

# College graduates are interviewing for jobs, and they have a lot of questions for you

*To recruit and retain new graduates, employers must have systems that promote workplace equity and inclusion as well as career advancement.*

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Planning to interview members of the Class of 2022 for job openings? They may be the ones asking the tough questions, not you.

Make sure you've prepared your company's equity and inclusion résumé. Practice your elevator pitch so you can describe what your organization is specifically doing to mitigate inequities and injustices in the workplace. You should also be ready to discuss solutions to rectify systemic racism, the gender wage gap, underrepresentation of people of color in C-suites, hiring practices that disadvantage trans and nonbinary applicants, and other workplace inequities.

To successfully recruit – and more important, retain – new graduates, employers must demonstrate programs and support systems that promote workplace equity and foster the long-term success of students who come to work for them. Today's students who are preparing to enter the workforce won't accept anything less, and employers risk losing a generation of talented workers by being unaware of changing times.

In our career development efforts at Suffolk University, we are working to foster the skills of equity and inclusion with the same intensity as skills like building a professional network, writing a solid résumé or preparing for an interview. All first-year students now take credit career readiness classes, where one of the first exercises asks students to evaluate how their own identities will impact their careers, and how they can create more equity and opportunity for people who have been historically marginalized.

## **What's your commitment to diversity?**

Questions of equity are infused in our one-on-one advising conversations, our events and workshops, and throughout the Suffolk curriculum. In addition to researching companies based on the salaries they are offering, our students are also looking at those organizations' commitment to promoting, supporting and retaining diverse candidates.

The class of 2022, and those that follow, will enter the workforce with a new perspective on work, one that has the potential to transform workplaces and industries.

**Teens are missing out on jobs.** And your state could be to blame.

Early-adopting workplaces are getting in line. A recent study by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) spotlighted "Equity & Inclusion" as one of eight competencies employers are most actively searching for in candidates. Increasingly, we are hearing from recruiters and potential employers looking for resources to help them improve their processes for recruiting, hiring and supporting a diverse candidate pool.

But far too many employers have given it too little thought, and they are the ones in danger of falling flat on their face in those job interviews with today's graduates.

## **Grads are prepared. Is your company?**

A sampling of the questions we ask prospective recruiters: Have you considered whether your job description and application process are biased? Do you have equitable promotion tracks and leadership opportunities? Is there salary transparency? Are your employee affinity groups accessible and diverse? Is the day-to-day language you use to communicate with your employees inclusive?

**Columnist Rex Huppke:** Elon Musk should take over Twitter, shut it down and fire the social media giant into space

To help employers successfully recruit and retain new college graduates, we created an Employer Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Toolkit that helps organizations assess and implement best practices in recruiting, hiring, retaining and growing diverse talent.

Our ultimate goal is to prepare our students to succeed in meaningful careers with employers who value equity, diversity and lifelong learning. Will your company be one of them?

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