

D.E.I. TOOLKIT

Vetting Company Culture for Inclusive Excellence

Before you say **yes!** to a job offer, research the level of support the company gives to issues you consider important. To know what to look for, first reflect upon your personal needs in a work environment.

DEFINITIONS

Diversity means multiple identities are represented and respected.

Equity is the process of fairness. It means consistently recognizing and redistributing power (through fair treatment, equal opportunities, equal access to resources).

Inclusion means actively engaging the participation of all people, thoughts, ideas, and perspectives in a way that ensures everyone feels welcomed.

Intersectionality the complex, cumulative way the effects of multiple forms of discrimination combine, overlap, or intersect.



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How To Use This Resource

Use only the tools you need now. Save the rest "just in case".

What is inclusive excellence?

Inclusive excellence is defined as "active, intentional and ongoing engagement with diversity".

Self-Reflection Questions

- Which parts of myself am I comfortable sharing at work?
- What do I need to thrive at work?
- What makes me feel included?
- Are there any accommodations I need to be successful?
- What have I learned about my needs from past work experiences?
- How comfortable am I advocating for myself in a work setting?
- What level of activism do I want to engage in at work?

Human Resources (HR) focuses on the success and satisfaction of employees. They **advocate** for employees who find themselves in difficult situations, provide **conflict resolution** when needed, and develop and ensure **compliance** with policies designed to build and maintain a positive workplace culture.

What Should I Look For?

The following information is often available on company websites and can also be requested from Human Resources *before* accepting an offer

- Non-discrimination policies** are plans of action adhered to by companies who have made a commitment to grant equal opportunity to any individual without any prejudice. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has created a list of [General Non-Discrimination Policy Tips](#) that outlines what these policies should include.
- Domestic partner policies** allow your partner to get the same benefits a spouse would get. Whether you're currently in a relationship or not, take time to [Understand Domestic Partnerships and Domestic Partner Insurance](#).
- Diversity education and training programs** provide employees with training on DEI-related topics. When evaluating an organization's offerings, consider the following
 - Is training optional or required of everyone at all levels?
 - If optional, what percentage of employees participate?
 - What type of diversity training has upper-management participated in?
 - What is the frequency, length, and quality of the training?
 - What topics are covered?
 - Who provides the training and what are their qualifications?

What Should I Look For? (Continued)



Diversity Reports break down the variety (or lack of variety) in identities and backgrounds within a company and help provide transparency in a company's diversity efforts and their results. While each organization's reports might look different, here are a few examples of comprehensive reports: [Google 2021 Diversity Annual Report](#), [Booz Allen Hamilton Diversity, Equity and Inclusion 2021 Executive Report](#), and [Netflix Inclusion Report 2021](#).

Examples of what to look for in a diversity report

- Distinct, diverse, and transparent demographic information
- Specific diverse hiring goals and a clear plan to meet them
- Specific issues and areas addressed and proposed solutions
- Specific initiatives taken in the past year and the results/impact
- A clearly defined progression of efforts and results over time
- Inclusive language and a multitude of identities represented
- Partnerships with reputable outside organizations
- Innovation and enthusiasm over DEI efforts

Corporate Equality Index

The **Human Rights Campaign Foundation** (hrc.org) publishes a [Corporate Equality Index](#). In it, hundreds of companies are evaluated using a 100-point scale to measure their commitment to **non-discrimination policies, equitable benefits** for LGBTQIA+ workers and their families as well as supporting an **inclusive culture** and **corporate social responsibility**.



Transitioning in the Workplace

What does a comprehensive transition policy look like?

The Transgender Law Center has drafted a [model policy for employers and transgender employees](#).

What are my rights?

The National Center for Transgender Equity has [outlined rights](#) for both federal and general employees.



What Is This?

Comparably celebrates its 5th Annual [Best Places to Work Awards](#) this season with four of its popular end-of-year categories, including Best Companies for Diversity (as rated by employees of color). Based solely on sentiment feedback provided by current employees of color who anonymously rated their companies in 16 core workplace culture metrics.

The Americans with Disabilities Act

The **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities. You can learn more about this act on the [U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division website](#).

Examples of disabilities include but are not limited to:

- Cancer
- Diabetes
- HIV
- Cerebral palsy
- Major depressive disorder
- Traumatic brain injury
- Deafness or hearing loss
- Blindness or low vision
- Epilepsy
- Mobility disabilities
- Intellectual disabilities
- PTSD
- Autism



What are "reasonable accommodations"?

A **reasonable accommodation** is any change to the application or hiring process, to the job, to the way the job is done, or the work environment that allows a person with a disability who is qualified for the job to perform the essential functions of that job and enjoy equal employment opportunities.

Accommodations are considered "reasonable" if they do not create an undue hardship or a direct threat.

The [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission \(EEOC\)](#) offers guides on types of reasonable accommodations and discusses when and how to request them.

FACT: You are **not** required to disclose any disabilities during your job search. This article on [disclosing your disability during a job search](#) provides you with pros and cons of disclosing disability information during different stages of the hiring process.

What Is Company Culture?

Company culture is reflected in an organization's attitudes, ideals, actions, and attributes. It may not be expressly written but can be seen when observing the actions and behaviors of its employees.

Here are some elements to consider when assessing company culture

- Tone and language used in job descriptions
- Company website and social media presence/engagement
- Company reviews on sites like Glassdoor or InHerSight
- Benefits packages (including maternity and paternity leave)
- Support offered (example: identity-based employee groups)
- The diversity of the panel of interviewers and the quality of their questions. Do they address DEI topics?
- Inclusive attributes and architecture (gender neutral restrooms, flexible work arrangements, assistive technology, wheelchair accessibility, etc.)

7 Questions to assess company culture:



1. What makes you proud to work at this company?
2. What's one thing you would change about this organization if you could?
3. What causes conflict at XYZ Corporation and how is conflict resolved?
4. Titles aside, who in the organization has the power to get things done?
5. What are ways the company celebrates success?
6. What adjectives would you use to describe the culture of XYZ and what are some examples that illustrate this?
7. What challenges is the company experiencing?

Red Flags and Warning Signs

1. There's no diversity on the leadership team OR the team itself (check the "Team" or "About Us" page or LinkedIn)
2. There's a "token minority" and it shows
3. Lack of specific information on the gender and racial breakdown of employees as well as employees who identify as LGBTQIA+.
Companies measure what matters to them.
4. They require something called "confidential arbitration": a clause which forces anyone to seek damages privately to do so behind closed doors instead of taking the case to court.
5. They focus on the shallow cultural aspects of the company. Do they talk about diversity, equity, and inclusion? Or are they only about pizza parties and karaoke after work?
6. No flexibility in terms of working remotely or time off.
7. They don't offer paid parental leave or just a very basic (and sexist) parent and family leave policy.
8. They say/suggest they want someone who thinks like them.
9. They make comments or ask questions that make you feel out of place like "We don't get many [your demographic] interviewing for this position" or "What made *you* interested in this line of work?".
10. An incomplete or vague job description.
11. Vague but concerning language like "fast-paced."
12. Negative reviews or ratings (don't just look on Glassdoor use the Google "News" option).
13. Tardiness, rudeness, or inattentiveness during the interview process.
14. There's an unusually high turnover rate.
15. **Something in your gut feels off, even if you can't quite articulate it.**

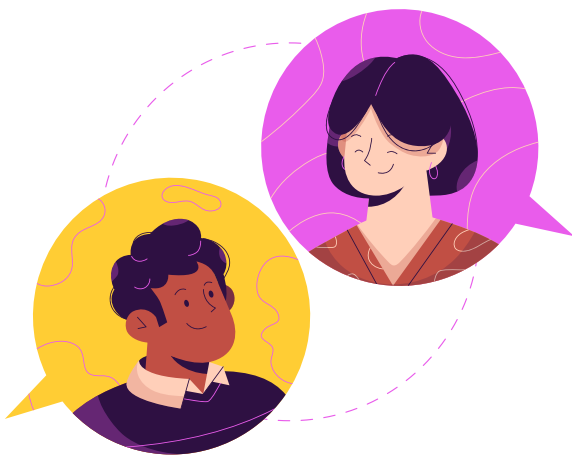


Questions you can ask to reveal "red flags" in an interview

- How do you create an inclusive environment?
- What are your core values?
- How do you address pay equity?
- Do people at this company ever include their pronouns when they introduce themselves? How might they react if I included mine?
- Do you have any employee resource groups? What are they doing to make a difference here?
- Do you conduct anti-racism and anti-bias trainings?
- How do you make people feel included in meetings? What happens when someone gets interrupted?

From [Ellevist](#)

Use Your Connections *(Yes, You Have Connections.)*



Use **ClarkCONNECT** or **LinkedIn** to search for Clark alumni currently working at organizations you're interested in applying to.

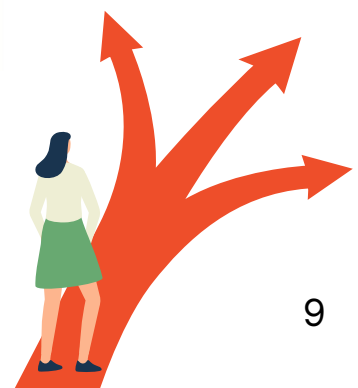
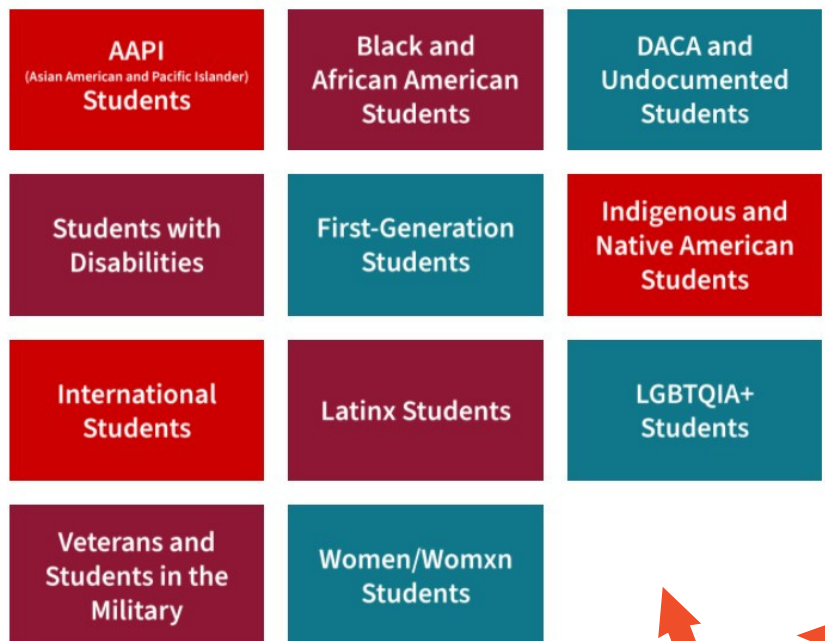
Ask if you can schedule a 10-minute conversation with them to discuss company culture.

Time To Decide

1. Don't accept an offer out of fear another will never come.
2. Collect and organize the facts. Make sure you have complete information about any offer.
3. Decide what really matters to *you* and prioritize that.
4. Don't be afraid to ask clarifying questions after an offer has been made or advocate for a reasonable amount of time to decide.
5. Consider where you can negotiate for your benefit.
6. Ask yourself "**Who Do I Want to Be?**", write out your answer, and reflect upon how this job will (or won't) help you become that version of yourself.

Did you know?

The Career Connections Center has curated a list of [identity-conscious resources](#) such as niche job boards, articles, advocacy information, and financial resources.



Websites Referenced

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission General Non-Discrimination Policy Tips

<https://www.eeoc.gov/employers/small-business/general-non-discrimination-policy-tips>

Understanding Domestic Partnerships and Domestic Partner Insurance

<https://www.thebalance.com/domestic-partner-insurance-101-2645680>

Google 2021 Diversity Annual Report

<https://diversity.google/annual-report>

Booz Allen Hamilton Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion 2021 Annual Report

www.boozallen.com/content/dam/boozallen_site/esg/pdf/publications/dei-executive-report.pdf

Netflix Inclusion Report 2021

<https://about.netflix.com/en/news/netflix-inclusion-report-2021>

2022 Human Rights Campaign Foundation's Corporate Equality Index

hrc.org/resources/corporate-equality-index

Model Transgender Employment Policy

[model-workplace-employment-policy-Updated.pdf](#)

National Center for Transgender Equality Outlines of Rights & Procedures

<http://www.transequality.org/know-your-rights/employment-general>

Comparably Best Companies for Diversity Awards 2021

<https://www.comparably.com/news/best-companies-for-diversity-2021>

Americans With Disabilities Act

www.ada.gov

Reasonable Accommodations Guide by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

<https://www.eeoc.gov>

Article: Disclosing Your Disability During a Job Search

<https://www.thebalancecareers.com/disclosing-disability-during-a-job-search-4158349>

Article: Red Flags That a Company's Culture Isn't Inclusive

www.ellevest.com/magazine/career/company-culture-red-flags

CCC Identity-Conscious Resource

www.clarku.edu/offices/career-connections-center/resources/identity-conscious