



The Guides for Equitable Practice: Chapter 4





The Guides for Equitable Practice: Recruitment and Retention

Talent is the lifeblood of any practice. This guide outlines strategies for recruiting a diverse workforce and retaining employees through equitable practices at the individual, firm, and professional levels.



What are recruitment and retention?

Recruitment

Attracting new talent by searching for, interviewing, and hiring candidates.

Retention

Keeping employees by providing them with the support to thrive, advance, and balance work/life.



The value of engagement

What drives engagement

Factors:

- High satisfaction
- Growth opportunities
- Aligned values

Outcomes:

- Retention
- Innovation
- Firm resilience

What drives disengagement

Factors:

- Low satisfaction
- Career ceiling
- Value disconnect

Outcomes:

- Low productivity
- Burnout
- Attrition



Pinch points and barriers



Career pinch points

- Education
- Licensure
- Caregiving
- Glass ceiling



Workplace barriers

- Limited access
- Microaggressions
- "Only" status
- Biased evaluation



Disproportionate impact

Women, and especially women of color, face steeper barriers.



- Make a check mark next to practices that you can find in your firm or organization
- A question mark for those that you are not sure
- A minus for those that are missing.

GUIDE 4 * RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION **WHAT DOES GOOD LOOK LIKE?**

We more easily recruit and retain employees when...

ALIGNMENT

- members of underrepresented groups feel comfortable and supported when contributing to their firm's collective intelligence
- firms recruit for diversity and then embrace difference
- diversity and gender balance are communicated as benefiting the whole profession
- the profession is known in popular culture and in broader society as open, accessible, and equitable
- goals for improving firm diversity are ambitious but realistic and supported by a plan of action

COMPLIANCE

- managers with hiring responsibility understand what can and cannot be asked during an interview
- diversity characteristics are set as flexible but expected targets, not quotas
- hiring managers are trained in and aware of discrimination laws

ENGAGEMENT

- connections between satisfaction, engagement, and commitment are understood
- warning signs of burnout are noticed and addressed early
- all employees have equitable access to flexible policies and a psychologically and physically safe workplace
- management and employees engage in relationships that support ongoing feedback
- firm and employee values are aligned, improving the likelihood of positive engagement

INFLUENCE

- firms reduce tokenism and work to mitigate and eliminate the experience of being the "only"
- the process for attaining desirable opportunities is clear and open
- other work responsibilities are seen as equally valuable as design
- processes for promotion are designed to interrupt bias and help to advance employees from underrepresented groups toward leadership positions



Actions to strengthen recruitment and retention (individual)



Know Your Values

Know your values and workplace needs.



Learn the Rules

Learn legal rules for recruitment and workplace conduct.



Seek Growth

Seek mentors and diverse experiences.



Embrace Flexibility

Normalize and use flexible options to avoid burnout.



Actions to strengthen recruitment and retention (firm-level)



Evaluate Practices

Evaluate hiring and promotion practices; use identity-blind processes.



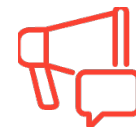
Neutralize Bias

Neutralize bias and recognize diverse contributions in evaluations.



Structure Pathways

Structure onboarding and leadership paths.



Gather Feedback

Gather feedback on engagement and culture.



Consider scenarios & reflections

Read, discuss in small groups, and share insights

Consider

RECRUITING EQUITABLY

Before the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) highlighted the idea that employment is a civil right, I was looking for architecture jobs as a fresh graduate. I used to drive around to prospective offices to see if I could get in the door. If I could, I would apply. If I got an interview, I would walk in and if the person's jaw dropped to the floor, I'd know they weren't going to consider me. I did find a few people willing to take me on, but the assumption was I would just work in the slide library. It took a lot of work for me to convince employers to let me do more—for example, I convinced one employer that I could work on tenant improvements. At a tenant-improvement project jobsite, there's a building and a floor slab, so I can roll onto that site in my wheelchair and work with the contractor. We need to help architects understand that there are a million different jobs within the field of architecture, that there's a place for everybody, and that we can each find the place that allows us to promote and use our best skills.

These days, larger firms tend to have more equitable hiring processes, which are probably more formalized, and hiring is less of a gut reaction of if we can use them or we can't. A large firm might have more opportunities, although I think any open-minded firm can find ways for someone with a variety of skills to fit in.

—Principal, Firm Owner, White, Female, Baby Boomer, Wheelchair User



Now what?

Write a SMART goal for improving recruitment or retention.