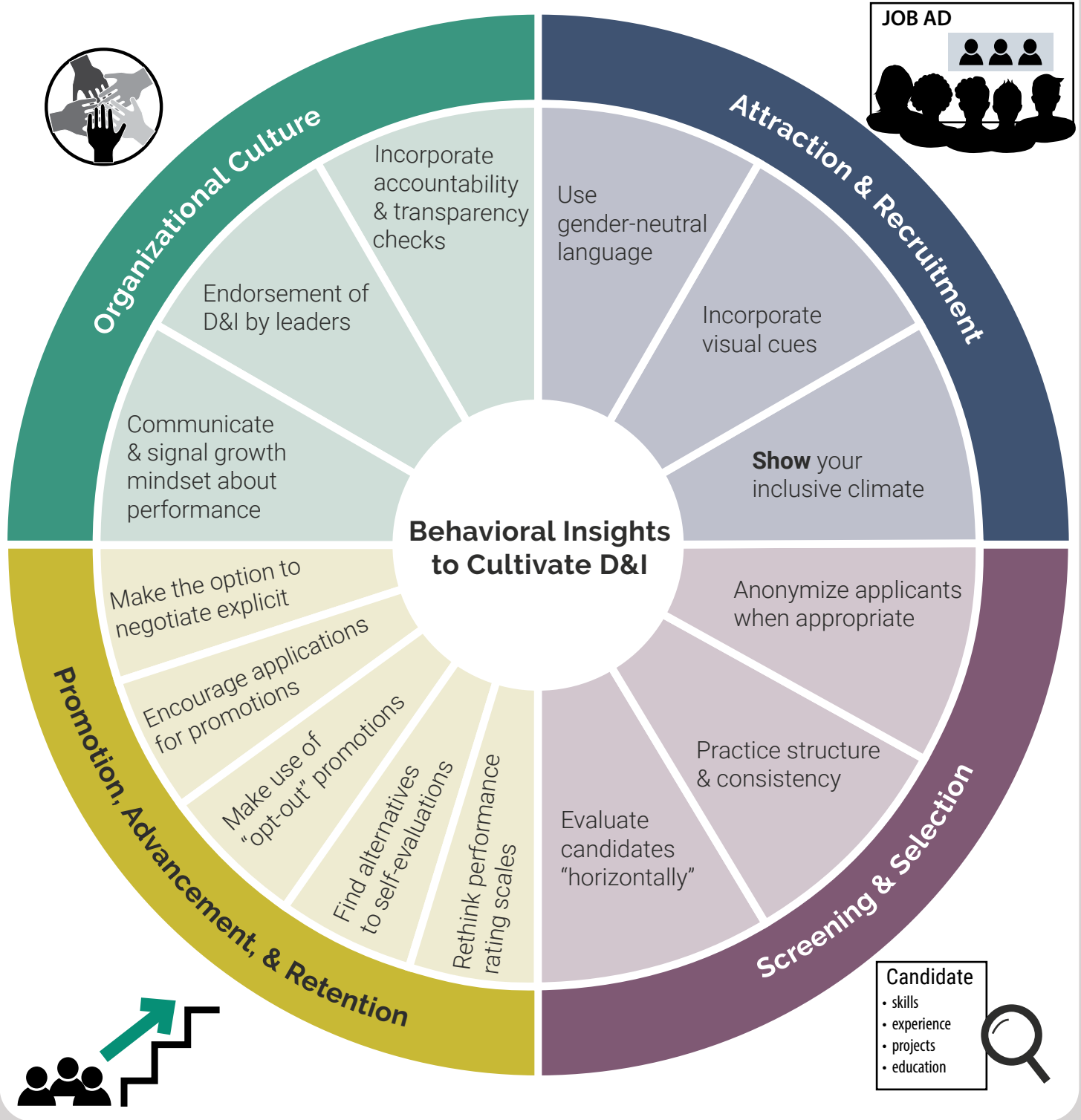


Applying Behavioral Insights to Cultivate Diversity & Inclusion

Managers are facing increased pressure & need to ensure **diversity & inclusion (D&I)** in their companies. Traditional initiatives focus on changing individuals, not systems,² & have found limited success^{3,4}. Below are some easy-to-implement **behavioral approaches** & **structural interventions** to improve D&I in an organization.^{1,5}



Applying Behavioral Insights to Cultivate Diversity & Inclusion

Attraction & recruitment¹

Use gender-neutral language

Male-dominated fields tend to use more **masculine language** in job ads (e.g., competitive, dominant)⁶, which can dissuade some applicants. **Neutral wording** can attract more women & people in general⁷

Incorporate visual cues

Include **pictures of diverse employees** in job ads⁸⁻¹⁰, but only if it is an **accurate depiction** of your workforce¹¹. If diversity is low, share future plans & milestones for diversifying

Be specific

- Specify required qualifications as concretely & objectively as possible
- Change default on job ads to include part-time, job share, hybrid, work from home or flexible working (& make sure those options are actually available)

JOB AD

- skills
- experience
- responsibilities
- compensation



Diversity statement



Show your inclusive climate

Diversity statements can attract minority groups¹²⁻¹⁴, but **need specifics** (i.e., numeric diversity goals¹⁵). Create with care & data, & test multiple versions. Make sure that the values espoused in these statements are enacted throughout your workplace culture

Screening & selection¹

Practice structure & consistency

Use the same questions & order for all applicants (reduces bias & better predicts job performance^{16,17}), & develop a scoring system & identify hiring criteria in advance¹⁸

Anonymize applicants when appropriate

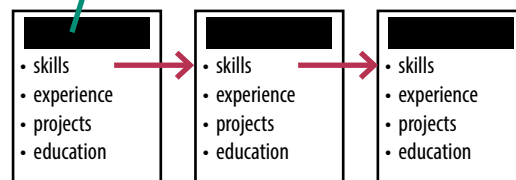
Hide identifying demographic information on applications, unless needed for a specific hiring goal¹⁹

Interview Questions

1. Tell me about yourself
2. Interest in position
3. Behavioral question
4. Analysis

Candidate Rubric

Score				
Criteria				



Evaluate applications as sets

Evaluate **"horizontally"** (question by question across all applicants) & where possible hire in groups³¹; comparing candidates together shifts focus to performance-based evaluations²⁰

Read more details about these approaches in the full chapter of in the book, *Behavioral Science in the Wild*¹.

Applying Behavioral Insights to Cultivate Diversity & Inclusion

Performance reviews

Rethink performance rating scales

~~10/10~~ → 6/6

Review workers on scales **out of 6**²¹ or **another number**; /10 or /100 are associated with perfection & brilliance²², & can lead to bias^{22,23}

Find alternatives to self-evaluations

Use **360 peer evaluation**^{24,25} of a worker's **specific behaviors** instead of self-evaluations²⁶



Promotions

Make use of "opt-out" promotions

Automatically consider **all staff** past a pre-determined qualification for promotion unless they opt-out; opt-in can result in a gender gap^{27,28}

Encourage staff to apply

Experiment with **explicitly encouraging employees** of different identities to apply for opportunities

Make the option to negotiate explicit

Frame negotiations as **asking** (neutral language)²⁹ & have clear information about what a good final agreement includes & what options are available

Promotion, advancement, & retention¹



Practice, communicate, & signal a growth mindset

Fixed mindsets can reduce collaboration, innovation & trust,³² & cause achievement gaps³³; communicate a growth mindset through **policies, norms, & leadership messages**



Endorse D&I & practice inclusive leadership

Without inclusive leadership, changing policies does not benefit underrepresented groups³⁴; **leaders need to actively endorse & enact D&I**



Create an environment where everyone:

- has a chance to speak at the table^{35,36}
- is valued for what they bring to the team³⁷
- is safe to make mistakes & share perspectives³⁸



Incorporate accountability & transparency checks

Include accountability & transparency checks in decisions like hiring & advancement^{39,40}

Treat D&I like any other initiative; include milestones, progress checks, & metrics

Organization culture¹

Small changes can have big results, especially when focusing on systems. Creating lasting D&I requires commitment, experimentation, & evaluation of interventions. Start small, but think big, from rehauling systems to on-the-ground protocols.

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How can we educate adults about implicit bias in a way that fosters mutual respect and creates a more inclusive culture in the workplace? Project RISE (Realizing Identity-Safe Environments) will harness our understanding of implicit bias, intergroup contact, & social identity threat to create a more "identity safe" workplace culture. Interventions designed to create identity-safe contexts have been shown to narrow the gender gap in academic performance. Project RISE aims to create positive cultural change for women & men in science and engineering by: (1) educating participants about implicit bias, (2) fostering supportive and respectful interactions between men and women in the organization, and (3) providing them with a clear understanding for how to combat bias. Learn more: successinstem.ca/projects/riose

About Engendering Success in STEM (ESS)

Engendering Success in STEM (ESS) is a research partnership focused on evidence-based solutions to foster positive working environments for people in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math). We bring together social scientists, STEM experts, and stakeholders in STEM industry and education to use an evidence-based approach to break down barriers people face on their pathway to success. Canada's Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council reviewed and funded this project.