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Director of Employment  
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Manager of Diversity

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## DIVERSE WORKFORCE: GOOD BUSINESS SENSE

Did you know?

- According to the United States Census Bureau fifty-percent of children under the age of five are categorized as children of color.
- Women make up over sixty percent of the student body at many colleges and universities.
- Twenty-five percent of the U.S. workforce qualifies under the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Five to ten percent of the population is estimated to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.

It is estimated that by 2045 the U.S. population will increase by 50 percent, and 90 percent of that growth will come from the minority community. Diversity is becoming an increasingly important workforce issue as the nation's population continues to shift. All this, coupled with the prospect of massive numbers of baby-boomers retiring, gives employers an opportunity to bolster workforce diversity.

Building a diverse workforce is a strategy that makes good business sense. Case Western Reserve University must embrace emerging demographic changes and focus on attracting a variety of constituents who can positively impact our institution. To effectively serve our ever-changing student body, alumni, and community, we need a diverse workforce.



Such a workforce can provide valuable insight and relate to our varying constituencies. Many institutions boast that their diverse workforce facilitates their understanding of various groups giving them an advantage over the competition.

But developing a diverse workforce is easier said than done. Many groups are grossly under-represented in strategic and influential positions in American institutions, according to statistics from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. In addition, recruiting and retention are big hurdles in diversity management.

Case Western Reserve University does not view diversity as just another program; it's how we do business. Like many other successful organizations, we have adopted diversity management as part of our mainstream strategy.

*continued on page 4*

The Employment Office and the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity coordinated this issue of *HRQuarterly*.

## STAFF EMPLOYMENT

Employment Office, located in Crawford Hall, room 304, is responsible for administering the employment process of Case staff (i.e., non-faculty) employees; fulfilling the staff employment needs of Case by committing to and complying with all federal and state statutes enforced by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the U.S. Department of Labor; following outlined hiring procedures for the purpose of serving in the best interest of the university and providing a high quality, professional service to its community; and maintaining the strictest of confidentiality with the university, its employees, and applicants.

### STAFF

Karma Topor, Director

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JuWanda Rowell, Assistant

368-4504

Gayle Musiek, Recruiter

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Elaine Barney, Recruiting Assistant

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JuWanda Rowell, Recruiting Assistant

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Jill Grauel, Recruiter

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Joseph Camino, Recruiting Assistant

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Cynthia Davy, Receptionist

368-6964

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND DIVERSITY

Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity, located in Adelbert Hall, room 310, is responsible for providing support and guidance and promoting equitable and fair treatment in employment, education and other aspects of campus life including the development, implementation, and coordination of all equal employment opportunity, affirmative action, and diversity programs to support the university's commitment to increased representation and advancement of members of all protected groups at all levels of employment and academic endeavor.

### STAFF

Erica Merritt, Manager of Diversity

365-4786

Jeanette Thomas, Equal Employment Specialist

368-5371

Shirley Mosley, Department Assistant

368-8877

FROM THE DESK OF...

# Karma Topor

DIRECTOR OF EMPLOYMENT AND COMPENSATION

## Legal Case Study in Age Discrimination for Supervisors

The following case study is based on *Van Voorhis v. Hillsborough County Board of Commissioners*.

Molly was approached by the HR Manager regarding a recent hiring experience. She said, "My statement was taken out of context. It's not what I meant."

The HR Manager replied, "I know you didn't mean it the way it came out, but you can understand how someone might take it differently."

"Is this going to be a big deal?" asked Molly nervously.

"Unfortunately, it might. Eric is suing us for age discrimination. He claims that he was the most qualified person for the position, yet we gave it to someone who was younger and less qualified. I have to admit that it doesn't look good that two people overheard you say you didn't want to offer the job to an older worker," said the HR Manager.

Molly declared, "It was an off-the-cuff comment."

"That may be so," said the HR Manager. "Remember, though, that halfway into the hiring process, you lowered the years of experience required to get the job. Why did you do that?"

"I didn't like the caliber of the people we were getting," contended Molly. "I wanted to see if a change in criteria would bring in more folks."

"I understand your thinking, but you can see how a younger person might benefit from a lowering of the experience level," said the HR Manager.

Molly asked, "How was Eric harmed? Sure, he didn't get the job, but it's not like we fired him or anything."

### Did the company win?

In the real court case, the company lost. The court found sufficient evidence the worker wasn't hired because of his age, and that a jury should decide. Companies seldom find a jury sympathetic to their points of view and usually wind up in expensive settlements in these types of situations. The court said the supervisor's statement that she didn't want to hire an older worker could be evidence of discrimination. Coupled with the fact that the company lowered the level of experience required for the position, it appeared that the supervisor wanted primarily younger candidates. It was determined that the older worker was harmed by the possible discrimination, since he didn't get the higher paying job that he was seeking.

FROM THE DESK OF...

# Erica Merritt

MANAGER OF DIVERSITY

## The Generations at Work

The average organization has four generations working side by side, Traditionalists 1922-1945, Baby Boomers 1946-1964, Generation X 1965-1980 and the Millennials 1981-2000. Each generation brings with it a multitude of talents that can be leveraged in the workplace. Information flows in all directions in a learning organization. The most successful leaders find a way to ensure that members from each generation are heard. They recognize that no one has all the answers. This appreciation of diversity allows each group to contribute and be a part of the growth of a department or organization.

If you are interested in learning about the values, work ethic, communication and leaderships styles that impact each generation there are several books available on the subject including *When Generations Collide: Who They Are. Why They Clash. How to Solve the Generational Puzzle at Work* by Lynne C. Lancaster & David Stillman and *Managing the Generation Mix, 2nd Edition* by Bruce Tulgan.

# *President's Award for Staff Excellence*

**PRESIDENT BARBARA SNYDER** invites you to nominate a non-faculty Case staff member for the President's Award for Staff Excellence. This annual award honors up to three staff members whose outstanding contributions to our campus culture have a transformational effect on university colleagues, students, or visitors with whom they come into contact.

Nominations may come from any university staff or faculty member. The honorees will each receive a \$1,000 cash award and their names will be engraved on a plaque that is currently on display in Tomlinson Gallery. The recipients will be recognized at the Staff Service Awards Luncheon in June.

## *Criteria for Nomination*

1. Nominee must be a permanent, non-faculty staff member with a minimum of five years of university service.
2. Nominee must exhibit qualities that are consistent with a university striving to create a learning environment that has a transformational impact on all who teach, learn, discover, and work here so they are prepared and engaged to serve society.
3. Should a nominee be a current member of the SAC Staff Recognition Committee, he or she will become inactive during the selection process.
4. Nominee must not be a previous recipient of the award.

For more information, contact:  
SAC Staff Recognition Committee  
c/o Patsy Harris  
Materials Science and Engineering  
White Building, Room 312  
LC: 7204

Consider the following tools for attracting and retaining a more diverse workforce into our institution and facilitating their becoming thriving members of the Case Western Reserve University community.

## 1. PRESENCE

To recruit people and make Case Western Reserve University the destination of choice we need to be hands on. Many institutions sponsor events for Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions, Professional Women's Organizations and LGBT groups. But if there is no relationship at the local level, then national sponsorship won't help attract the talent you need. Sponsoring special events like parades, Little League games or concerts not only raises awareness about an organization, but also lends credibility to local efforts and lets the community know that the employer has genuine interest. Developing relationships in diverse communities also puts employers in direct contact with influential leaders, which can promote a positive image.

Get involved with the local community and share the opportunities Case Western Reserve University has to offer potential employees. Ask current employees or others within the targeted community to spread the word. Word of mouth advertising is an effective way to attract talent.

Connect with the community by sitting on the board of directors, participating in fundraisers, and speaking to diverse constituents.

To establish Case Western Reserve University as the employer of choice, we must build trust by consistently demonstrating a commitment to diversity.

## 2. TARGETED ADVERTISING

In addition to placing an ad in the Sunday newspaper, consider sharing job openings with professional groups, such as MotivAsians or the YWCA of Greater Cleveland. There are professional groups for just about every industry, including

health care, financial, law, etc. Employers can also rely on public relations to build a strong reputation among diverse groups. Create positive noise by tapping key media like *Al Sahafa*, a monthly Middle Eastern newspaper. Let these publications know when someone from their community has been hired or promoted into a strategic position.

## 3. TALENT RETENTION

Employees should be trained on issues like communicating effectively and conflict management. Training should provide pragmatic skills for enhancing group dynamics and helping workers to draw out the talent and creativity in one another.

Training and education initiatives should be accompanied by deeper workforce management policies. One way to improve employee development within an organization is to hold employees in influential positions accountable for how they manage talent.

A big source of frustration and a contributor to turnover for people of color, individuals with disabilities and other diverse groups is a lack of career advancement. It takes women and people of color, for example, longer to be promoted than their white, male counterparts. Regular communication and formal feedback is a good way to let all employees know where they stand and what they need to do to move up.

## 4. MENTORING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Research has proven that people who have mentors and strong professional networks are more successful, make more money and are more loyal to their employers. To successfully hire and retain diverse workers, managers must encourage mentoring and professional development.

Mentoring provides the one-on-one coaching and access that these groups need to climb the career ladder. Additionally, professional development helps people achieve confidence and leverage themselves in the marketplace. That ultimately can

differentiate them from their peers when it is time for promotion and advancement.

Mentoring programs not only lead to better group dynamics by blending people of different backgrounds and levels of experience, but they also aid in the development of diverse groups, some of whom might not otherwise have access to higher ups. Mentors can offer valuable advice about navigating successfully within an organization. Mentoring programs also give employees an opportunity to showcase their skills and voice ideas—which could help when they seek a promotion.

## 5. WATCH OUT FOR MICRO-INEQUITIES

Subtle forms of exclusion occur in offices today that over time create dissension and disengagement of employees. This subtle form of discrimination is termed "micro-inequities." An example of this phenomenon would be leaving a diverse person off a distribution list or not including them on key projects. These are small oversights that, over time, tell the diverse employee he or she is not valued. Ensuring that everyone, especially managers is properly trained to recognize how their biases impact their interactions is an effective way to minimize micro-inequities. Another way to decrease micro-inequities is to elicit feedback from colleagues and staff. However, one must be committed to exploring whatever personal biases they might uncover.

## HOW PREPARED IS CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY FOR THE FUTURE?

In an effort to meet the university's future staffing needs, it's imperative that we develop relationships with these key demographics today. The sooner we work toward that end as an institution, the better the chance that Case Western Reserve University will continue to attract and retain top talent from across the country and around the world. If you would like specific ideas about how to reach diverse constituents, contact [karma.topor@case.edu](mailto:karma.topor@case.edu) or [erica.merritt@case.edu](mailto:erica.merritt@case.edu).

# TOP 10 INTERVIEWING MISTAKES



Interviewing job candidates is an essential part of developing an efficient and productive staff. As the interviewer, you need to figure out in a short period of time the competence of the candidate and whether he or she is a good fit.

While the interviewing process isn't overly complicated, these 10 common mistakes should be avoided to ensure that you will get as much useful information during the interview as possible.

## LACK OF PREPARATION

As the hiring manager, you have to prepare for the interview as much as the interviewee. Familiarize yourself with the job description, skill requirements and other expectations before you begin. Look over the resume of the candidate in order to design questions that are most relevant.

## BEING TOO STRICT ON TIME CONSTRAINTS

Don't go into an interview under a tight schedule. Give yourself plenty of time to actually concentrate on the interview. Interviews are unpredictable. In some cases, you know quickly that an applicant isn't right for a position, or you may need to spend more time than you expected assessing an interviewee. The best practice

is to let the interview itself dictate how long it should last. Most importantly, you should not take any phone calls, other than emergencies, while conducting an interview.

## CREATING AN OVERLY FORMAL ATMOSPHERE

Interviewing for a job can be stressful, so try to reduce the tension. If you are interviewing someone who is uncomfortable, you will have a more difficult time assessing their ability to fit the job. It is a good idea to make small talk, until the candidate is at ease.

## LOSING CONTROL OF THE INTERVIEW

Sometimes an interviewee will attempt to take control of the conversation, trying to address certain issues and avoiding others. Allowing this to happen will result in an unclear picture of the individual. Have an outline of what you would like to accomplish during the interview, and do not let the conversation drift too far from those goals.

## TALKING TOO MUCH

Although you want to provide the candidate with background information on the institution and job description, you shouldn't talk so much that you fail to

learn about the interviewee. Keep in mind that the interviewing process is about the candidate.

## NOT BEING COMPLETELY HONEST

Explain the job by giving specific and accurate details regarding the job description and realistic expectations. Don't make promises about upward mobility, pay increases, and other possibilities. If the work is tedious and the hours are long, say so. Sugarcoating any aspect of the job hurts both the institution and the employee, as it will lead to a lack of trust, dissension, and possible turnover.

## AVOIDING THE TOUGH QUESTIONS

Sometimes an interviewer needs to ask tough questions in order to assess the abilities of a candidate and find the best person for the position. A difficult question is usually an important question, so it's vital to broach these subjects and get a good understanding of the response.

## PRYING TOO DEEPLY

Even though you want to know virtually everything there is to know about the person you are interviewing, not everything is allowable in the interview process. For example, it's illegal to ask questions concerning age, marital status, race, and religion.

## NOT CONSIDERING THE BIG PICTURE

Be sure to consider how the individual will coexist with your current staff. The right person will not only meet the qualifications, but also complement your team.

## RUSHING THE HIRING PROCESS

It may take many interviews to find the right person for the job. Don't rush into choosing someone just because they have a decent interview. It's better to take the time to interview several candidates rather than hire someone who is just adequate. If you make a bad hiring decision, you may be repeating the hiring process before long.

# AVOIDING INTERVIEW BIAS

There are several problems that interviewers run into when they allow biases to get in the way. These often include:

**Stereotyping:** Developing an opinion that is positive or negative about how people of a particular gender, religion, race, sexual orientation, or other characteristic think, act, respond, or would perform the job.

**Inconsistency in questioning:** Asking different questions of each candidate will lead to a skewed assessment of who would best perform the job. Questions designed to get particular information about a specific candidate are only appropriate in the context of a core set of questions asked of all candidates.

**First impressions:** An interviewer might make a quick decision about someone based on their first impression - positive or negative - that clouds the entire interview. For example, letting a candidate's heavy

accent or a visible disability take priority over their knowledge, skills, or abilities.

**Halo/horn effect:** The "halo" effect occurs when an interviewer allows one strong point about the candidate to overshadow or have an effect on everything else. For instance, knowing someone went to a particular university might be looked upon favorably. Everything the applicant says during the interview is seen in this light. ("Well, she left out an important part of the answer to that question, but, she must know it, she went to XYZ University). The "horn" effect is just the opposite - allowing one weak point to influence everything else.

**Cultural noise:** Since the candidate wants the job, she or he will provide the words the interviewer wants to hear, even if those words are not entirely truthful. For example, an applicant might say that he has no problem reporting to someone

younger, or working in a team setting, when this is not the case. Interviewers should prepare questions that probe for specific examples and stay away from questions that elicit "yes" or "no" answers.

**Nonverbal bias:** Undue emphasis might be placed on nonverbal cues that have nothing to do with the job, such as loudness or softness of voice, or the type of handshake given.

**Contrast effect:** Strong(er) candidates who interview after weak(er) ones may appear more qualified than they are because of the contrast between the two. Note taking during the interview and a reasonable period of time between interviews may alleviate this common problem.

Partially adapted from the Society for Human Resources Professionals 2006

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview questions should be job-related. Federal and state laws prohibit employers from asking certain questions that are not related to the job. Hiring supervisors should consult with a Human Resources representative regarding appropriate interview questions and guidance to designing an interview.

### Illegal Interview Questions

Supervisors should not ask about any of the following, because an employment decision to not hire a candidate based on any one of them is discriminatory: race, color, sex, religion, national origin, birthplace, age, disability, or marital/family status.

### Types of Questions

#### Subject: NATIONALITY

**Illegal:** Are you a U.S. citizen? Where were you/your parents born? What is your "native tongue?"

**Legal:** Are you authorized to work in the United States? What languages do you read, speak or write fluently? (This question is okay, as long as this ability is relevant to the performance of the job.)

#### Subject: AGE

**Illegal:** How old are you? When did you graduate from college? What is your birthday?

**Legal:** Are you over the age of 18?

#### Subject: Marital/Family status

**Illegal:** What's your marital status? Who do you live with? Do you plan to have a family? When? How many kids do you have? What are your child care arrangements?

**Legal:** Would you be willing to relocate if necessary? Travel is an important part of the job. Would you be willing to travel as needed by the job (This question is okay, as long as all applicants for the job are asked it.) This job requires overtime occasionally. Would you be able and willing to work overtime as necessary? (Again, this question okay as long as all applicants for the job are asked it.)

#### Subject: AFFILIATIONS

**Illegal:** To what clubs or social organizations do you belong?

**Legal:** Do you belong to any professional or trade groups or other organizations that you consider relevant to your ability to perform this job?

#### Subject: PERSONAL

**Illegal:** How tall are you? How much do you weigh?

**Legal:** Are you able to lift a 50-pound weight

and carry it 100 yards, as that is part of the job? (Questions about height and weight are not acceptable unless minimum standards are essential to the safe performance of the job.)

#### Subject: DISABILITIES

**Illegal:** Do you have any disabilities? Please complete the following medical history. Have you had any recent or past illnesses or operations? If yes, list and give dates. What was the date of your last physical exam? How's your family's health? When did you lose your eyesight?

**Legal:** Are you able to perform the essential functions of this job with or without reasonable accommodations? (This question is okay if the interviewer thoroughly described the job.)

#### Subject: ARREST RECORD

**Illegal:** Have you ever been arrested?

**Legal:** Have you ever been convicted of a crime? (The crime should be reasonably related to the performance of the job in question.)

#### Subject: MILITARY

**Illegal:** If you've been in the military, were you honorably discharged? In what branch of the Armed Forces did you serve?

**Legal:** What type of training or education did you receive in the military?

## TIPS FOR WORKING EFFECTIVELY WITH OTHERS

**When bringing a problem to your colleagues have some possible solutions in mind.** Avoid griping. Providing solutions will help to earn the respect of co-workers and bosses.

**Avoid the blame game.** This will alienate coworkers, supervisors, and reporting staff. You may need to identify who was involved in a problem, however publicly identifying and blaming others for failures will help you earn enemies. It may also appear that you are not taking responsibility for your involvement in the matter.

**Verbal and nonverbal communication are extremely important.** If you talk down to your colleagues, use sarcasm, or sound nasty, the other employees will hear you. This will not bode well for your ability to cope and manage your emotions.

**Never blindside a coworker, boss, or reporting staff person.** You should always give individuals the courtesy of being the first to know that there is a problem. Ambushing your coworkers or staff will never build effective work relationships and will do you more harm than good in the end.

**Keep your commitments.** When people work in teams, functions are interconnected. If you fail to meet deadlines and commitments, you affect the work of other employees. If for some reason, you are unable to keep a commitment let those involved know as soon as possible.

**Share credit for accomplishments, ideas, and contributions.** Most of us do not perform major feats without the help of others. If you are a manager, how many of the great ideas you promote were

contributed by staff members? Always find the time to thank, reward, recognize, and specify contributions of the people who help you succeed. Also, let them know individually on a consistent basis that they are appreciated, so that when you thank them in front of others your comments come across as genuine.

**Help other employees find their greatness.** Each employee in your organization has valuable talents, skills, and experience. You don't have to be a manager to motivate and encourage others. Compliment, recognize, and praise the contributions of others.

SAVE THE DATE  
SERVICE AWARD BRUNCH  
10 AND 25 YEAR EMPLOYEES  
JUNE 11, 2008

### RECRUITMENT RESOURCES

The American Association of Women Accountants  
[www.aswacleveland.org](http://www.aswacleveland.org)

The Cleveland Leadership Center  
[www.cleveleads.org](http://www.cleveleads.org)

The Gay & Lesbian Medical Association  
[www.glma.org](http://www.glma.org)

The National Association of Gay and Lesbian Scientists  
[www.noglstp.org](http://www.noglstp.org)

The National Black MBA Association  
[www.clevelandblackmbas.org](http://www.clevelandblackmbas.org)

The National Business & Disability Council  
[www.nbdc.com](http://www.nbdc.com)

The National Society of Hispanic MBAs  
[www.cleveland.nshmba.org](http://www.cleveland.nshmba.org)

MotivAsians  
[hwww.motivasians.org](http://hwww.motivasians.org)

The Urban League  
[www.ulcleveland.org](http://www.ulcleveland.org)

The YWCA of Greater Cleveland  
[www.ywca.org](http://www.ywca.org)

Workforce50  
[www.workforce50.com](http://www.workforce50.com)

## VOLUNTEERS

Individuals who are not employees may still perform services for the university as volunteers. Supervisors may not accept the services of a volunteer to fill a staff position, including individuals who are not citizens of the United States or lawful permanent residents to fill previously paid positions or positions that may become a paid position.

Volunteers are individuals who donate time and services with no expectation of a return in goods, services, compensation, or benefits. They may provide services to Case for specific reasons and for limited times after they sign a Volunteer Waiver and Release Form with the Employment Office of the Human Resources Department and attend appropriate DOES training. No volunteer under the age of 18 will be able to volunteer in any position deemed hazardous by Human Resources and DOES or under guidelines of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act.

## SPRING DIVERSITY WORKSHOP SERIES

### **Not Just Skin Deep: The Psychological Construction of Race**

Erica Merritt, CDP & Shirley Mosley, MSW  
12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. ~ Adelbert 352  
Wednesday, March 12, 2008

This session will discuss racial identity theory and its impact on self concept and intergroup relations. Participants will develop the competency to track their own identity development and explore the development of other racial groups.

### **The Unspoken Culture of Gender**

John Clochesy, Ph.D.  
12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. ~ Nord 310  
Thursday, March 20, 2008

This session will explore differences in cross-gender communication. Participants will be provided with tools to effectively manage communication differences in the workplace.

### **Taking the “Dis” out of Disability**

Erica Merritt, CDP & Lesley Brown  
12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. ~ Adelbert 352  
Wednesday, March 26, 2008

Explore and dispel myths and stereotypes associated with individuals who have disabilities. Participants will be provided with a framework for ensuring respect and understanding when working with people who have disabilities.

### **Making Whiteness Visible**

Erica Merritt, CDP  
12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. ~ Toepfer Room,  
Adelbert Hall  
Tuesday, April 22, 2008\*  
Thursday, April 24, 2008\*

\* Registrants are encouraged to attend both sessions

View Dr. Shakti Butler’s groundbreaking film “Making Whiteness Visible” which explores the concept of white privilege through the lens of several white anti-

racism advocates such as Wellesley College professor, Peggy McIntosh and anti-racism author & lecturer Tim Wise.

### **Workshops by Request**

The Office of Equal Opportunity & Diversity is available to design and conduct workshops for your department or unit. For more information please contact Erica Merritt at 216-368-4786 at [diversity@case.edu](mailto:diversity@case.edu).

### **Free DiversityInc Subscription!!!!!!!**

As a courtesy to the CWRU community, Presidential Advisory Council on Minorities & The Office of Equal Opportunity & Diversity are providing free online subscriptions to DiversityInc. To access your subscription to the country’s premiere diversity publication visit: [www.diversityinc.com/case](http://www.diversityinc.com/case)



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