Assessing Employers Through an EDII Lens and Your Own Unique Priorities

As you consider potential employers, you are likely interested in assessing what your experience may be like should you choose to pursue employment with them. This tipsheet provides some ideas for how you can ask questions and conduct research to help you assess which organizations meet your expectations for the type of work environment you want to be a part of, and how employers are taking active steps and advancing and integrating equity, diversity, inclusion, and indigeneity in their organizations.

During your job search, you will have opportunities to ask questions in various contexts and at various stages, including:

- at a career fair
- at an employer information session
- when networking
- at information interviews
- at job interviews
- over LinkedIn or other online platforms

Here are questions whose answers may help you better understand an organization's commitment to and prioritization of creating an inclusive and equitable work environment:

➢ Does the organization have a clear mission, vision, or policy statement that includes diversity and inclusion on its website?

➢ Do the organization's website and social media platforms demonstrate diversity and inclusion values being put into action? Do present and past employees' professional experience match the values the organization espouses?

➢ Does the organization note on their job descriptions that applications from underrepresented/equity- deserving groups are highly encouraged?
   o Do they provide opportunities to self-identify, if one chooses to?

➢ Does the organization actively engage with diverse groups?
   o Do they attend career fairs and on-campus events to interact with diverse students? Participation and support of these events can be an indicator of their values and level of inclusivity.
   o Do they offer targeted scholarships or other supports targeted to students from equity- deserving backgrounds?

- ➤ Are there employees of equity-deserving groups who are part of the organization already and how have they described their experiences there?
    - o Are alternative perspectives and strategies welcomed and encouraged?
    - o What is the workplace climate like?

- ➤ Has the organization demonstrated positive change and concrete steps towards creating an inclusive and equitable work environment through all aspects of the employee experience – recruitment, training and development, pay, benefits, promotions, succession planning, etc. ?

- ➤ Are there employee resource groups (ERGs), employee affinity groups, or other employee-driven committees/groups for equity-deserving groups in the workplace and/or for employees in the specific jobs you are most interested in?

- ➤ Does the organization regularly track and publish their workforce demographics? What is the representation in managerial, supervisory, or executive positions?

- ➤ Are they transparent about their compensation practices? Do they provide benefits and accommodations that reflect the needs of a diverse workforce (e.g. paid sick leave, parental/caregiver leave, cultural leave, flexible scheduling, transition support, prayer room)

- ➤ Has the organization celebrated, participated in, and/or tangibly supported initiatives, services, and events that showcase and celebrate diversity and inclusion?

- ➤ Are there any aspects of the organization that may be unique or specific to it, that you would like to know more about?

As you review your research and responses to the above considerations, remember that your decision is uniquely yours. Everyone will weigh values and aspects of an organization in a personal way and will make their own decision, often different from others' decisions. We are here to help you seek out the information you need to make the best educated choices for yourself. Do not hesitate to book an appointment with a Career Counsellor if you are interested in further discussion and support.

Further Resources

Reviewing published rankings of employers can be a good first step to help you assess an organization's values of and commitment to diversity and inclusion but should not replace the other types of research you do on your own using your own assessment criteria.

Canada's Top 100 Diversity Employers and Canada's Best Diversity Employers

DiversityInc Top 50 list

Forbes Canada's Best Employers

Labour Program: Changes to the Canada Labour Code and other acts to better protect workplaces

References

https://www.randstad.ca/job-seeker/career-resources/workplace-culture/how-to-recognize-an-inclusive-employer/

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Career Spotlight: Diversity | TalentEgg Career Incubator
Career Resources – Sexual & Gender Diversity Office (utoronto.ca)