Interviewer Biases

It is important for interviewers to understand and avoid biases that can affect the outcome of the interview. The following are some examples of interviewer bias:

Stereotyping

Forming generalized opinions about how people of a given sex, religion, or race appear, think, act, feel, or respond.

Inconsistency in Questioning

Asking different questions of applicants.

First Impression Error

Interviewer makes snap judgments and lets his/her first impression (positive or negative) cloud the entire interview.

Negative Emphasis

Rejecting an applicants on the basis of a small amount of negative information.

Halo/Horn Effect

The interviewer allows one strong point that he/she values highly to overshadow all other information.

Cultural Noise

The failure to recognize responses of an applicant that are socially acceptable rather than factual.

Nonverbal Bias

Undue emphasis is placed on nonverbal clues that are unrelated to job performance.

Contrast Effect

Strong applicants interviewed after weak ones may appear more qualified than they actually are because of the contrast.

Similar-To-Me Error

Picking applicants based on personal characteristics that they share with the interviewer rather than job-related criteria.

Central Tendency

This is the bias that happens when you’re holding out for the perfect candidate. You find fault with everyone, so you class everyone as “middle of the road” and keep looking for that elusive perfect candidate.

Diversity and Inclusion are a part of Cornell University’s heritage. We are a recognized employer and educator valuing AA/EEO, and we do not tolerate discrimination based on any protected characteristic, including race, ethnic or national origin, citizenship and immigration status, color, sex/gender, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions, age, creed, religion, actual or perceived disability (including persons associated with such a person), arrest and/or conviction record, military or veteran status, sexual orientation, gender expression and/or identity, an individual’s genetic information, domestic violence victim status, familial status, marital status, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, state, or local law. We also recognize a lawful preference in employment practices for Native Americans living on or near Indian reservations in accordance with applicable law.

Cornell University embraces diversity and seeks candidates who will contribute to a climate that supports students, faculty, and staff to all identities and backgrounds. We encourage individuals from underrepresented and/or marginalized identities to apply.

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