

Suggested procedures for organisations to increase diversity in the recruitment process

Advert

- Areas of advertisement
 - Can the mediums of advertising be broadened so as to reach networks of people not normally associated with the theatre industry?
 - Where can the job be advertised other than the normal 'arts outlets' like The Stage, Stage Jobs Pro and The Guardian?
 - Can the job be advertised in the local press, or in press relating directly to the skill you are advertising?
 - For a non-specific theatre role like Carpenter, Metalworker, Electrician, consider Mandy and other jobs outlets, in the theatre itself, or on Gumtree?
- Indicate that actively seeking applications from individuals who are presently under-represented in the theatre.
 - Look to use similar language to the following phrases: 'We encourage applicants from different backgrounds with different experiences, skills and stories to join us and influence and develop our working practice.' Or 'We are particularly keen to hear from people of colour and disabled candidates. All disabled candidates who demonstrate that they meet the essential criteria will be invited for an interview.'
- Does the position need to be advertised in the framework of a theatre?
 - Many jobs within our industry are jobs for skilled workers and craftspersons where an interest in theatre may be desirable but not essential. Can theatre be excluded entirely from the advert and the recruitment process?
- Encourage transferable skills
 - Looking for people outside the area of theatre already is potentially the biggest way to create a wider, more diverse workgroup in the immediate term.
- State that you are willing to train
 - This helps to break down the barriers of assumed experience and knowledge. Also helpful for trying to recruit from other industries, e.g. T.V, Corporate, Church groups etc.
- Include the salary and the dates of the interview in the advert
 - Not knowing the level of payment can be a significant barrier to people feeling they either are or aren't suitable for the position, or that they can manage financially on the remuneration offered.

- Can you frame the published nature of the organisation in a different way?
 - Consider if the name of an organisation is helpful or restrictive to a wider workforce from a non-traditional theatre background.
 - If the grand title of an organisation can be removed does that help open up recruitment? Anecdotally removing the name Royal Opera House/Royal National Theatre/Royal Exchange/Old Vic Theatre/ Young Vic Theatre can be helpful in opening up organisations to new workforces. Can the advert simply read 'Chef/Carpenter/Electrician needed for City Centre venue'?
- Think carefully about educational and experiential requirements.
 - Don't exclude when unnecessary.
 - Maybe don't ask for degree or equivalent or limit the type of 'on the job' experience one need.
 - Remember about taking the position back to the starting level.
- Be clear about what are desirable rather than essential skills.
 - Make it clear that essential skills are required for an interview and desirable skills are not
- Eradicate or explain any jargon, acronyms etc. Don't over confuse adverts.
- The job description and person specification
 - Review these each time a role is recruited to ensure that it is relevant to the current situation.
 - The person specification needs to be checked to make sure the identified 'essential criteria' are truly essential.
- Consider the phrasing of relevant experience
 - It is generally agreed that length of time e.g. 'at least two years' experience' is not an indication of ability or skill set. The assessment of a candidate's ability to do a job should be based on skills not length of experience.
- Interview dates
 - Offer more than one interview day and give notice of interviews that allow for flexibility with their present job.
 - Where possible put aside at least a day for each round of interviews and try to spread them across two half days so candidates have options.

Applications

- Look for transferable skills that meet the essential criteria.

The Interview

- Pay for travel to interviews, making access affordable
- Ensure the panel has representation from under-represented groups. This can be someone internally or externally, irrespective of role recognition.
- Offer digital interviews
If possible offer interviews over Skype, FaceTime or conference call.
- Offer support and childcare for interview dates
Can you afford to offer a childcare professional for the interview time? This doesn't mean supplying someone for the whole time you are interviewing but giving the option, and trying to group any applicants who require such support can open up possibilities. This is becoming more common place now with auditions.
- Meet more people
In the first round have shorter interviews but aim to meet between 10 – 20 candidates. Even if new and unknown applicants don't make the later stages of this process it may well create connection with people for other roles, or importantly, encourage them to apply again for other available positions in your, and other, organisations
- Set targets
Always interview people who fit core criteria for a job but ensure the group is diverse in terms of ethnicity, gender, geographical location, previous experience of working in theatre, age, educational status. Interview all disabled candidates that meet core criteria.

Other Considerations

- Consider open days for entry level jobs as a way to reach out to wider section of community
- Offer job shares where possible
- The application form needs to be easy to use and inclusive and should be reviewed on a regular basis.
- Job levels returning to starting levels rather than a continuation of the leaving level of current individual
 - Question if the job being advertised needs to be filled to the skill level of the person leaving, at which they started, or somewhere in between.
- Be alive to cultural bias and recognise where you might be drawn to candidates who share similar characteristics.