

# Examples of Systemic Barriers Affecting Candidates from Underrepresented Groups During the Interview and Hiring Process

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## Unconscious Bias

- **Example:** Interviewers may favor candidates who share their own background or characteristics, such as attending the same school or having similar interests.
- **Resolution:** Implement standardized interview questions and evaluation criteria, focusing on candidates' relevant skills and experience.

## Lack of Diversity in Hiring Panels

- **Example:** All interviewers being from a homogenous group may lead to a lack of perspective on the candidate's experiences and qualifications.
- **Resolution:** Ensure diverse representation on hiring panels. Include individuals from different backgrounds and identities.

## Inaccessible Job Descriptions and Application Processes

- **Example:** Job descriptions using gendered language, jargon, or acronyms that are not widely understood can deter qualified candidates.
- **Resolution:** Write clear, inclusive job descriptions. Ensure application processes are user-friendly and accessible to people with disabilities. Be mindful of language used to describe job duties and qualifications.

## Educational Requirements as Gatekeepers

- **Example:** Requiring degrees from specific institutions or overly high educational qualifications can exclude capable candidates.
- **Resolution:** Focus on skills and experience rather than formal education. Consider alternative credentials and on-the-job training or equivalent experience.

## Stereotyping and Assumptions

- **Example:** Assuming a candidate's commitment or capability based on their background or identity.
- **Resolution:** Challenge stereotypes actively. Assess candidates based on their individual merits and job-related competencies.

## Inadequate Accommodations

- **Example:** Not providing necessary accommodations for candidates with disabilities, such as accessible interview locations or assistive technology.
- **Resolution:** Ask candidates if they need accommodation during the interview process. If conducting interview virtually, provide options to utilize close caption, share your questions in the chat for them to read them. Ensure all interview locations and processes are accessible.

## Lack of Cultural Competence

- **Example:** Interviewers may not understand cultural nuances or may misinterpret behavior based on cultural differences.
- **Resolution:** Use inclusive and neutral language throughout the interview. Avoid idioms, slang, or jargon that may not be understood by candidates from different cultural backgrounds. Be mindful of non-verbal communication. Understand that eye contact, gestures, and other non-verbal cues can vary significantly across cultures.

## Language Barriers

- **Example:** Requiring fluency in languages that are not necessary for the job can exclude qualified candidates.
- **Resolution:** Only include language requirements that are essential for the job. Offer language support if needed.

## Disparate Impact of Background Checks

- **Example:** Background checks may disproportionately affect candidates from certain groups due to systemic inequalities in the justice system.

- **Resolution:** Use background checks that are relevant to the job, and only as needed. Focus on recent and job-related offenses rather than blanket policies and be consistent in your administration of these checks.

### Limited Geographic Reach

- **Example:** Only recruiting from specific geographic areas can limit the diversity of the candidate pool.
- **Resolution:** Use remote interviewing techniques and advertise job openings in diverse locations. Consider remote work options if possible.