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A Guide to Disrupt Racism + Sexism



EQUITABLE OFFER CHECKLIST →

Here are some additional ways you can proactively reduce barriers to entry for People Of Color, women, and trans workers by being specific.

The factors that allow your top candidate to say yes are often *very personal in nature*. The compound impacts of racism, sexism, transphobia, and more are real. **Confidentiality is key throughout the negotiations and compensation package discussions.** As the person responsible for reviewing benefits and the offer in totality, you may learn things that *no one else at your organization ever needs to know*. For example, you might learn, over the course of crafting a starting package, that a candidate:

- has a child with special needs
- has crushing student loan debt,
- has been struggling with fertility issues
- and more.

Candidates, understandably, may feel that it is dangerous to begin disclosing details about their physical health and financial constraints before officially accepting the offer. However, such details are important to their chances of succeeding in the job and staying with your company. Communicate—and deliver—confidentiality.

What do “traditional” offers typically include?

- Base rate of pay
- Frequency of pay
- Days off
- Benefits overview (including if union membership is part of this role)
- Desired start date
- Offer letter making it official

What *should* offers include, if you are seeking to hire *equitably*?

- [Staff Handbook/Personnel Policies](#)
- [Detailed information about health benefits](#)
- [Information Vacation or PTO](#)
- [Information about reimbursements and work-related purchases](#)
- [Expectations about time](#)
- [Protocols for working from outside the office](#)
- [Demographic info about who currently works here](#)
- [How the current org chart works](#)

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Staff Handbook/Personnel Policies—how we do things around here—so new hires can get an even better sense of whether this is somewhere they want to work or not. New hires can infer a lot about how they, personally, will be treated by reading policies. People of Color, women, and trans workers may especially notice dress code, holidays recognized, and work-from-anywhere boundaries, and what those policies say about your company. For example, allusions to “professional dress” can communicate “We want you to dress and do your hair like a white person” or “We expect you to be gender conforming”—and if you don’t it will be a problem.

Detailed information about health benefits—what we cover and how, including mental health coverage, the cost of specific prescription drugs, paycheck deductions, deductibles, and so on. A lifetime of racism, sexism, and transphobia comes at true costs to our health; if you are planning to hire a mixed-identity team, recognize that you are providing health benefits for people who are more likely to have had little to no access to quality, consistent, affordable health care options over their lifespan. Be clear about what you offer.

Information Vacation or PTO – explain how time off works, what is considered okay and not okay for frequency and volume of paid days off of work. Practices naming expectations and then practicing sticking to them. It is predictable that white and masculine performing employees might “get away with” informal or unwritten treatment of time off while People of Color, women and trans people get punished for any activity “off book.”

Information about reimbursements and work-related purchases—what we’ll pay for: are mileage/bus fare, parking, phone usage, internet usage, getting a new laptop, and so on covered? People of Color, women, and trans people are more likely to be poor or underpaid, and new costs, such as high-speed home internet or a smartphone, put an actual strain on a familial budget. Although it may feel far outside of your own experience, plan and communicate accordingly.

Expectations about time—when we work, when we’re available by phone/email, and how we arrange time off. Be forthright about exactly what you mean when you talk about your workplace being “flexible” in certain ways. For example, women are still being expected to do the brunt of community and familial caregiving responsibilities; are people expected to take their own sick days when they have a sick kid or parent?

Protocols for working from outside the office—when and how we work elsewhere and what’s allowed when we do. (CAVEAT: COVID is in the midst of changing both conversations and expectations of businesses and employees when it comes to costs, outputs, and the likely hybrid future of work-from-anywhere possibilities; be prepared to adjust and update this regularly as our collective, and your unique context, shifts and changes.) Try to put aside whether or not *you* prefer working from an office or somewhere else. We lovingly note that this isn’t about *you*. What makes it okay and not okay to work from where? Be specific.

Demographic info about who currently works here—which you included in the job announcement, and maybe on your website, right? Saying yes to your company includes a curiosity about potentially being the *first* or the *only* in some way—for example, the only Person of Color in the finance department, or the first woman in senior leadership. Every adult gets to decide for themselves whether or not that is

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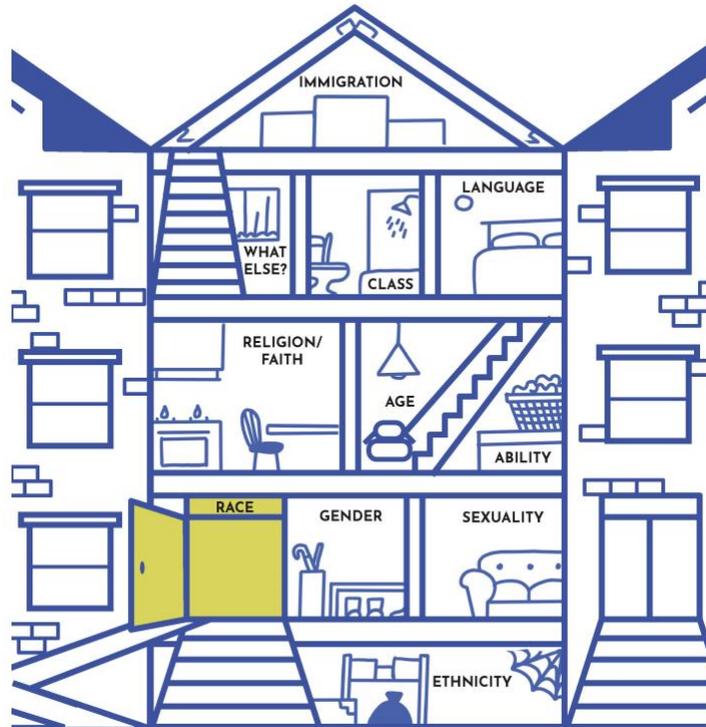


something they want to do. Your job is not to omit or fib about reality by going on and on about all the ways your team is diverse. If there are currently no Black people, be honest about that.

How the current org chart works—and how they, in this role, would fit into it. Remember that inclusion is NOT simply about having a seat at the table—it's about having power enough to change a structure. Titles and org charts can be confusing. Who makes which decisions? Does the chart reflect current reality? And if this person says yes, what would be in their purview and what would not? Be transparent.

When deciding whether or not to say yes to a job offer, in addition to the tasks of the role, a candidate is also considering how the company will acknowledge, respect, and even value who they are.

In the offer and negotiations part of a hiring process, each of the predictable identity disparities will pop up for you and your candidate in material, relational, and symbolic ways. Consider your whole house and how each identity experience may contribute to a candidate believing this job will or will not be a good fit for them, their families, and their professional development aspirations.



RACE

- o What is our dress code—our expectations, formalized or not, about how People of Color and white people dress and do their hair, what they smell like, what is considered formal/put together and not, are hats allowed in the office or not?
- o Who decides what art, what music, what food gets shared in the office?
- o What is our company's stance on reacting when an incident of racism happens in our office, building, city, or sector?
- o What are our expectations about pronouncing team members' names correctly, and is there accountability for it?
- o How will new hires know if they're being paid on par with white people, men, and white men who work here?

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IMMIGRATION

- o Might this person need our workplace to provide sponsorship/visa support?
- o If we do direct deposit for paychecks, will pay be accessible for someone operating in cash and not through a traditional bank?
- o What is our company's stance on reacting when an incident of xenophobia happens in our office, building, city, or sector?

CLASS

- o Do we offer a relocation expense reimbursement package?
- o Do we expect new hires to cover expenses of starting employment, such as a uniform or "professional" wardrobe, a laptop, high-speed home internet, and so on?
- o Is our office easy to get to on public transportation, or do we expect new hires to have a vehicle, insurance, and funds for gas, repair, maintenance, and parking?
- o Do we assume new hires have a passport valid for international travel?
- o Do we expect new hires to have a personal credit card with which to cover "incidentals" during business travel?

LANGUAGE

- o What are company preferences around talking with colleagues in languages other than English?
- o Who can help translate to ensure understanding of the legal and financial commitments in the offer and acceptance?

ABILITY

- o What does the company, or immediate team lead, need to know about a new person's cognitive, physical, and/or behavioral disabilities or differences if we are to work together?
- o Does the company make available particular technology or tools to make work more widely accessible?
- o Do you make it a practice to tell all new employees about elevator, ramp, restroom, and stair options in your building?

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AGE

- o What norms have the company established around breast/chest feeding¹ or pumping in the office? During meetings (in person and/or virtual)?
- o What is our dress code?
- o What expectations do we hold for hours worked? If a weekday schedule is “normal,” is working late or over weekends expected or discouraged, and how likely is it? If working unusual or irregular hours is allowed, is it viewed neutrally or assigned judgment?
- o Do we treat the presence of a variety of ages as an asset? How do we value employees of different generations?

RELIGION / FAITH

- o *What dates or holidays do we recognize, celebrate, talk about, or decorate for?*
- o What level of personal religious display (such as specific head coverings, facial hair, clothing items, and hairstyles) is expected or frowned upon?
- o How do we navigate faith-related dietary and/or behavior traditions (such as eating Kosher, not consuming alcohol, not touching people of a different gender) in daily exchanges and at company gatherings?

SEXUALITY

- o What is our company’s stance on reacting when an incident of homophobia or biphobia² happens in our office, building, city, or sector?
- o How would you answer the inquiry: “I’ve been sexually harassed before; how do y’all handle that here, because I want to feel safe?”

GENDER

- o What are company expectations for working after dark? Working alone in the office? What are our safety and security protocols?
- o What are office restrooms and accommodations like (for example, single stall, signed for men/women)?
- o How will new hires know if they’re being paid on par with men who work here?
- o How many people, and what proportion of people in leadership positions, are similar or different to the new hire’s current gender presentation?
- o What is our practice for sharing and being accountable for using colleagues’ pronouns and preferred names?

¹ *Chest feeding* is a term used by some trans men who have mammary glands and are able to feed their babies, but do not consider themselves as having breasts.

² Transphobia is not included here because being trans is a gender identity, not a sexual orientation.

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ETHNICITY

- o What variances do we have in the way people dress, eat, talk, work, and deal with conflict here?
- o What are our expectations about pronouncing team members' names correctly, and is there accountability for it?
- o What religious, national, or ethnic traditions does your company acknowledge, honor, or otherwise pay attention to? What about the building your office space is in? (For example, is there a Christmas tree each December in the foyer of the coworking space where you rent a few desks?)