

Assessing an Organization's Culture



What is Organizational Culture?

Culture is the unique way that the organization lives out its purpose and delivers on its brand promise to customers. Simply put, culture comes down to “how we do things around here.” (Gallup Organization). One element of organizational culture is the approach and value placed on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

- **Diversity** refers to the representation of various identities and differences which may include race, ethnicity, gender, ability, sexual orientation, country of origin, class, as well as other beliefs and affiliations.
- **Equity** refers to the fair treatment and access to opportunity, information and resources for all to reduce or eliminate systemic inequities.
- **Inclusion** refers to the degree to which an organization invites contributions and participation from all individuals. Emphasis is on all voices being heard leading to a sense of belonging.
- Research indicates that embracing DEI positively impacts business performance (McKinsey). Additionally, abundant evidence shows that diversity positively impacts scientific discovery through improved problem-solving, innovation, prediction, evaluation, and strategic thinking (UCI BioSci Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion).

How can I assess a company's commitment to DEI as a job seeker?

A look at an employer's website should tell you if their company culture values and prioritizes DEI. Some key elements to look for include:

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Website and Social Media Commitment

- A web page dedicated to diversity, equity, and inclusion may be an indicator that an employer is committed to DEI. An organization's social media presence is also a great place to review for DEI commitment. Look for mentions of any DEI best practices or other actions of genuine commitment to diversity.

A Diverse Leadership Team

- If an employer's website does not have a section dedicated to DEI, the employer's commitment to DEI can still be assessed using their Leadership web pages. A diverse leadership team is a good sign that the company values DEI. If the employer publishes their mission or values statement, that would be another good place to review organizational culture.

Review Benefits Offered to Employees

- Research benefits offered to employees to determine the flexibility for people with different needs. Some of these benefits may include: broader medical coverage, domestic partner benefits, flexible holidays, caregiver benefits, and wellness benefits.

Mentions of Affinity Groups or Employee Resource Groups

- Employee groups based around empowerment and inclusion can indicate a company's commitment to DEI. Examples of affinity groups and employee resource groups include NASA's LGBTQ Pride Alliance, Google's Women@Google, and Amazon's Black Employee Network.

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Gain Input from People who Work at the Organization

- Talk to former or current employees regarding their experience and perspective through informational interviews. You can message people via LinkedIn, find contacts through the UCI Anteater Career Network and research reviews on Glassdoor.
- If you feel that your online research is inconclusive, you can always ask the employer DEI questions during an interview, as detailed below.

Questions to Ask:

- 1 How would you describe the company culture here?
- 2 How does the company support professional development and growth opportunities for its employees?
- 3 How does the company actively promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace?
- 4 What are the core values that drive the organization?
- 5 How does the company promote work-life balance for its employees?
- 6 How does the company foster collaboration and teamwork among employees?
- 7 Can you share any employee engagement initiatives or programs that are in place?
- 8 Can you describe the decision-making process within the company and how employees are involved?
- 9 Are there any employee-led diversity and inclusion groups or networks within the company?
- 10 Can you share any success stories or examples that illustrate the organization's culture in action?



Additional resources...

NACE

naceweb.org/diversity-equity-and-inclusion/best-practices/conscious-job-seeking-assessing-employers-commitment-to-dei

THE HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW

hbr.org/2016/11/why-diverse-teams-are-smarter

THE MUSE

themuse.com/advice/looking-for-an-inclusive-employer-ask-these-9-questions-during-interview

AMAZON RESOURCE GROUP EXAMPLES

aboutamazon.com/affinity-groups

GOOGLE RESOURCE GROUP EXAMPLES

diversity.google/commitments

UCI DIVERSITY AND AFFINITY GROUPS

oeod.uci.edu/resources/affinity.php

WHAT IS DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION - MCKINSEY

mckinsey.com/featured-insights/mckinsey-explainers/what-is-diversity-equity-and-inclusion

WORK180

work180.com/en-us/blog/7-ways-you-can-identify-if-a-company-is-genuinely-committed-to-diversity-equity-and-inclusion

UCI BIOSCI OFFICE OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

inclusion.bio.uci.edu/about/what-is-dei

WHAT IS ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND WHY DOES IT MATTER? - GALLUP

gallup.com/workplace/327371/how-to-build-better-company-culture.aspx

OFFICE OF INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE – UCI

inclusion.uci.edu

THE WALT DISNEY COMPANY

impact.disney.com/diversity-inclusion