DE&I council



### DE&I COUNCILS AND ERGS IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

**Situation:** Women in Hospitality, Hotels and Leisure or WiHTL is a collaboration community devoted to increasing Diversity and Inclusion across Hospitality, Travel and Leisure. The 2020 WiHTL diversity report reported on Hilton's DE&I efforts emphasizing the function of ERGs. These ERG's include Abilities, African American, Asian & Pacific Islander, Hispanic Latino, LGBTQIA, Military, Millennial and Women.

**Approach:** The overall impact of ERG's areas of impact that directly tie into the company's overall DE&I strategy include business insights, team member development and community outreach.

**Outcome:** Hilton was recognized for their ERGs within the top ten index by DiversityInc.

*“Each day I can enter work and be my true self allowing me to focus on my daily tasks and make connections with colleagues, new hires and community partners. As part of the HyPrideAZ chapter we get to bring our purpose to life ‘We care for others so that they can be their best’ by bringing awareness to not only our colleagues on LGBT issues and also be part of the LGBT community within Phoenix.*

*— Hyatt Wellness Manager*

*How Hyatt has benefited from ERGs  
[bestcompaniesaz.com](https://bestcompaniesaz.com)*



# Key steps to establishing an ERG/DE&I council

This outline and the considerations will support you in how to create and establish a DE&I council/ERG for your organization.

## 1 Build membership

### DE&I council

**Who is included?** DE&I council members should be made of individuals from different leadership teams that span across business segments. Members typically include senior leadership ranging from senior directors to C-suite professionals.

**How do you build membership?** DE&I councils are typically formed by selection or invitation, rather than open-enrollment. The individual leading the council will often ask colleagues who they deem to be a proactive member and can contribute to the objectives and needs of the council.

**How do members work together?** DE&I councils should establish a cadence of meetings to discuss DE&I efforts and strategy. They are an advisory committee, task force, and they are a conduit to the top leadership team and should keep them informed of the council's intentions.



#### TIP

At foundational and progressing levels of DE&I [Maturity](#), DE&I councils and ERGs will be moving from nascent organizations to well-established organizations. Further up the maturity model, DE&I councils and ERGs become more embedded in and important to driving the DE&I strategy forward.

### ERG

**Who is included?** The ERG should be comprised of members from all business levels of the organization. ERGs are open to all employees, but they are often comprised of people from the same affinity group.

**How do you build membership?** Employees will find ERGs through their managers, word of mouth, or formal recruitment. To actively build membership, develop a communication and recruitment plan, and connect with different levels of leadership to spread the word.

Consider: How are you planning to communicate and ask for participation across business segments of your organizations?

**How do members work together?** ERG members work with DE&I councils and utilize them to advocate for the change and objectives they seek to advance.

## 2 Determine ways of working and objectives

### DE&I council

**What is the goal?** Set objectives and be clear on the function of the DE&I council. State the compelling purpose and reasoning for the creation of the council in relation to your organization's DE&I efforts. Often goals of the DE&I council center on advancing DE&I strategy.

**What is the function?** Articulate the function of the council. Examples may include:

- Contribute to the development of your DE&I strategy by leveraging DE&I data and metrics (See DE&I strategy tool)
- Engage with accountability owners of DE&I initiatives and provide advice and approval to progress DE&I efforts
- DE&I councils will be well versed in the organization's data/metrics and analyze/utilize the data to further progress.

**TIP!** The council will need to be in communication with ERGs and all additional DE&I stakeholders to keep them updated on DE&I progress and help to solution any obstacles.

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- Where are you in the planning phase and what is the current need for a DE&I council or ERG?
- How will you communicate the Council's or ERG's needs and gain senior leadership support and investment?
- How are you connected and involved with the different ERGs within your organization?



### ERG

**What is the goal?** ERG goals include creating safe spaces, diversity programming and educational events within the organization. Outline your objectives, the budget needed for programming, and key stakeholders need for support. confirm your leadership team's backing by meeting with your organization's DE&I council for considerations and approval of the required resources.

**TIP!** ERGs are more flexible with their goals if they can be tracked and rolled into the organization's larger DE&I goals. Determine meeting cadence to update DE&I council and additional stakeholders.

**What is the function?** Articulate the function of the ERG. Examples may include:

- Advance your organization's DE&I efforts
- Create a safe space for your affinity group
- Be a line of communication for your affinity group and leadership teams
- Create goals that can be rolled into your organization's larger DE&I efforts and track accordingly at the Leading Edge level of maturity

**Final Thought:** ERGs will enact your organization's DE&I strategy. At advanced maturity, an ERG has a well-known presence and is considered a voice for the affinity group. They will be focused on building employee interactions that align with the DE&I strategy and can even be interactive with the community you operate within.

# Key steps to establishing an ERG/DE&I council

## 3 Actioning your objectives

After establishing your DE&I council and/or ERG, bringing in members, and laying out objections – it's time to create a plan and move to action!

### DE&I council

Use available data as a baseline to create an action plan to further progress on goals. Connect with your organization's ERGs to determine ways to work together to progress on your goals. Organizations at the Advancing levels of maturity typically leverage existing data to support these decisions.

DE&I councils will serve as advisors and managers of action plans to ensure progress is made on DE&I strategy. Examples of how DE&I councils and their members may be involved include:

- Employee referral programs
- Mentorship and sponsorship opportunities
- Open forum and safe space for ERGs to voice concerns

Continue to monitor progress and put a metrics tracking system in place. Reconvene often to check in and address possible gaps. At the leading edge, organizations will use this data to revisit and potentially revise their DE&I strategy, if applicable.

### ERG

ERGs will typically have access to demographic data relevant to their affinity group. Considering the available data, create a plan that is aligned to your goals and objectives. Establish touch base meetings with your DE&I council and additional DE&I stakeholders to ensure you have the support you need to achieve your goals.

Begin implementing your objectives and goals. Examples of these action steps may be providing members and your organization with:

- Cultural programming
- DE&I educational panels and forums
- Professional development opportunities and networking

At the Leading Edge level of [maturity](#), an ERG will be closely tracking and monitoring progress against its goals, and communicating progress back up to key stakeholder to influence DE&I and business strategies.



TIP

Incorporate ERGs and all DE&I stakeholders within your plan to ensure communication and transparency.

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- What are the goals and objectives of the DE&I council/ERG? What data do you need to create the goals?
- How do you plan on taking action?
- How do the goals of the DE&I council/ERGs tie into the overall mission of your organization? How is this represented and tracked?
- How will you be present and proactive for your organization and the communities within it?

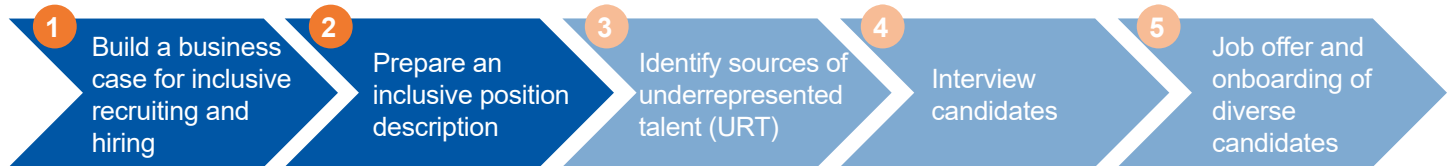


# Key actions to building a more inclusive hiring process

This guide highlights steps to take when your organization has made the decision to participate in inclusive hiring. We will expand on the following steps:

## TAKEAWAY:

After reviewing this guide, you will have specific ideas for how to incorporate inclusive hiring techniques and key inclusive hiring questions to consider depending on your organization's DE&I maturity level.



## 1 Build a business case...

- Reflect on how an inclusive and diverse workforce would benefit your organization. Share this business case with key stakeholders to show how inclusive hiring will improve your bottom line (see statistics to the right).
- Declare a commitment to inclusive hiring and recruiting and then transform that commitment to actionable goals, such as increasing representation across the organization or exhibiting inclusive behaviors in sourcing talent. It is an important step forward in developing and activating your overall DE&I strategy.

[Diversity, Equity & Inclusion – Turn talk into action: Becoming a leader in DE&I](#)

Research indicates that diverse and inclusive organizations have stronger financial and business performance and outperform their peers.

**87%** are more likely to make better business decisions and see a noticeably positive impact of DE&I on their business performance

- **70%** more likely to capture new markets
- **36%** more likely to outperform on profitability
- **75%** more likely to see ideas become productized and report 19% higher innovation revenue

## 2 Prepare an inclusive position description...

- Create position descriptions that are conducive to inclusive hiring. The language used in job descriptions and job postings can be the deciding factor of whether an individual will apply or not. De-bias by using inclusive language and qualifiable and objective requirements.
- Keep in mind that in addition to using inclusive language, candidates seek inclusive workplaces in their job search.

- A report uncovered that **men will apply for a role if they meet 60%** of the criteria whereas **women tend to only apply if they meet 100%**

- **76%** of job seekers state that a diverse workforce is an important factor when evaluating companies and job offer

[Harvard Business Review – Why Women Don't Apply for Jobs Unless They're 100% Qualified](#)  
[glassdoor for Employers – What Job Seekers Really Think About Your Diversity and Inclusion Stats](#)

## BY CHANGING JUST A FEW WORDS, YOU CAN REDUCE GENDER BIAS IN YOUR HIRING

There are other words commonly used in the job postings/adverts that could dissuade a diverse application pool.

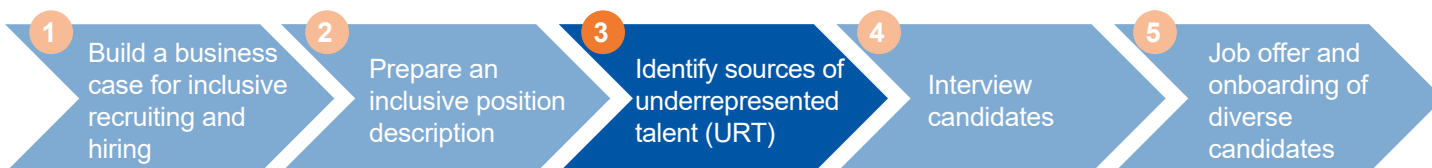
### Inclusive language – Unconscious bias

Remove	Replace with	Remove	Replace with	Remove	Replace with
Any reference to man/woman (i.e., sales man)	Person	His/Her	Their, Your	Recent Grad	Suggest only candidates of a certain age can apply
Man Hours	Work Hours, Workforce	Maternity	Parenthood, Parental Leave	4-7 Years of Experience	Removes the potential for people with more work experience to apply
Manpower	Workers, Workforce, Personnel	Speak	Communicate		
Workmanship	Work	See	Identify, Assess, Discover		
		Carry	Move		

### Inclusive language – Gender bias

Remove	Replace with
Strong	Proven, Sound, Solid
Drive	Run, Steer, Deliver, Energy
Lead	Run, Manage, Grow
Analysis	Research, Testing, Scrutiny
Individuals	People, Team Members
Decisions	Actions, Moves
Competitive	Attractive, Fair, Results-Oriented

# Key actions to building a more inclusive hiring process



## 3 Identifying sources of underrepresented talent (URT)...

Finding underrepresented candidates may require you to diversify your “traditional” networks:

- **Recruit** from different talent sources & pools e.g., professional associations, conferences, networking groups, colleges including Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and minority organizations at universities. Provide paid internships or scholarships to strengthen your early talent pipeline.

- **Advertise** through diverse channels and different job boards e.g., Diversity Working, Recruit Disability, Diversity.com, Black Career Network, Hispanic/Latino Professionals Association, HBCU Connect, Professional Diversity Network, iHispano, WorkplaceDiversity.com, Pink Jobs, Campus Pride.
- **Ask** current employees for referrals and offer referral bonuses. For consideration: keep in mind that we often spend time with individuals most similar to us, which could impact URT referrals depending on your employee base.

**Consider developing long-term relationships with professional organizations and associations who serve underrepresented groups. Example organizations may include:**

- African American Leadership Council
- Alumni Associations or Affinity Groups at Graduate Schools
- American Business Women’s Association (ABWA)
- American Indian Business Leaders
- Ascend
- Asian American Hotel Owners Association (AAHOA)
- Association of Latino Professions for America (ALPFA)
- Black in Technology
- Canadian Association of Women Executives and Entrepreneurs
- Executive Leadership Council
- Financial Women’s Association
- Hispanic Alliance for Career Enhancement (HACE)
- Hospitality Diversity Action Council
- Information Technology Senior Management Forum
- Latino Hotel Association (LHA)
- League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
- Minorities in Hospitality
- Multicultural Greek Council
- National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering (NACME)

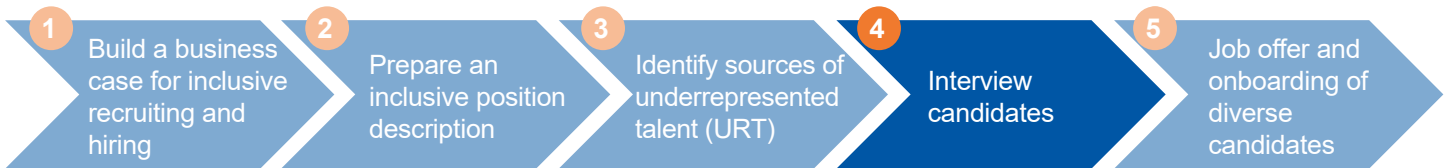
- National Association for Female Executives (NAFE)
- National Association of African American in Humans Resources
- National Association of Asian American Professionals (NAAAP)
- National Association of Black Accountants
- National Association of Black Hotel Owners, Operators & Developers
- National Black MBA Association
- National Coalition of Black Meeting Professionals (NCBMP)
- National Diversity Council
- National Society of Hispanic MBAs
- National Society of Minorities in Hospitality (NSMH)
- National Urban League
- Prospanica
- Reaching out MA
- Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE)
- Southern African Association for the Conference Industry (SAACI)
- Women in Technology International (WITI)
- Women’s Diversity Network (WDN)

### TIP

**URT may also be found outside of the standard career paths and industries:**

- Extend beyond job titles of potential candidates and instead seek evidence of leadership, business experiences and abilities.
- Consider URT from adjacent industries – e.g., restaurant, travel, theater, retirement communities – or even completely different industries (particularly for positions like IT, HR, engineering, operations, or legal) where skills are transferable.

# Key actions to building a more inclusive hiring process



## 4 Interviewing candidates...

As humans, we all have conscious and unconscious biases. Mitigating these biases and first impressions (whether positive or negative) during the hiring process is essential for inclusive hiring. Best practices include:

- Removing all non-essential information (i.e., name, gender references) when conducting your initial review of applications or resumes
- Having your recruiter, hiring manager, and interviewers go through trainings for unconscious bias, cultural literacy, and behavioral interviewing\*
- Using structured, behavioral based interviewing techniques
- Assessing for relevant competencies, traits, drivers and experiences

\* Korn Ferry has a number of leadership training programs, including topic areas of bias, inclusion, and the talent selection process. For more information, contact [Jacquelyn Dekker](#) at Korn Ferry.

\* The American Hotel and Lodging Educational Institute (AHLEI) has an Understanding Unconscious Bias in Hospitality training. For more information, contact [Jenn Clark Fugolo](#) at AHLEI Foundation.



### Recruiters should also advise and prepare the candidate before interviews. Best practices include:

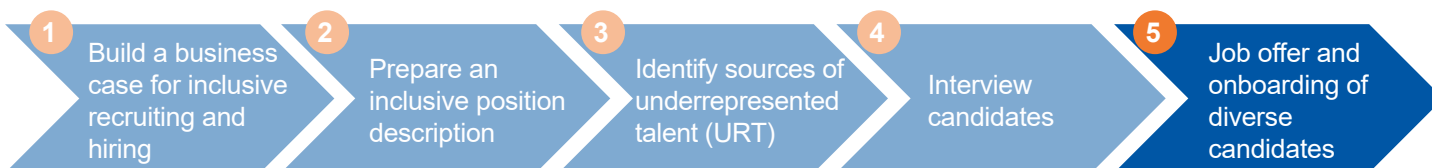
- Providing an agenda to the candidate ahead of the interview with interviewers' names/positions.
- Coaching the candidate on how to best highlight their experiences and qualifications relevant for the position.

When conducting interviews, interviewers should focus on candidates' **quantifiable impact** and **evidence of success** in prior positions/experiences. During the evaluation phase, interviewers should provide **objective evaluations** to avoid biases.

[A Guide to Conducting Behavioral Interviews with Early Career Job Candidates](#) | [How to overcome 4 challenges of recruiting diverse talent](#)



# Key actions to building a more inclusive hiring process



## 5 Job offer and onboarding...



### Job offer

When extending a job offer, increase the appeal of the offer by thoroughly selling the company and opportunity by:

- Explaining the 'total package' of benefits to joining your company
- Highlighting your inclusive and welcoming culture. Examples may be: an "onboarding buddy" to help with a smooth transition, a meditation or prayer room, potluck events to celebrate the different nationalities represented among your employees, gender-neutral restrooms, or employee-based events focused on inclusivity (e.g., a Pride Month event)
- Sharing the commitment to professional development and career mobility/trajectory within your organization

**Once the job offer has been officially accepted, share the news of your successful new hire through internal and external communications (newsletters and social media)**



### Onboarding

To prepare the selected candidate for a successful onboarding process, consider supporting your new employee through:

- Coaching
- Mentorship/sponsorship
- Differentiated Development opportunities

**Emphasize your company's commitment to DE&I during the onboarding experience, including sharing resources that explain how the new employee can become involved in making the workplace more inclusive (e.g., overview and invitation to your Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)).**



### TIP

In order to protect and strengthen the company's reputation as an inclusive employer, it is also important to skillfully inform candidates who were not selected in a timely manner.



### KEY POINT

As you know, if you work in the hospitality industry there's a good chance your business will attract customers from a variety of countries and cultures. If you want to engage with your customers effectively, your staff should reflect the entirety of your market.

**Racially diverse teams outperform non-diverse organizations by as much as 35%.**

Read more about it: [Benefits of diversity in hospitality](#) | [Diversity benefits statistics](#)

# Inclusive hiring process

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR INCLUSIVE HIRING AT EACH MATURITY LEVEL

	Foundational (Level 1)	Progressing (Level 2)	Advanced (Level 3)	Leading Edge (Level 4)
<b>Business case</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why is it important to recruit and hire more diverse talent?</li> <li>Does the company have the DE&amp;I expertise to build a business case internally or do they need to outsource to a consultancy?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How will DE&amp;I and inclusive hiring drive the business?</li> <li>Who will the business case be shared with and how will the business impact of DE&amp;I start to become "top of mind" for leaders?</li> </ul>	<i>Business case should be developed</i>	<p><i>At the highest level of DE&amp;I maturity, all previous considerations for inclusive hiring should be sufficiently built into your talent acquisition approach.</i></p>
<b>Inclusive position description</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the position description use inclusive language, avoiding gender specific wording and industry jargon?</li> <li>What are the necessary responsibilities and "must haves" for the position versus what is just a nice to have?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does language clearly state your workplace commitment to diversity, inclusion and belonging and is this visible through your mission, website, authentic photos, employees, etc.?</li> <li>Do you leverage different types of content for your job description, e.g., videos and audio files with transcripts and close captions, downloadable information sheets, vision- and hearing-impaired-friendly solutions, dyslexia-friendly fonts?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the position description emphasize inclusive benefits of your organization (i.e., parental leave, mental health &amp; wellness programs)?</li> </ul>	
<b>Diverse candidate pool</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the company have legal representation that could advise on any legal implications around DE&amp;I initiatives, demographics captured, etc.?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where has the organization traditionally marketed job descriptions and postings in the past? How can it reach new sources?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where can the organization develop long term networks/relationships with professional associations and organizations to attract underrepresented talent</li> </ul>	
<b>Candidate interview</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do interviewers know which questions are appropriate to ask candidates and do questions abide by all legal guidelines?</li> <li>Do the interviewers have a strong sense of the necessary job requirements/"must haves" so they can assess objectively?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have recruiters and hiring managers been trained in inclusive hiring practices?</li> <li>Create diverse interviewing panels that represent the diversity of the world we live in; is there a diverse group of individuals interviewing the candidate?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do the interviewers demonstrate the organization's commitment to diversity (i.e., using interview questions that demonstrate its DE&amp;I literacy)?</li> <li>Is the organization creating an inclusive and equitable interview environment?</li> </ul>	
<b>Offer and onboarding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the job offer appropriately showcase the benefits of joining the company?</li> <li>Does the job offer utilize inclusive language?</li> <li>Have candidates who were not selected been appropriately notified?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the job offer provide a comprehensive "package" to showcase the benefits of joining the organization, aside from salary and inclusive benefits?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the company considering how the new employee can fulfill the current role but also stretch assignments, development opportunities, mentorship/sponsorship that will prepare the individual for career mobility within the organization?</li> </ul>	