

BEST PRACTICE JOB AD TIPS: HOW TO ATTRACT CULTURALLY DIVERSE EMPLOYEES TO YOUR WORKPLACE

Why aim for diversity in the workplace?

Building a diverse workforce makes both financial and social sense. As McKinsey & Company's January 2018 report "Delivering through Diversity" concludes, "Many successful companies regard I&D [Inclusivity and Diversity] as a source of competitive advantage. It makes sense that a diverse and inclusive employee base – with a range of approaches and perspectives – would be more competitive in a globalised economy."

A 2019 report commissioned by the SBS and authored by John O'Mahony from Deloitte Access Economics found that improving social inclusion could amount to a \$12.7 billion annual boost to the Australian economy, lifting the GDP growth, improving health and employment outcomes, increasing workplace productivity and reducing the cost of social services. The report estimates that increasing the share of women in senior leadership will boost Australia's GDP by \$5 billion through more creative and innovative workplaces. "Almost one third of Australians have come from overseas. There's over 270 different ancestries, LGBTIQ Australians, older Australians and Australians with a disability – all of that diversity can be an asset if we can be socially inclusive: which means more than being tolerant," says O'Mahony.

Keen to embrace diversity and help your business thrive? A basic starting point is to make your job advertisement more appealing for diverse audiences.

How a position is advertised is crucial to attracting the right people for the job. A good advertisement will focus exclusively on the essential skills and abilities needed to do the job. Only refer to personal characteristics, such as age, sex, marital status or race, if they are part of the genuine requirements of the job.



Here are a few tips to help you target English Second Language speakers in your job advertisements:

- Use simple, clear language. Think “help” instead of “assist”, and “follow” instead of “comply with”, for example. This list of common words and simple alternatives can help: <https://plainlanguage.gov/guidelines/words/use-simple-words-phrases/>
- Think about your choice of words: do not use words that would marginalise groups of people based on their culture, race, language, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability.
- Avoid jargon, idiomatic expressions and slang – many ESL speakers might not yet be familiar with industry-specific Australian jargon or slang terms.
- Avoid acronyms and “insider” language: to entry-level candidates, acronyms such as KPI, FWC, HR, WHS, KPS might seem like a foreign language, acting as a barrier to entry.
- Do not expect applicants to know every aspect of your business or company’s culture before they’ve had the chance to experience it.
- Consider adding testimonials (written or visual) from employees similar to your target applicant to your job descriptions, showing the reality of what it’s like working for your business.
- Consider adding links to or information about any internal business policies that support or may be of interest to the target applicant.
- Make it clear that becoming part of your business will provide structured, supported opportunities for mentorship, skills training, learning and career growth.
- Emphasise the family friendly benefits and policies your business offers and supports.
- Emphasise pay equity, and the wages/ salary package you offer.
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- Be open to appointing an employee that might not fit all the formal requirements, but has the potential to develop, and brings a new perspective to the workplace.
- Emphasise opportunities for taking part in and helping shape workplace culture and expectations.
- Focus on clearly describing transport options in the area of your business, and potential support when it comes to transport that might make it easier for Indigenous employees to reach work.
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- Encourage a visit to your business by potential applicants, and be open to informal communication before the interviewing process begins.
- Make sure to advertise your available position in media focused on Indigenous Australians, and through word-of-mouth in the local community.