The Who, What, Why, Where, and When of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:

A Comprehensive Guide for Amplifying Your DEI Approach

Introduction

Today's top talent teams are no stranger to the concept of creating a diverse, equitable, and inclusive (DEI) workplace for all employees. Forty-nine percent of **recruiters reported** that candidates inquire about a company's DEI programs during the interview process, and 44% consider the commitment to expanding DEI in their organization an important factor in accepting a job offer — but a surprising number of recruiters (20%) shared that their teams still aren't planning to prioritize DEI in the near future.

In a competitive talent market that still favors candidates, companies should make the investment in expanding DEI in their organizations and creating a supportive culture. Leaders across every industry agree that diversity of representation in their companies increases innovation, sense of belonging, employee happiness, and ultimately, the bottom line. Committing time and money to DEI efforts can seem daunting at first, especially with so many resources out there to sort through. That's why we created the ultimate guide with everything you need to expand and improve DEI efforts in your organization.

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Who Are My Ideal Candidates?

While you've seen different theories on what makes the "ideal" candidate and where to find them, you may be excluding your *true* ideal candidates through unnecessary filtering at the top of the applicant funnel. Diversity of candidate representation can be anything about a person that makes them unique — like age, race, sex, gender identity, religious affiliation, orientation, parental status, disability status, military status, and neurodivergence. Building programs to attract, engage, and hire underrepresented groups through strategic audience planning is considered a leading practice, according to the **EVOLVE™ Talent Acquisition Framework**.

Recently, we were joined by **Ginny Clarke, CEO of Ginny Clarke, LLC and former Director of Executive Search for Google** at Recruiter Nation Live, where she hosted a session on **Identifying "Best Talent" in the New Age of Work**. In this session, Clarke discussed why recruiters are having a hard time in a competitive market finding qualified talent with certain soft skills or experience.

While the market is short of this talent, companies are limiting the diversity of their talent pools by having too many requirements listed for a role when they may not all be necessary. Limiting language in job descriptions and screening questions will shrink applicant pools right away. TA teams may then struggle with diversity of representation across their organizations due to limited candidate slates for roles.

Clarke shared recruiters are finding success by using strategies like **Merit-Based Recruiting**, which is selecting applicants based on core competencies rather than specific soft skills or experience. Consider your list of requirements when writing out a job description and eliminate any that aren't deal-breakers for the role.

Core competencies can stand out in a lot of places on a resumé, but some include:

- Leadership experience through leading team projects, joining employee resource groups, or training new hires

- Completion of any kind of certification or further education/upskill program

- Assistance in all-company projects like new system testing or event organizing

- Gaining additional responsibilities, raises, or internal promotions at past jobs

- Positive reference letters from past coworkers or managers

- Past or active military service

Ideal Candidate Profile

So, what do ideal candidates look like? **They are engaged, excited to learn about your company, interested in an open position, and have the skills, experience, or core competencies that fit the role.** Hiring managers, company executives, or even recruiters can get stuck on the idea of the "ideal candidate" and forget to ask themselves what they *really* need out of an employee in a role.

Work with the hiring manager to create a candidate profile with the list of deal-breakers, preferred skills, and bonus skills for a role — then move as many out of the deal-breakers bucket as possible. Use their list of requirements and preferences for the role and translate them into the job description. This keeps your applicant pool wide, especially for roles that require specific degrees, certifications, or skills to qualify.

TIP
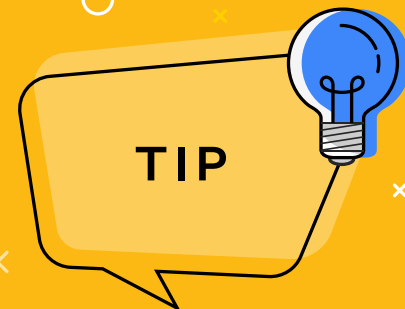
Keep your candidate pool diverse by taking out as many potential deal-breakers from the job description as possible and listing them as nice-to haves.

Why Should Organizations Focus on Creating Diverse Candidate Slates and Prioritizing DEI?

It shouldn't be a surprise that companies with a wider diversity of representation and inclusive workplace cultures are more innovative and successful in their industries compared to competitors with homogenous workplaces. In fact, it's become such an essential part of the employee experience that diversity and inclusion is now a key metric for making the Fortune 500 list, ensuring that companies remain committed to improving diversity, equity, and belonging in their workplaces for the long term.

When talent teams and company leadership join forces and prioritize attracting diverse candidate slates when hiring, they can improve DEI in their organizations. In fact, recruiters are expecting increased budgets for DEI activities in the coming year, which they plan to use on things like employee referral programs, recruitment marketing, and internal mobility incentives. Many talent teams are dedicating time and resources to DEI and requesting the budget to make these goals happen. An impressive 68% of recruiters reported that they believe improving DEI in their organization will be a priority in the next year.

So, what if your organizational leadership still isn't convinced that improving DEI should be a priority for your TA team? Start by measuring key recruiting metrics in your process and continue to analyze areas of improvement as you make changes. Once you've gathered data about small improvements made to your hiring process, you have a strong case to present to leadership teams on the importance of prioritizing DEI in your company.

These tips will help you get started on building the business case for expanding diverse talent pipelines and improving DEI in your organization.

- **Start with free tools:** You can make small improvements to be more inclusive in your recruiting practices. Use free tools like the **Job Description Grader** to help write more inclusive job descriptions and attract a wider variety of candidates. Measure candidate conversion rates before and after improving job descriptions.

- **Measure key recruiting metrics:** Data like candidate source, conversion rate, and time-to-fill are great places to start with **measuring recruiting metrics**. Keep track of improvements over time and demonstrate how diverse candidate slates help fill roles faster.

- **Create inclusive content:** Use your existing social media channels and **career website** to tell a variety of employee stories in your organization. Demonstrate a diversity of representation and commitment to improving DEI through original content. Track the performance of these posts with interaction and lead generation data, including contact forms filled out, jobs applied to, total followers, and net new followers, as measurements for success.

When Is It Important to Prioritize DEI Hiring Initiatives and Programs?

While improving diversity of representation and **sense of belonging** among employees should be a priority for every recruiter this year, some agile talent teams have the budget and time ready to dedicate to expanding DEI programs and initiatives. **A surprising 18% of strategic recruiters reported** that they planned to prioritize creating more diverse candidate slates in the next 12 months.

It's no secret that TA teams who prioritize DEI programs will find more top-quality applicants that turn into new hires. **Strategic recruiting teams** that already use automation and AI in their daily process should prioritize DEI hiring initiatives and programs this year.

In a time of candidate advantage in the marketplace, and with so many candidates considering DEI an important factor in accepting a job offer, it is a strategic imperative for TA teams to focus on improving diversity, equity, and inclusion in their companies.

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Recruiting teams can improve the diversity of candidate slates by adding automation and AI to these areas of the recruiting process:

- **Sourcing:** Intelligent sourcing can help find more diverse candidates that match skills and experience for a role. Automation matches candidates to best-fit roles from your entire talent network and invites them to apply. This ensures the most ideal candidates find your job posting, which can shorten the screening process, while keeping your candidate slate diverse.

- **Relationship management:** Stay in touch with past applicants and silver medalist candidates to keep them engaged with your employer brand. Encourage these candidates to apply for future roles that fit their talent profiles. These qualified candidates are often overlooked by companies due to poor candidate relationship management practices, but they're a great place to source diverse applicants.

- **Workforce planning:** Use the data of your existing employee population, combined with candidates in your talent network, to get a picture of gaps in diversity of representation on your teams. Pay attention especially to representation among leadership and executive roles. This data can help build your future candidate slates and plan potential needs for hires.

- **Audience planning:** Leverage strategic audience planning to focus on finding diverse candidates from specific groups like veterans, recent college graduates and interns, or active military. Broadcasting your requisition to a variety of job boards and channels will also help ensure a wide range of applicants.
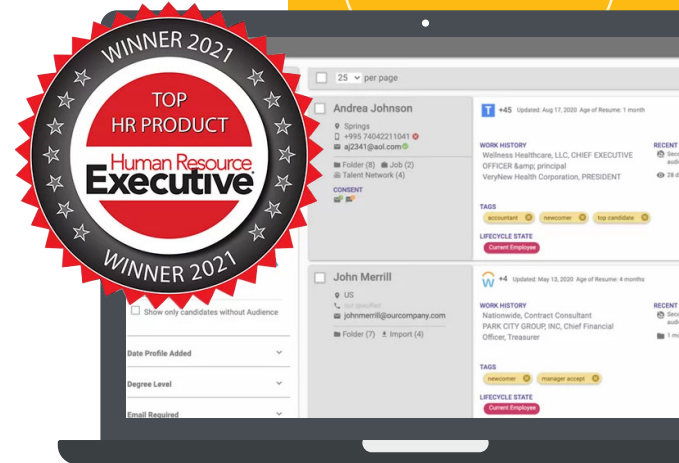
What Can Businesses Do to Grow Diverse Talent Pipelines?

When you're ready to expand your talent network and recruit a broad range of qualified candidates, where do you start? Today's candidate has a long list of expectations for their future employer, and a culture that prioritizes diversity, equity, and inclusion is at the top of the list. This means that recruiters need double down on DEI to compete in their industry for top talent.

Top TA teams are prioritizing expanding diverse talent networks, **internal mobility**, employee referral programs, and recruitment marketing activities in order to compete in a tight labor market. **They've worked to plan** their recruiting, hiring, and onboarding strategies to maximize efforts and hire quality candidates as quickly as possible.

Recruiters are using automation and AI, recruitment marketing, and candidate relationship management to **improve the diversity of candidate slates** and grow their diverse talent networks. But whether your TA team has a budget dedicated to improving DEI in your company or not, you can still grow diversity in your talent pipeline this year.

Expand talent pipelines and source a wide variety of candidates by:

Interacting on social media: Keep in touch with potential applicants, passive talent, and past candidates on social media. Share what's going on in your company, tell employee stories, answer questions, **post job openings**, and give info on referral programs to your network.

Creating engagement campaigns: Your network is full of silver medalists and warm leads for candidates and referrals. **Keep leads warm** by engaging them through email and text campaigns. Send them job openings that match their candidate profile or offer incentives for employee referrals.

Sponsoring learning sessions, events, or webinars: No matter your industry, there are always thought leaders who put out content to their networks. Find influencers in your industry and see if your company can sponsor an upcoming event or piece of content to generate employer brand awareness. Companies with a **strong employer brand** spend less money on recruiting efforts.

Attending virtual recruiting events: Attend virtual recruiting events and meet with potential candidates. Find hiring events that are focused on bringing together a niche audience, like veterans or with historically black colleges and universities. These events are a great way to connect with job seekers and broadcast the message that your company is hiring.

Working with local organizations: Find local professional or nonprofit diversity groups and work with them to source DEI candidates for open positions. This is a great way to expand niche talent pools like veterans, active military, recent college graduates, specialized professionals like CPAs or PMPs, and other diverse candidate slates. Building a relationship with these organizations can help long-term network growth.

Where Can Organizations Leverage Talent Acquisition Technology to Prioritize DEI?

As you've seen, there are plenty of places to focus your efforts to increase diversity of representation, equity, and belonging in your organization. Whether you're looking to improve recruitment marketing, applicant management, or TA operations for your company, automation and AI will save time and effort in your processes.

Top TA teams have **adopted automation and AI** to reduce time and effort spent on manual tasks. These tools allow recruiters to automatically source, screen, schedule interviews, answer questions, and chat with candidates to create a world-class applicant, recruiter, and employee experience. Saving time on the tedious daily tasks gives recruiters time back to spend on the human aspect of recruiting — like improving DEI recruitment efforts in their companies.

Talent teams are striving to create a more supportive workplace culture in a time of hybrid and remote-first work. These tools are helping TA teams improve DEI in their organizations by expanding their talent pool and continuously improving their recruiting processes.
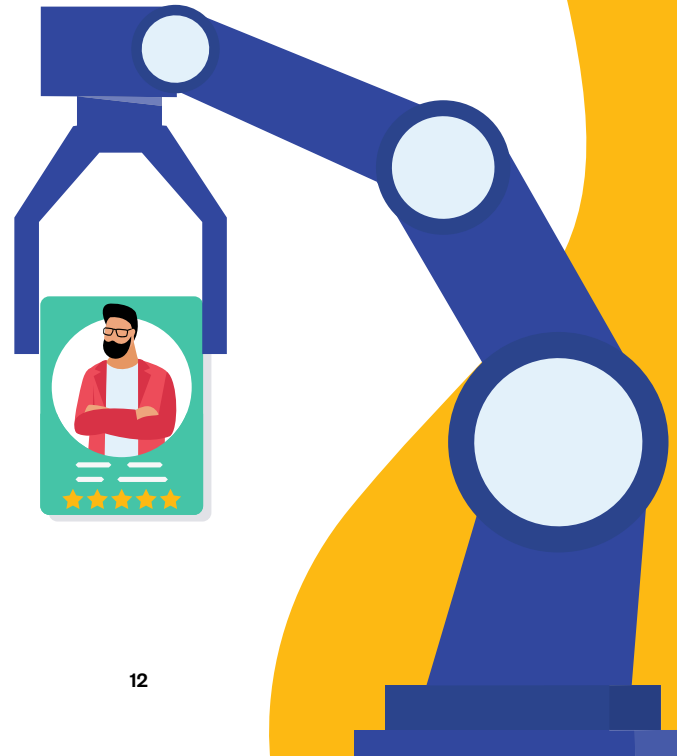
The Tools You Need to Prioritize DEI in Talent Acquisition

Job Description Grader

As mentioned earlier, the **Job Description Grader** is an intelligent recruiting tool that analyzes job descriptions and creates a report to help reduce interrupting bias in language and overcome common obstacles in candidate conversion. This tool helps add inclusivity to job descriptions by eliminating exclusionary language to attract a wider audience of candidates.

A job description is one of the first impressions that a job seeker has of your company. Work with hiring managers to get their list of requirements for the job and translate them into the job description — be sure to check for exclusionary language that will reflect your commitment to DEI.

> **Did you know?** *Words like "guru", "man-hours", and "freshman" are all considered to be exclusionary terms. Use tools like the Job Description Grader to find suitable alternatives for your job description.*

Automated intelligent sourcing

While sourcing is considered the most time-consuming process in recruiting, perhaps even worse, manual sourcing of candidates can unintentionally lead to more homogenous talent pools. Automated intelligent sourcing reduces interrupting bias in the resume sorting process by matching candidate experience and skills to job requisitions. This ensures that applicants are screened and selected based on factors like relevant skills and experience or ability to magnify diversity within the company culture.

Automated sourcing doesn't just pull potential applicants into your candidate database, but it can also **broadcast jobs** across multiple channels at once. Send job requisitions to a variety of job boards where diverse candidates can be found, including targeted boards for industries and strategic audiences.

Creating automated, audience-based messaging campaigns can engage past applicants, passive talent, and silver medalists, and invite them to apply to fitting roles. Rely on **automated intelligent messaging** to reach candidates where they are and source them quickly. Recruiters see an impressive 98% response rate to **text messages** versus emails or phone calls to candidates.

AI candidate skill-matching

Your ATS should be able to integrate with any platform to find the best matching candidates in your entire talent network. AI integrations help match candidate skills and experience with open requisitions to automatically find diverse, qualified talent.

Automated matching helps reduce time-to-hire by finding top candidates based on their skills and potential success in the role. Skill matching also automatically screens applicants for role requirements, which is especially helpful for specialized roles that can benefit from diverse candidates, including engineers, healthcare workers, or machine operators.

Jobvite is a Platinum member of **LinkedIn's ATS Preferred Partner Program**, offering multiple LinkedIn Hiring integrations that help recruiters find quality candidates quickly. These integrations allow TA teams to automatically post jobs and use LinkedIn applicant highlights like skills to match with open requisitions. Integrations take the headache out of managing multiple candidate databases in different places and help find qualified talent more quickly.

Internal mobility and employee referrals

After a reshuffling in the job market where candidates continue to have the advantage, recruiters are relying more heavily on employee referrals and internal hires to fill open roles. In fact, **37% of recruiters** shared that they plan on focusing investment on employee referrals in the next

12 months. In a market that's short of qualified talent, many recruiters are expanding their networks and finding candidates from internal hires and referrals.

Employees feel a stronger sense of belonging when they're encouraged to grow in your organization and can turn into loyal leaders if given an opportunity. TA teams are creating more equitable opportunities internally by offering **referral benefits** and encouraging managers to refer employees for promotions. Offer incentives to managers for referring employees to promotions or other roles across the company to nurture their professional growth goals.

Be sure to also create incentives for employees to refer their personal networks to open positions. This helps keep your candidate pool diverse and builds your employer brand to make recruiting top candidates easier in the future. When employees feel excited to share open roles to their network, you'll find more diverse candidates for your open roles that will strengthen your company culture.

Career site pages

Companies use **career site pages** to demonstrate organizational values, priorities, and share employee stories with candidates. Career sites are a great tool to use in recruitment marketing strategies and can emphasize an employer value proposition or show a strong employer brand to job seekers.

Some talent teams even have multiple career site pages for different groups of candidates, including those for strategic audiences and diversity candidates. No matter what kind of site your team uses, career sites are a key tool in any effective recruitment marketing strategy. They offer a look at what it's like to work in your company, what your company cares about, and who their coworkers would be.

Post relevant content on the site that's helpful to candidates in their job search. Consider some of these ideas to get started:

- Show a wide variety of employees, sharing their career journey through your organization. Highlight employees from all walks of life, including those from different departments and roles, and ask why they love working at the company.

- Share the typical interview process with some answers to frequently asked questions. This helps provide a quick overview of what to expect after applying for a role and engages candidates in the process.

- Highlight your company's commitment to community involvement. Share stories of volunteering opportunities that employees recently completed or talk about local organizations that your company supports.

Tailored career sites are crucial to building a strong employer brand and creating a good first impression with job seekers. Candidates today are savvy and do extensive research before accepting an offer — from reading employer reviews to scouring social media pages and even reaching out to past employees. A company with a strong employer brand will more easily attract diverse candidates who did their research and are looking for a supportive workplace.

Robust onboarding platform

In today's environment of hybrid and remote-first work, onboarding at your company must be accessible from anywhere. Onboarding **sets new hires up for success** and gives them the opportunity to learn more about their role in the company.

Many talent teams now have pre-boarding for new hires that is completed prior to their first day. This is especially important for your diverse hires to ensure they feel welcome and productive even before starting on day one.

However you **set up your onboarding program**, it should leverage a robust platform that allows employees to sign paperwork, complete training modules, and get everything needed for their first week. Creating an onboarding program that can be completed remotely ensures that any employee can easily access it and be equally introduced to the company.

Make sure your platform can fully equip new hires for their crucial first weeks on the job by giving them all the information they need.

While advanced recruiting software offers automation and AI, an onboarding platform should offer these basics:

- New hires can complete and sign paperwork digitally

- Provide company information and organizational structure for easy reference

- A place where the new employee can find answers to FAQs and other helpful contact information (IT, HR, manager)

- Introductory videos that share the company values, history, etc. with the new employee

[Advanced onboarding platforms](#) include features like:

- Custom training workflows based on role type

- Analytics of key metrics like time-to-onboard and onboarding completion rate

- Automated email notifications to hiring managers to track new hire onboarding progress

- Mobile-optimized onboarding portals

- Task completion status for new hire

- Branded onboarding portals
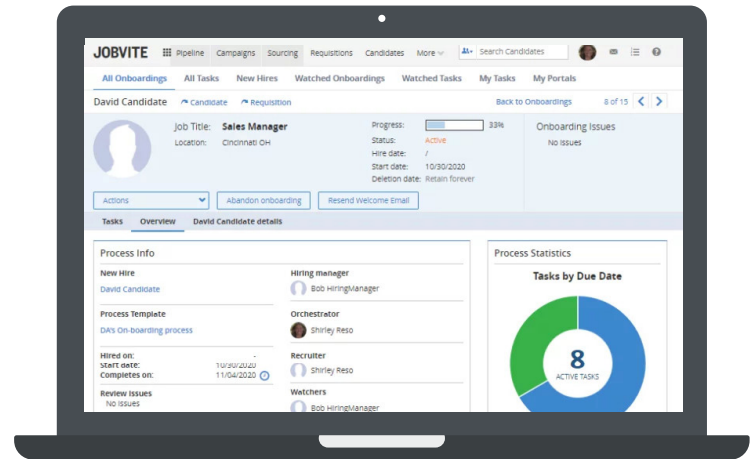
D&I software pack

The most strategic TA teams continuously invest time, effort, and resources into expanding diversity, equity, and inclusion in their companies. They prioritize new hiring practices and enrich their employer brand to make recruiting diverse candidates easier. And most importantly, they create a more supportive culture for all employees. But they cannot do it alone.

Again, more mature recruiting functions have adopted automation and AI tools to save effort on time-intensive daily tasks like sourcing, scheduling interviews, and even communicating with applicants. The **Diversity and Inclusion software pack** by Jobvite also helps talent teams reduce the interrupting bias by adding automation into the process. This software pack helps teams build a more diverse pipeline of talent and finds qualified candidates quickly. Some features include:

- **Career site pages:** Post information about your company's inclusion strategies and share diverse employee stories.

- **Content publishing:** Create blog content with employee stories, employee resource group information, and community involvement.

- **Email and social media campaigns:** Contact candidates with relevant information/content based on source and candidate profile.

- **Select types of identifiable information needed and not needed:** Geared for resumes with job requisitions. Information is intelligently de-identified, while key info is retained.

- **Identify best sources for talent:** Use targeted messaging campaigns to engage candidate pools. See what sources give you the best fit candidates from and prioritize in the future.

- **Analyze content performance:** See what type of content performs best and use it in ad campaigns and social posts. Use content performance benchmarks for recruiting metrics and business cases.

- **Track and report on the progression of applicants through your process:** Identify points of drop-off with candidates and see how to work to improve retention rates throughout the process.

Get Started on Improving DEI in Your Organization

Whether your team is looking to expand an already robust DEI program or is learning how to make it a priority as part of your talent acquisition program, remember, DEI is a journey, not a destination. Taking the 5 Ws — the Who, What, Why, Where, and When — of recruiting into consideration, you can more effectively develop and mature your DEI programs. Most of all, the tools and tips provided here should empower you to create a more inclusive and equitable workplace where each of your employees feel supported.

Want to stay up to date on the latest in talent acquisition? Subscribe to the Jobvite **blog** and **resource library** for the latest content.

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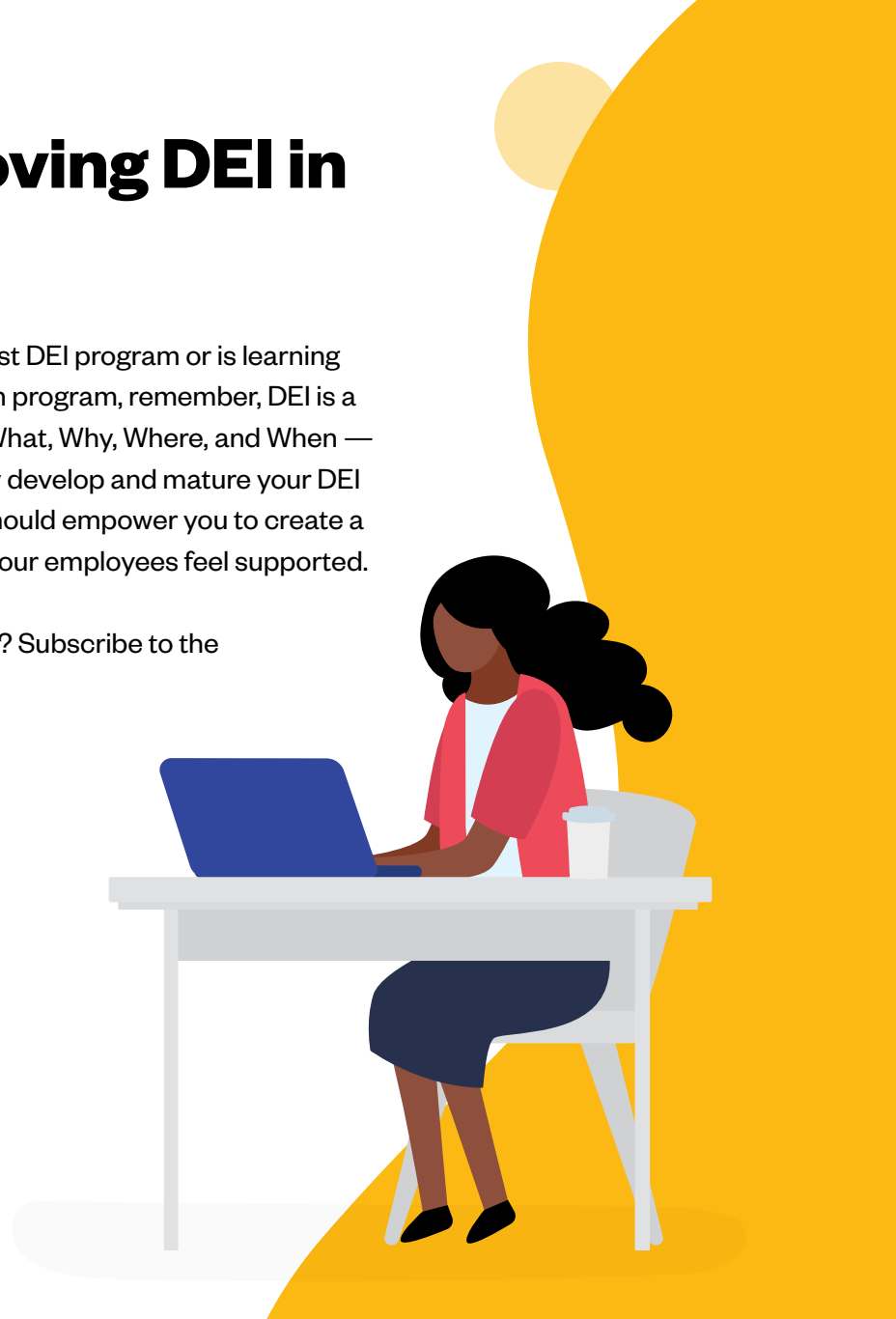
About Jobvite

Recruit with Purpose. Hire with Confidence.

Jobvite is leading the next wave of talent acquisition innovation with a candidate-centric end-to-end talent acquisition suite that helps companies engage candidates with meaningful experiences at the right time, in the right way, from first look to first day and beyond. Jobvite's marketing-first Talent Acquisition Suite weaves together AI and automation to increase recruiting speed, improve the quality of hire, and reduce costs. Jobvite is proud to serve thousands of customers across a wide range of industries including Ingram Micro, Schneider Electric, Premise Health, and Zappos.com. To learn more, visit **www.jobvite.com** or follow the company on social media @Jobvite.

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