

6.5 Overcoming Barriers

Promising Solutions To Common Challenges

Challenges to Entry (outside-in)

Challenge	Solutions
High volume of applications prevent recruiters from seeing applicants sourced through outside-in programs who may be great employees.	<p>Partner with a workforce intermediary to provide outreach, recruitment, preparation, and support services to your focus populations, and tag or flag resumes that come from your intermediary partner or communities of focus.</p> <p>Connect hiring managers directly with applicants participating in training programs.</p> <p>Hold "hiring day" events where hiring managers have face-to-face meetings with larger numbers of applicants. In addition to giving hiring managers opportunities to more quickly identify candidates who would be a good match for open positions, hiring days also give candidates opportunities to meet hiring managers, be considered for positions, and practice interviewing skills.</p>
Poorly written resumes that may not reflect all the skills a person has acquired during pre-employment training or life experiences prevent individuals from advancing beyond the initial screening process.	<p>Provide supplemental application materials, including evaluation data from program staff, to demonstrate a candidate's past performance and future potential.</p> <p>Instead of using resumes to evaluate candidates, use letters that allow applicants to speak to their motivation, personal growth, and resiliency.</p>
Blanket policies prevent the hire of formerly incarcerated applicants.	<p>Develop the capacity of human resources staff to understand categories of justice-system involvement and state laws so they can match applicants to departments where there are no legal barriers.</p> <p>Convene a work group including leaders from HR and legal/compliance to evaluate existing processes for conducting background checks and assess the opportunities for removing legal barriers.</p>
Applicants referred through outside-in pathway programs do not know how to interview well.	<p>Provide training or collaborate with workforce intermediaries to prepare applicants for the interview process.</p> <p>Provide training for hiring managers and recruiters so that</p>

	<p>they do not rule out qualified candidates solely based on interview performance.</p> <p>Consider skills-based hiring models that emphasize a person's job skills and experience rather than their interviewing skills.</p>
Lack of awareness about job postings or career ladder opportunities.	<p>Work with intermediaries to share job information with local communities and ensure that people understand what the job is, how to apply, and how the application and hiring processes work.</p> <p>Review job descriptions to ensure they are understandable for all potential qualified applicants.</p>

Challenges to Success & Internal Advancement (inside-up)

Challenge	Solution
Employees are unable to take advantage of training opportunities due to time constraints and changing shifts.	<p>Provide financial and scheduling support to managers to allow for release time, a practice employed by Fairview Health Services among others. Release time allows employees to complete training opportunities during paid work time and maintain their full-time wages and benefits.</p> <p>Offer onsite training to reduce time away from work and family obligations.</p>
Entry-level employees are unable to take advantage of tuition reimbursement because of the upfront costs.	<p>Work with local colleges to set up a process where the health system pays upfront for employees' tuition using tuition assistance funds.</p>
Employees hired through an outside-in pathway program may encounter difficulties fulfilling work responsibilities due to personal challenges, making it hard to retain their jobs.	<p>Educate managers to understand challenges employees face, and adjust HR policies to provide resources and supports to overcome these challenges and avert terminations that are due to these challenges.</p> <p>Provide wraparound services—including financial literacy training, childcare support, and transportation benefits—or partner with intermediary organizations to provide these services.</p> <p>Assign or hire a job coach to help employees deal with barriers they face.</p>

Workforce Ecosystem Challenges

Challenge	Solution
<p>In-demand jobs require education and credentials that many people in your communities of focus do not possess.</p>	<p>Partner with upstream workforce and training organizations to source and prepare candidates for your jobs.</p> <p>Examine your sourcing partners to ensure they are connected to your communities of focus.</p>
<p>Your organization struggles to find an intermediary organization that can collaborate effectively on an outside-in pathway program, or that can prepare applicants adequately to work within your organization.</p>	<p>Partner with a local United Way, or communicate with your employees from focus communities to determine which intermediary organizations they currently work with and find to be effective and trustworthy.</p> <p>Identify an intermediary organization that has promising practices and help them increase their capacity and effectiveness to meet your hiring needs.</p> <p>If your community does not have an intermediary organization that is able to meet your needs, consider starting a new organization specifically to help prepare people to work within your health system.</p>
<p>Your health system or hospital is too small to warrant an outside-in strategy, as there are not enough open positions to make this approach worthwhile.</p>	<p>Partner with other institutions or a workforce intermediary that works with other anchor institutions with similar employment needs. These partnerships can even be outside the healthcare sector, such as partnering around facilities or maintenance positions.</p>

Internal Cultural Challenges

Challenge	Solution
<p>Hiring managers or leadership question the quality or qualifications of applicants from local communities.</p>	<p>Provide training on implicit bias to ensure everyone is treated fairly and able to succeed in their jobs.</p>
<p>Buy-in is a challenge with leadership or hiring managers.</p>	<p>Focus on one pilot program initially, demonstrate its impact, and then replicate and scale it.</p> <p>Ensure communications are cohesive and consistent.</p> <p>Find individuals in your system that are interested in and committed to this work, and then collaborate with them to start a pilot program.</p>
<p>The anchor mission is not yet part of your organization's culture.</p>	<p>Refer to the Big Questions worksheet for discussion questions that can be used to gain clarity on anchor mission alignment with your organization's mission, strategy, culture, and values.</p>

Implement an awareness and communication campaign to define the organizational imperative to advance the anchor mission.

Determine connections between specific implementation projects and the larger anchor mission strategy and goals.