

GIVING PREFERENCE TO THE CANDIDATE BECAUSE YOU HAVE A LOT OF COMMONALITIES, LIKE HAVING SIMILAR HOBBIES

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IN THE COMPETITIVE LANDSCAPE OF HIRING, RECRUITERS AND HIRING MANAGERS OFTEN SEEK CANDIDATES WHO NOT ONLY POSSESS THE NECESSARY SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS BUT ALSO ALIGN WITH THE COMPANY CULTURE AND TEAM DYNAMICS. ONE INTRIGUING FACTOR THAT CAN INFLUENCE HIRING DECISIONS IS THE PRESENCE OF COMMONALITIES BETWEEN THE INTERVIEWER AND THE CANDIDATE, PARTICULARLY SHARED HOBBIES OR INTERESTS. FAVORING A CANDIDATE BECAUSE OF THESE SIMILARITIES CAN FOSTER BETTER RAPPORT, ENHANCE TEAM COHESION, AND ULTIMATELY CONTRIBUTE TO A MORE POSITIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT. THIS ARTICLE EXPLORES THE NUANCES OF GIVING PREFERENCE TO CANDIDATES BASED ON SHARED HOBBIES AND COMMONALITIES, EXAMINING ITS BENEFITS, POTENTIAL DRAWBACKS, AND BEST PRACTICES FOR ETHICAL AND EFFECTIVE HIRING.

UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF COMMONALITIES IN THE HIRING PROCESS

WHAT ARE COMMONALITIES AND WHY DO THEY MATTER?

COMMONALITIES REFER TO SHARED CHARACTERISTICS, INTERESTS, OR EXPERIENCES BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS. IN THE CONTEXT OF HIRING, THESE CAN INCLUDE:

- SIMILAR HOBBIES OR LEISURE ACTIVITIES (E.G., SPORTS, MUSIC, TRAVEL)
- SHARED EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUNDS
- COMMON CULTURAL OR REGIONAL ORIGINS
- SIMILAR PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES OR CAREER PATHS

THE PRESENCE OF COMMONALITIES CAN SERVE AS SOCIAL GLUE, MAKING INTERACTIONS MORE NATURAL AND COMFORTABLE. WHEN A RECRUITER OR INTERVIEWER FINDS THAT THEY SHARE HOBBIES OR INTERESTS WITH A CANDIDATE, IT CAN:

- CREATE AN IMMEDIATE SENSE OF CONNECTION
- REDUCE INTERVIEW ANXIETY FOR BOTH PARTIES
- FACILITATE MORE OPEN AND HONEST COMMUNICATION
- ENHANCE MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND EMPATHY

THESE FACTORS CAN INFLUENCE SUBJECTIVE ASSESSMENTS, SOMETIMES LEADING TO A PREFERENCE FOR CANDIDATES WITH WHOM THERE'S AN INSTANT RAPPORT.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL BASIS FOR FAVORITISM BASED ON COMMONALITIES

THE PHENOMENON OF FAVORING INDIVIDUALS WHO SHARE SIMILARITIES IS ROOTED IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY. KNOWN AS THE "SIMILARITY BIAS," IT SUGGESTS THAT PEOPLE TEND TO PREFER OTHERS WHO ARE LIKE THEMSELVES BECAUSE:

- IT FOSTERS A SENSE OF BELONGING
- IT REINFORCES PERSONAL IDENTITY
- IT REDUCES UNCERTAINTY IN SOCIAL INTERACTIONS
- IT INCREASES PERCEPTIONS OF TRUSTWORTHINESS AND LIKABILITY

IN HIRING, THIS BIAS CAN UNCONSCIOUSLY SWAY DECISION-MAKERS TOWARD CANDIDATES WITH WHOM THEY SHARE HOBBIES OR INTERESTS, EVEN IF OTHER CANDIDATES ARE EQUALLY OR MORE QUALIFIED.

ADVANTAGES OF GIVING PREFERENCE TO CANDIDATES WITH SHARED INTERESTS

1. ENHANCED CULTURAL FIT AND TEAM COHESION

HIRING CANDIDATES WHO SHARE HOBBIES OR INTERESTS WITH TEAM MEMBERS CAN LEAD TO A MORE HARMONIOUS WORK ENVIRONMENT. SHARED PASSIONS CAN:

- FACILITATE STRONGER BONDS AMONG COLLEAGUES
- PROMOTE COLLABORATION AND TEAMWORK
- SUPPORT A POSITIVE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

FOR EXAMPLE, A TEAM OF AVID HIKERS MIGHT FIND IT EASIER TO CONNECT AND ORGANIZE OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES, FOSTERING A SENSE OF CAMARADERIE.

2. IMPROVED COMMUNICATION AND RAPPORT

COMMON INTERESTS SERVE AS CONVERSATIONAL ICEBREAKERS, MAKING INITIAL INTERACTIONS MORE RELAXED AND ENGAGING. THIS CAN:

- LEAD TO MORE GENUINE INTERVIEWS
- ALLOW THE CANDIDATE TO SHOWCASE THEIR PERSONALITY BEYOND TECHNICAL SKILLS
- HELP INTERVIEWERS ASSESS SOFT SKILLS LIKE ADAPTABILITY AND CULTURAL ALIGNMENT

3. INCREASED CANDIDATE ENGAGEMENT AND MOTIVATION

CANDIDATES WHO PERCEIVE THAT THEIR HOBBIES AND INTERESTS ARE VALUED MAY FEEL MORE GENUINELY WELCOMED. THIS CAN:

- BOOST THEIR ENTHUSIASM FOR THE ROLE
- ENCOURAGE LONGER-TERM COMMITMENT
- REDUCE TURNOVER RATES

4. FACILITATING ONBOARDING AND INTEGRATION

SHARED HOBBIES CAN ACT AS SOCIAL ANCHORS DURING THE ONBOARDING PROCESS, HELPING NEW EMPLOYEES INTEGRATE FASTER AND FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE WITHIN THE TEAM.

POTENTIAL DRAWBACKS AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

WHILE GIVING PREFERENCE BASED ON SHARED HOBBIES MIGHT SEEM BENEFICIAL, IT IS ESSENTIAL TO CONSIDER POTENTIAL PITFALLS AND ETHICAL BOUNDARIES.

1. RISK OF BIAS AND DISCRIMINATION

FAVORING CANDIDATES SOLELY BECAUSE OF COMMON INTERESTS CAN LEAD TO:

- UNINTENTIONAL FAVORITISM
- OVERLOOKING MORE QUALIFIED CANDIDATES
- REDUCED DIVERSITY IF PREFERENCES SKEW TOWARD SPECIFIC HOBBIES OR BACKGROUNDS

IT IS VITAL TO BALANCE PERSONAL RAPPORT WITH OBJECTIVE EVALUATION CRITERIA.

2. COMPROMISING FAIRNESS AND OBJECTIVITY

DECISIONS BASED ON SHARED HOBBIES SHOULD NOT OVERRIDE THE CORE REQUIREMENTS OF THE ROLE. OTHERWISE, ORGANIZATIONS RISK:

- VIOLATING EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT PRINCIPLES
- MAKING HIRING DECISIONS BASED ON SUBJECTIVE IMPRESSIONS RATHER THAN MERIT

3. MAINTAINING PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

WHILE COMMON INTERESTS CAN IMPROVE RAPPORT, IT IS CRUCIAL TO KEEP INTERACTIONS PROFESSIONAL. OVEREMPHASIS ON HOBBIES MIGHT:

- BLUR BOUNDARIES
- LEAD TO FAVORITISM OR PERCEPTIONS OF UNFAIRNESS

BEST PRACTICES FOR LEVERAGING COMMONALITIES ETHICALLY IN HIRING

TO MAKE THE MOST OF SHARED INTERESTS WITHOUT COMPROMISING FAIRNESS, ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD ADOPT BEST PRACTICES.

1. USE COMMONALITIES AS ICEBREAKERS, NOT DECIDING FACTORS

SHARED HOBBIES CAN BE USEFUL FOR ESTABLISHING RAPPORT BUT SHOULD NOT BE THE SOLE BASIS FOR HIRING DECISIONS. INSTEAD, THEY SHOULD:

- SERVE AS CONVERSATION STARTERS
- COMPLEMENT OBJECTIVE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

2. MAINTAIN A STRUCTURED AND FAIR EVALUATION PROCESS

ENSURE THAT ALL CANDIDATES ARE EVALUATED BASED ON:

- RELEVANT SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE
- CULTURAL FIT WITH ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES
- POTENTIAL FOR GROWTH AND CONTRIBUTION

COMMONALITIES CAN SUPPORT THESE ASSESSMENTS BUT SHOULD NOT OVERSHADOW THEM.

3. PROMOTE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

BE MINDFUL THAT EMPHASIZING SHARED HOBBIES COULD UNINTENTIONALLY LIMIT DIVERSITY. TO MITIGATE THIS:

- RECOGNIZE THE VALUE OF DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES
- SEEK A VARIETY OF BACKGROUNDS AND INTERESTS
- AVOID MAKING ASSUMPTIONS BASED SOLELY ON SHARED HOBBIES

4. TRAIN INTERVIEWERS ON BIAS AWARENESS

ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD PROVIDE TRAINING TO HELP INTERVIEWERS RECOGNIZE AND MANAGE UNCONSCIOUS BIASES RELATED TO SIMILARITY BIAS.

5. DOCUMENT AND JUSTIFY HIRING DECISIONS

MAINTAIN TRANSPARENCY BY DOCUMENTING REASONS FOR HIRING CHOICES, ENSURING THEY ARE BASED ON OBJECTIVE CRITERIA.

CONCLUSION

SHARING COMMON HOBBIES AND INTERESTS WITH CANDIDATES CAN BE A POWERFUL TOOL IN FOSTERING RAPPORT, ENHANCING CULTURAL FIT, AND BUILDING A COHESIVE TEAM. WHEN USED ETHICALLY AND THOUGHTFULLY, LEVERAGING THESE COMMONALITIES CAN CONTRIBUTE TO A MORE ENGAGING AND PRODUCTIVE WORKPLACE. HOWEVER, IT IS CRUCIAL TO BALANCE PERSONAL CONNECTIONS WITH OBJECTIVE EVALUATION CRITERIA, PROMOTE DIVERSITY, AND REMAIN VIGILANT ABOUT UNCONSCIOUS BIASES. ULTIMATELY, THE GOAL IS TO SELECT THE MOST QUALIFIED CANDIDATE WHO ALIGNS WITH ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES AND CAN CONTRIBUTE MEANINGFULLY—WHILE APPRECIATING THE HUMAN ELEMENT THAT SHARED INTERESTS CAN BRING TO THE HIRING PROCESS. BY ADOPTING A FAIR, BALANCED APPROACH, ORGANIZATIONS CAN BENEFIT FROM THE POSITIVE EFFECTS OF COMMONALITIES WITHOUT COMPROMISING FAIRNESS OR INCLUSIVITY.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

IS IT APPROPRIATE TO GIVE PREFERENCE TO A CANDIDATE BECAUSE OF SHARED HOBBIES DURING THE HIRING PROCESS?

WHILE SHARED HOBBIES CAN FOSTER RAPPORT, HIRING DECISIONS SHOULD PRIMARILY BE BASED ON SKILLS, EXPERIENCE, AND JOB FIT. PREFERENCE SOLELY BASED ON HOBBIES MAY LEAD TO BIAS; THUS, IT'S IMPORTANT TO FOCUS ON PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS.

CAN HAVING COMMON INTERESTS WITH A CANDIDATE INFLUENCE MY OBJECTIVITY IN THE INTERVIEW PROCESS?

YES, SHARED INTERESTS CAN CREATE A SENSE OF FAMILIARITY, BUT IT'S ESSENTIAL TO REMAIN OBJECTIVE AND EVALUATE CANDIDATES FAIRLY BASED ON THEIR COMPETENCIES TO AVOID BIAS.

How can I ensure that giving preference to a candidate with similar hobbies doesn't compromise fairness?

Establish clear, criteria-based evaluation standards that prioritize qualifications and experience. Use hobbies as a supplementary factor rather than a deciding criterion to maintain fairness.

Does sharing hobbies with a candidate help in assessing their cultural fit for the organization?

Shared hobbies can indicate cultural compatibility, but they shouldn't be the sole basis for assessing fit. Consider a holistic view that includes professional skills, values, and work ethic.

What are the potential drawbacks of giving preference to candidates with similar hobbies?

Prioritizing candidates based on hobbies can lead to bias, reduce diversity, and overlook more qualified candidates. It's important to balance personal connections with objective hiring practices.

Additional Resources

Giving Preference To The Candidate Because You Have A Lot Of Commonalities, Like Having Similar Hobbies

In the competitive landscape of recruitment, hiring managers and interviewers often seek more than just technical skills and professional experience. Some candidates stand out because of intangible qualities—shared interests, values, or hobbies—that create a sense of familiarity and rapport. One common phenomenon in hiring is giving preference to a candidate because you have a lot of commonalities, like having similar hobbies. While this approach can foster a more comfortable interview environment and potentially lead to better team cohesion, it also raises important questions about objectivity, bias, and fairness in the hiring process. This article explores the nuances of favoring candidates based on shared hobbies, the psychological underpinnings behind this tendency, its advantages and pitfalls, and best practices for maintaining fairness while leveraging commonalities.