



LESSON 2

AVOIDING DISCRIMINATION & ENSURING FAIRNESS: A PRACTICAL GUIDE

Introduction: From Theory to Practice

Understanding the law is the first step, but it is not enough. To truly create a fair and equitable hiring process, you need to translate that legal knowledge into practical, everyday actions. This lesson will provide you with a set of practical tips and best practices for avoiding discrimination and ensuring fairness at every stage of the hiring process.

Best Practices for a Fair and Inclusive Hiring Process

- **Write Inclusive Job Descriptions:** Use gender-neutral language and focus on essential job functions.
- **Use a Diverse Sourcing Strategy:** Actively seek out candidates from a wide range of backgrounds.
- **Conduct Structured, Behavioral-Based Interviews:** Ask every candidate the same set of questions and use a consistent scoring rubric.
- **Train Your Interviewers:** Provide training on unconscious bias and legal interviewing practices.

- **Be Mindful of Your Language:** Avoid making assumptions and stick to job-related questions.
- **Provide Reasonable Accommodations:** Engage in a good-faith process to provide accommodations for candidates with disabilities.
- **Document Everything:** Keep detailed records of your hiring process and decisions.

The “Front Page of the Newspaper” Test

When in doubt, use the “front page of the newspaper” test. Ask yourself: “If my hiring decision and the reasons for it were published on the front page of the newspaper tomorrow, would I be comfortable with it?” If the answer is no, then you should reconsider your decision.



ACTIVITY: AUDIT YOUR HIRING PROCESS FOR FAIRNESS

Time needed: 30 minutes

What You'll Do

Evaluate your organization's hiring process step-by-step. Identify where bias might creep in and create an action plan to fix it.

Why This Matters

Unfair hiring costs you:

- ☐ Best candidates pass you by
- ☐ Team diversity suffers
- ☐ Legal risks increase
- ☐ Employee turnover goes up

Example: One hotel removed degree requirements from job posts. Applications from qualified candidates increased 40%. They found great people they were accidentally excluding.

Instructions

Step 1: Map Your Current Process (5 minutes)

Download the audit worksheet.

List every step in your hiring process:

Example

- ☐ Post job ad
- ☐ Phone screen
- ☐ Reference check
- ☐ Review resumes
- ☐ In-person interview
- ☐ Make offer

Your process:

① _____	⑤ _____
② _____	⑥ _____
③ _____	⑦ _____
④ _____	_____

Step 2: Audit Each Step (15 minutes)

For each step, answer: Is this fair? Why or why not?

Use this fairness checklist:

JOB POSTING

- ☒ Focuses on actual job requirements, not "nice to haves"?
- ☒ Avoids coded language (like "digital native" = young)?
- ☒ States salary range?
- ☒ Posted in diverse places, not just one website?

Your score: ____/4

What needs fixing:

RESUME REVIEW

- ☒ Use same criteria for every resume?
- ☒ Remove names/photos before reviewing?
- ☒ Focus on skills, not school prestige?
- ☒ Give everyone equal time, not 6 seconds?

Your score: ____/4

What needs fixing:

SCREENING/INTERVIEWS

- ☒ Ask same questions to all candidates?
- ☒ Use structured interview format?
- ☒ Score answers with rubric, not gut feeling?
- ☒ Multiple interviewers involved?
- ☒ Interviewers trained on bias?

Your score: ____/5

What needs fixing:

DECISION-MAKING

- ☒ Hold structured huddle meeting?
- ☒ Discuss evidence, not assumptions?
- ☒ Someone challenges potential biases?
- ☒ Document reasons for decision?

Your score: ____/4

What needs fixing:

OVERALL PROCESS

- ✓ Track diversity metrics (who applies vs. who gets hired)?
- ✓ Ask candidates for feedback on experience?
- ✓ Review process annually?

Your score: ____/3

What needs fixing:

Step 3: Calculate Your Fairness Score (2 minutes)

Total points possible: 20

Your total score: ____/20

- 16-20: Strong! Focus on maintaining standards
- 11-15: Good foundation. Pick top 3 improvements
- 6-10: Needs work. Start with biggest gaps
- 0-5: Major overhaul needed. Prioritize now

Step 4: Create Your Action Plan (8 minutes)

Identify your TOP 3 problems:

①

②

③

For each problem, write ONE specific action you'll take this week:

Problem 1:

Action: (Make it specific with a deadline)

Example: "By Friday, create standardized interview questions for front desk role"

Your action:

Problem 2:

Action:

Problem 3:

Action:

Who needs to be involved?
(Manager, HR, team, training department?)

What might stop you?
(Time, budget, pushback?)

How will you overcome it?

Self-Check

- ✓ Did you audit every step honestly? _____
- ✓ Are your actions specific with deadlines? _____
- ✓ Can you actually do these actions this week? _____
- ✓ Will these changes make real impact? _____

Common Findings

Most organizations score low on:

- Removing names from resumes (easy fix!)
- Using scoring rubrics (create once, use forever)
- Tracking diversity metrics (what you don't measure, you can't improve)

Quick wins you can do today:

- Standardize your interview questions
- Create a simple scoring sheet
- Remove degree requirements that aren't essential

Submit Your Work

- Your process map (all steps listed)
- Fairness scores for each section
- Total score out of 20
- Top 3 problems identified
- 3 specific actions with deadlines

