

HIRED THE WRONG PERSON FOR THE JOB? BLAME YOUR BRAIN

**Hiring a diverse pool
of talent is a process
of mind over matter**



*A diversity and inclusion event took place at
Harvey Nash, London. Click to watch.*

“Interviews should not be the gold standard in the hiring selection process,” says Paul Rein, business psychologist at Harvey Nash.

“People tend to think they are a better judge of character than they really are,” says Rein. “That being the case, when conducting interviews, they should be structured and as objective as possible rather than the interviewee just coming in for a chat.”

When it comes to hiring talent, a typical interview process could inhibit the selection of a diverse range of people.

Take, for example, a pool of candidates that have been shortlisted for a role. If there is only one woman or ethnic minority within that pool, statistically speaking, there is little chance of them being selected by the hiring manager. If there are at least two women in the pool, she is 79.14 times more likely to be hired, according to a study by Harvard Business Review.

Brain games

It all comes back to an understanding of heuristics — that is, knowing why the human brain makes the decisions it does.

Faced with the situation where there is only one woman in a pool of finalists, the prefrontal cortex part of the brain, where decisions are made, trying to be as efficient as possible, quickly comes to the conclusion that the anomaly — the lone female — is a deviation from the norm.

“That’s why having just one candidate who is different is futile,” says Rein.

**To discuss holding a round table or event around diversity and inclusion,
contact: akeesh.khokhar@harveynash.com or call 0207 3331553**

The discussion about latest unconscious bias learnings took place at the **latest Harvey Nash Diversity and Inclusion event**, which took place at Harvey Nash headquarters in London. HR managers from the banking and finance industries participated in the breakfast event and open debate.

Hinging around the key question: Are your selection processes hindering diversity? It was also revealed that recruiters and hiring managers often consider factors such as a candidate's years of experience and the degree obtained, despite this not necessarily being a good predictor of performance. And yet, criteria like this are often requirements in job descriptions.



A discussion takes place at the Harvey Nash diversity and inclusion event. Click to watch.

Notably, a number of professional services companies such as EY and PwC have removed degree classifications from their selection criteria.

“Instead, we are seeing a lot of clients asking candidates to take part in job audition tests or to submit mock work samples as part of the interview process”, said Akeesh Khokhar, senior consultant at Harvey Nash.

Consider that 50 percent of white people in the UK go to university compared to just 20 percent of minority groups and we see instant discrimination when a degree is a factor for hiring someone, explains Rein. In many jobs, there is little evidence to demonstrate a relationship between having a degree and a person's job performance.

“An understanding of unconscious bias and of a fair selection process should be done from leadership down — it's shouldn't just come from HR,” says Rein.

Sarah Hansen, talent acquisition from Moody agrees. “We are educating hiring managers. It takes a lot of education but we are sharing this information.”

Diversity drives profits

As a business psychologist at Harvey Nash, Rein regularly shares his expertise internally with the company's recruitment consultants and directors, and at open debates with external clients and partners.

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Harvey Nash, the global professional and executive recruitment group with 2,500 employees in 36 countries, was the first recruitment firm in the UK to receive the National Equality Standard (NES) accreditation, a recognised standard of clear Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) criteria against which companies are assessed.

The recruitment company are encouraging diversity and inclusion through the hiring process, not least as a business standard to redress workplace biases but backed by data that diversity leads to better profits.

Companies with more culturally and ethnically diverse executive teams are 33 percent more likely to see better-than-average profits, according to McKinsey's Delivering Through Diversity report, published in 2018.

“Ultimately, it is through thorough considerations of the hiring process and of diversity and inclusions that we can bring out the benefits of diversity in all its forms,” says Rein.



Paul Rein, business psychologist at Harvey Nash, shares his expertise on diversity and inclusion in the hiring process. Click to watch the video.

To arrange an on-site or off-site discussion/event around diversity and inclusion with Harvey Nash business psychologists and recruitment consultants, email [Akeesh Khokhar](mailto:akeesh.khokhar@harveynash.com) on akeesh.khokhar@harveynash.com or call 0207 3331553

