

APRIL 2021

INCLUSIVE RECRUITMENT

LEADING POSITIVE CHANGE

A report by NHS Employers and commissioned by
NHS England and NHS Improvement

INTRODUCTION

This compilation of case studies is a resource for HR leaders and managers. It contains examples of good practice across six aspects of recruitment and promotional practices:

- Job creation.
- Person specification and job descriptions.
- Adverts.
- Interviews.
- Onboarding.
- Talent management.

Whilst structured in line with these broad themes, all the case studies demonstrate that progress in embedding inclusive recruitment doesn't happen in isolation, and predominantly emerges in organisations that take a holistic approach.

Therefore, we have also included case studies focusing on interventions for leadership where they evidence contribution to organisational culture change.

These examples were selected from a range of public, private, and voluntary sector organisations, where they have been formally recognised through awards, national research or benchmarking, in terms of inclusive recruitment.

NHS Employers continuously seeks to highlight and showcase good practice. If you would like to share your organisation's good practice, please email diversityandinclusion@nhsemployers.org



JOB CREATION

HS2 LTD

The challenge

HS2 Ltd, is responsible for developing and promoting the UK's new high-speed rail system, which is one of the largest and most complex infrastructure projects ever undertaken in the UK. Ensuring that equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) is embedded into all areas of the business is a priority for HS2 Ltd, as it actively strives to redress the underrepresentation of women and other minority groups working in construction.

What the organisation did

HS2 Ltd adopted the Clear Assured benchmark, to measure itself against and ensure that barriers into recruitment and career progression are removed for underrepresented groups, including female, disabled, black and minority ethnic (BME) and LGBTQ+ candidates. The focus of the benchmark was across four key areas and included auditing more than 120 policies and documents.

The four key areas were:

- policies and procedures
- finding talent
- assessing talent
- retaining talent.

Results and benefits

- As of May 2020, 21.5 per cent of those employed at HS2 Ltd are female. This compares to just 12.5 per cent in the construction industry as a whole, according to [official statistics](#) reported in October 2019 by GMB, the union for construction workers.
- HS2's supply chain currently includes 17.7 per cent of people from BME communities. This compares to a figure of just 5.4 per cent across the sector.

The project has already supported over 9,000 jobs and 2,000 businesses across the UK. EDI standards and targets are embedded into all contract awards, so the potential to build on this success and transform the historical underrepresentation of minority groups in the construction sector is huge.

HS2 Ltd achieved gold standard accreditation as part of the Clear Assurance framework benchmarking and was raised to platinum in less than ten months by demonstrating that its ideology is based on diverse talent being included in every aspect of operational performance. HS2 Ltd is the only organisation in the UK to be awarded this, and recognises HS2 Ltd's commitment to equality and diversity, with inclusive best practice embedded into all elements of its work.

The Clear Company, a diversity and inclusion specialist, was the awarding body and it stated: 'HS2 Ltd went above and beyond mandatory regulatory obligations in setting new standards, using focus groups, workshops, panels, and soundboards to understand what inclusive design means for those with protected characteristics.'



“21.5% of employees at HS2 Ltd are female.”

BARTS HEALTH NHS TRUST

The challenge

Barts Health operates across four major hospitals in east London serving 2.5 million people. The trust wanted to support people with a learning disability to become part of the Barts workforce. The trust was aware that six per cent of people with a learning disability who are known to their local authority were in employment, and only 17 per cent of people with a learning disability in England are in employment.

As a major employer the trust decided to host the Project SEARCH programme, which is an international training programme aimed at supporting young people with learning disabilities into paid employment.



“60% of interns are now in paid employment.”

What the organisation did

The trust used the Project SEARCH principles to develop an internship programme. It focused on providing work experience, combined with training in employability and independent-living skills, to help young people with significant disabilities to make a successful transition into a productive adult life.

The Project SEARCH model involved an extensive period of skills training and career exploration, innovative adaptations, long-term job coaching and continuous feedback from teachers, skills trainers, and employers. Six interns were recruited in the first year, which gradually rose over a period of five years to 24 interns. These interns were recruited at the Mile End Hospital and The Royal London Hospital. Due to its success, Newham University Hospital has recruited 36 interns. The programme employs participants and provides a coach, mentor and supervisor to support employees throughout their journey.

Results and benefits

- 85 interns in total have successfully completed the programme since it began in 2013.
- 46 interns have secured employment, many within the trust. Job roles include ward clerks, housekeeper, catering, porters and ward hosts. Some of the interns have taken roles outside the health sector in retail, education, and construction.
- 60 per cent of interns are now in paid employment and 35 per cent are with Barts Health or its contractors.

In 2019, the organisational development team at Barts Health were winners of the best diversity and inclusion practice category at the Nursing Times Workforce Summit and Awards, and the best coaching and mentoring initiative at the CIPD People Management Awards.

MTR ELIZABETH LINE

The challenge

MTR Elizabeth Line (MTREL) is a UK train operator. The organisation was awarded the Elizabeth Line (Reading/Heathrow to Shenfield/Abbey Wood) London concession in July 2014. The concession required recruiting more than 1,000 people, of which 50 per cent were train drivers, for the staged opening of 60 miles of track and ten stations.

The company wanted local stakeholders to view its workforce as an extension of their local community, supporting a station's integration into an area and securing MTREL's position as a diverse and equal opportunity employer. It wanted to reflect its communities in its recruitment strategy, so it developed partnerships with various organisations including Crisis and Young London Working, part of the Mayor's Fund.

What the organisation did

Community ambassadors engaged with local communities to raise the profile of the railways and the opportunities available, delivering more than 1,000 MTREL events, and supported other events, resulting in 100,000 customer engagements.

The team has ensured over 650 school engagements and work experience for more than 470 individuals.



“MTREL's diversity targets are consistently above national average.”

Results and benefits

MTREL's willingness to look at non-traditional sources of talent to build its workforce has received much praise. It is consistently an industry leader in terms of diversity targets, with measured areas of equality, diversity and inclusion consistently above national averages.

- 31.4 per cent of train drivers are from BME communities, compared with a national average of 8.3 per cent.
- 13.9 per cent are women, more than double the industry average.
- 46.2 per cent are under the age of 35, the UK average is 15.8 per cent.
- Three quarters of customer experience assistants are from BME communities and 40 per cent of them are female.
- Overall, 23.1 per cent of MTREL employees are female and 31 per cent are BME.
- 13 per cent of employees were recruited as a direct result of partnership activities.

MTREL has neurodiversity level 2 accreditation and gained the Disability Confident award (level 1) and is on track to be a Disability Confident employer (level 2).

The organisation has also been highlighted through the Personnel Today awards and Working Mums awards, and was recently recognised through Personnel Today for its response to the pandemic and furloughing and protection of staff.

PERSON SPECIFICATION AND JOB DESCRIPTIONS

SOUTH WARWICKSHIRE NHS TRUST (SWFT)

The challenge

One of the trust's local equality objectives defined in its equality and inclusion strategy was to recruit a diverse workforce that is representative of its local communities.

What the organisation did

SWFT capitalised on the robust community and voluntary networks in place and with these undertook a review of its systems and processes openly and transparently.

The trust worked with EQUIP, the equality and inclusion partnership in Warwickshire, which did an audit and developed recommendations for the trust to consider. The remit of the review was to:

- identify areas of improvement concerning recruitment processes and procedures, to increase a more diverse and reflective workforce applying for and securing promotions within SWFT
- highlight the cultural barriers that candidates applying for positions within SWFT may experience when applying for promotions and training opportunities and to make recommendations to address them
- determine the culture of the recruitment teams and personnel and to determine and address any unconscious biases that may exist
- highlight areas of improvement concerning the internal and external communication of training, promotion, and job opportunities, ensuring that they are culturally accessible.

The audit methodology included a review of the recruitment process, recruitment documentation and recruitment personnel interviews, and undertook qualitative and quantitative research with existing staff. The trust implemented a holistic approach to enhance its existing policies and practices following the audit, namely a review of job descriptions and person specifications to ensure that there are no equality or cultural barriers from the outset. The trust ensured a member of the panel or the assessment process had the necessary skills and experience to identify any equality or cultural barriers and it rolled out cultural awareness training.

To ensure that no protected characteristic would be at a disadvantage resulting from any policy or its contents, all service leads are offered equality impact assessment training. All vacancies are promoted in the local community or through community channels, to ensure the adverts reach a diverse pool of potential candidates. The trust changed its documentation to be able to identify overseas applicants from those applying from the UK. This gives a clearer picture as to how many overseas applicants are failing the process due to the Right to Work rules. The trust ensures all panels are diverse and members have appropriate training.

Results and benefits

The National NHS Staff Survey showed an improving picture in terms of the experience of people from a BME background or those with a disability. Fewer people said that they had experienced discrimination at work and more people said that the trust had made adjustments to help and support them while at work.

ATLASSIAN

The challenge

Atlassian, a software company, wanted to attract diverse candidates and looked at its recruitment process to identify any potential barriers to attracting more diverse candidates. The company found that its job descriptions and person specifications were a potential barrier, so looked into the way they were written and communicated, in order to mitigate biases.

What the organisation did

The company researched artificial intelligence (AI) powered tools to help mitigate potential biases in the way job descriptions and job specifications were developed. Atlassian adopted an intelligent text editor that uses AI to grade jobs and track words that could lead to positive and negative outcomes. It recommends specific language to use and plays a huge role in how applicants view job descriptions.

This then enables the rewriting of job descriptions to appeal to candidates from groups that are not well represented. Furthermore, other AI tools were used that could spot patterns in data that helped uncover hidden preferences for certain candidates, which can then be alleviated.

Results and benefits

Using this software, Atlassian was able to increase the percentage of females among its new recruits:

- Female new recruits have risen from 10 per cent to 57 per cent.
- 22.9 per cent of technical roles are now filled by women, an increase from 10 per cent.

In addition, the experience of using AI revealed that AI does not simply function for present or future recruitment decisions, it can look back at past recipient decisions to see if these have been subject to bias.

“The use of AI has been successful in attracting more female recruits.”



JOB ADVERTS

LINCOLNSHIRE PARTNERSHIP NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

The challenge

Following a turnover of several executive and non-executive roles, the organisation decided to review its recruitment processes. The trust wanted a values-based recruitment process that resulted in a board that reflected the organisation's values and behaviours and reflected the communities it served in terms of gender and ethnicity.

What the organisation did

The trust reviewed its job adverts and focused on the traditional, equal opportunities employers' statement that the organisation often included in job adverts and other recruitment material.

The trust concluded that the way it was phrased, 'we strive to be an equal opportunities employer', needed addressing.

The trust decided it needed to be more explicit that diversity was important and addressed this in a new advert that stated: 'We welcome applications from these under-represented protected characteristics,' and then listed them accordingly, identifying BME and LGBTQ+ groups as priorities.

Feedback from candidates indicated that this sort of intervention convinced prospective candidates that the organisation was serious about workforce diversity and equality, diversity and inclusion more generally.

For the non-executive director (NEDS) roles, the trust did an analysis of what skills, knowledge and experience it already had around the board table and worked out what the gaps were for the kind of board they needed for the next few years.

Within the job description and specification, the trust emphasised inclusivity and in terms of working as a part of a complex team, they were explicit around the trust's commitments on equality and diversity.

Results and benefits

The trust had a much broader field of applicants, for both executive and NED posts. Feedback from the candidates revealed that one of the things that really attracted them to the organisation was the commitment to values.

- At board level, the representation of staff is 42 per cent female and 25 per cent BME.

The organisation was also recognised as an example of good practice in Professor Ruth Sealy's 2020 report, [Action For Equality, The Time Is Now](#). The report echoes the trust's practices and suggests that to achieve gender balance on NHS boards it needs representation of 40–60 per cent of each gender.

The trust's Care Quality Commission (CQC) rating was good overall in each category in June 2020 and for the well-led score it was outstanding.



**“25% of board members
are BME.”**

NATIONAL RAIL

The challenge

Adrian Thompson, HR director, described the challenge National Rail faced: “When I first arrived seven years ago, we were very obviously white, male and middle-aged. Not only did we think having a better mix was the right thing to do culturally, but we also wanted our mix of staff to better represent our area and our customers.”

Northern Rail wanted to change its recruitment brand and advertising to represent its openness to diversity, in order to attract more women and more BME applicants.

What the organisation did

National Rail created an internal ‘working together’ group which looked at every element of its recruitment brand and advertising: from analysing how its dark purple and blue corporate colours were potentially putting off female applicants, through to changing the wording to promote flexible working so it was more appealing to female parents.

The company has also acted to dispel myths that the railways are dirty places to work, by putting more emphasis on customer service elements. National Rail also changed its recruitment channels and placed job adverts on Mumsnet and other social media platforms to attract more female employees. Videos of current female and BME staff were promoted to demonstrate that this is a place where anyone can work.

Results and benefits

“If we get seen by more people, we’ll get more diverse applicants, and that will only improve our diversity levels.”

Adrian Thompson, Northern Rail.

Improvement has been steady:

- The proportion of female workers has risen from 13 per cent to 16 per cent.
- The proportion of BME staff has grown from 2 per cent to 5 per cent.

The company actively promotes female workers and on International Women’s Day it held events across Britain, including all-female-run passenger trains from London Victoria to Gillingham in Kent, Edinburgh Waverley to London King’s Cross, and London Paddington to Bristol.



“The proportion of female workers has risen.”

INTERVIEWS

NORTH MIDDLESEX UNIVERSITY NHS TRUST

The challenge

The trust wanted to ensure the interview stage of the recruitment process had diversity at its centre, as it helps to avoid hiring based on shared biases and assesses candidates in a more thorough manner.

What the organisation did

Cedi Frederick, chair of North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust, was often asked why it is important to have diverse interview panels. He stated: "If you are a woman and you walk into a non-executive director interview and the panel is all men, before you even start to speak you're going to feel slightly disconnected. It is very difficult to have the empathy and the rapport that allows you to give your best in that process."

Cedi also mentioned the importance of challenging colleagues and encouraging people to ask questions as part of the process, such as: "Why didn't you think she was as good as the other candidate?" Asking that why question can sometimes spark a different conversation.

Cedi continued: "It's not about being judgemental, it is about rapport. When you walk into an interview, it is about those first seven seconds, or whatever it may be, of connectivity".

Results and benefits

The idea behind the intervention was to get the best out of the candidates and appoint based on skills to ensure diversity.

The trust's board representation is now:

- 31 per cent female
- 38 per cent BME.

The organisation was also recognised as an example of good practice by Professor Ruth Sealy's report, Action For Equality The Time Is Now.



“38% of board members are BME.”

GOOGLE

The challenge

Large organisations such as Google want to improve the interview process and experience. Google is of the view that it is important to find out what a candidate can do and what they enjoy and have a natural aptitude for.

The normal interview process does not always result in the most appropriate candidate being chosen for a role. Common challenges are that even if their skills and experience match the position, you could still end up with their resignation letter on your desk a few months later, leaving HR with the expensive and time-consuming task of finding a replacement.

Having better interviews was seen as a key enabler for future talent management.

What the organisation did

Google adopted strengths-based interviews (SBIs), which have their origins in positive psychology and are thought to be particularly effective in identifying where passion and competence converge to create value.

Whereas traditional competency-based interviews aim to assess what a candidate can do, a SBI looks at what they enjoy doing and have a natural aptitude for.

Therefore, the interviewer spends 20 per cent of their time pursuing topics the candidate is most interested in. Typically, the SBI is supplemented with additional tools to enhance predictive outcomes, especially to evaluate technical competence.

Typical questions used included:

- What kind of situations are you likely to excel in?
- What tasks do you find most engaging?
- Can you describe in detail an example of where you feel you performed your best in the role?


Results and benefits

The SBI technique has proven to be a good test for best fit, particularly in white-collar roles.

In addition, this technique offers a good way to evaluate potential graduates, who often have a limited experience in the workplace.

Furthermore, SBIs seek to identify what energises and motivates the employee and if this closely matches the culture of the organisation. The process itself is interactive, relaxed and engaging. The candidate is likely to discover more about their own personality as part of the interview process, which can help make rejection easier when faced.

Finally, it allows interviewers to easily distinguish employees who will naturally enjoy the role and are likely to push the frontier from those just performing tasks.



“The SBI technique identifies what a person enjoys and has a natural aptitude for.”


THE 'ROONEY RULE'

The challenge

All but one of the USA's 32 National Football League (NFL) team owners are white men.

The Rooney rule, which is named after the late former Pittsburgh Steeler's owner and chairman of the league's diversity committee, was adopted across the NFL in 2003. It requires teams to interview at least one person of colour for head coaching positions. In 2009, the NFL expanded the rule to apply to general manager jobs and equivalent front office positions. In 2016, the requirement was updated to make sure that at least one woman was interviewed during the hiring process for executive positions, although that does not include head coaching positions.

Before implementation in 2003, the NFL had three black NFL coaches, which represented nine per cent of all coaches, compared to BME players accounting for 70 per cent of all players. Progress overall has stalled, with the number of minority head coaches fluctuating between six and eight and by the 2020–21 season it dipped to just three.



“Female and BME groups must be interviewed for senior executive positions.”

What the organisation did

The NFL team owners approved new Rooney rule measures directed at improving diversity in coaching and senior football operation jobs.

Teams and the league office are now required to interview BME and female applicants for team president and other senior executive positions in:

- communications
- finance
- human resources
- legal
- football operations
- sales
- marketing
- sponsorship
- information technology
- security.

Each of the 32 NFL teams will establish a minority coaching fellowship programme. The coaching fellowships are to be full-time positions, one or two years in length, to provide minority and female participants with hands-on training in NFL coaching.

Results and benefits

The number of minority coaches in the NFL did increase in the years since the Rooney rule came into effect, peaking at eight coaches or 25 per cent in both 2011 and 2018.

It is hoped the new initiatives outlined and a refresh of the approach will address the recent dip and once again pick up pace. Several tech companies are also now adopting the Rooney rule to increase the diversity of their senior workforce.

ONBOARDING

YEOVIL HOSPITAL

The challenge

In March 2017, the trust's nursing vacancies were reaching crisis levels. The trust had 82 staff nurse vacancies within a headcount of 547 and was spending £2.8 million per year on agency nurses. This was exacerbated by an ageing workforce with 22 per cent of nurses aged over 50, a figure which will have reached 28 per cent by 2021.

What the organisation did

An overseas recruitment team was created, with the specific aim of not just filling posts but doing so in a way which was focused on the wellbeing and experience of the nurse.

Work starts at interview and continues with regular contact to check progress and answer queries. The team's responsibility extends to ensuring staff immediately feel part of the Yeovil Hospital team. The team proactively supports travel arrangements and actively settles staff and their families into the area, including securing appropriate accommodation, creating bank accounts, shopping, and creating a new network of friends.



Results and benefits

Yeovil also supports other trusts with international recruitment. The success has been exceptional:

- In the last 18 months, more than 1,000 international nurses have been supported on their journey into work across trusts in the UK.
- The turnover rate has dropped from 23 per cent to 15 per cent.
- Sickness absence has dropped from 4.4 per cent to 2.2 per cent.
- Agency costs have decreased from £250,000 per calendar month to £33,000.
- The trust recruits on behalf of 16 NHS trusts and is proud to employ a diverse workforce which represents 62 nationalities.

In 2020 the trust was awarded the inclusive employer of the year by ENEI and recognised by the Nursing Times in 2019.

“Creating an inclusive environment has had positive impact on turnover and sickness absence rates.”

WEST MIDLANDS POLICE

The challenge

During COVID-19, one-third of the force's workforce has been working from home. West Midlands Police (WMP) recognises the importance of maintaining and achieving a balance between work and home life, including personal and family commitments.

What the organisation did

Specific leads were selected in each staff association who are experts in family-friendly policies, including LGBTQ+, disability, faith and religion and women in policing.

The remote working support has focused on maintaining connectedness and wellbeing. Every colleague working from home has received a catch-up call from a member of the diversity and inclusion team as well as further signposting to the buddy's network or the coaching service, Ear 4 U.

During the month of Ramadan, the force supported its fasting colleagues through the use of flexi-working arrangements to ensure that they have time with their families at this important time and support their wellbeing. Rather than being dictated from the centre, line managers and teams try to accommodate their fasting staff members as much as possible. Increasing numbers of non-Muslim staff also fast each year, as an act of solidarity with their Muslim colleagues, adding to the family feel of WMP culture.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, WMP's sports and wellbeing association offered discounts for families and organised regular trips and holidays so that employees can bring their families, socialise with each other and feel part of the WMP family.

There were also numerous sports and activity clubs that employees could participate in to help maintain their health and wellbeing. Furthermore, the WMP employee benefits scheme offers childcare vouchers and many more deals including the option to buy extra annual leave.

Results and benefits

The impact of the force's supportive policies and practices can be seen in improvements in recruitment and senior representation:

- 61 per cent of its force executive team are female.
- Over half of police staff senior roles (directors and assistant director roles) are held by women.
- This year WMP has attracted the highest number of female applicants in its history for police constable (PC) recruitment.
- In its police officer-to-sergeant and sergeant-to-inspector promotion process its female officers have higher success rates.



“Over half of police staff senior roles are held by women.”

TALENT MANAGEMENT

NORTH EAST LONDON NHS FOUNDATION TRUST


The challenge

Marie Gabriel, former chair of East London NHS Foundation Trust, was very clear about the importance of diversity across the organisation and had three reasons to explain why it was important:

- For board effectiveness, because diverse boards make better decisions.
- Representation, to reflect the communities that we serve.
- Talent management.

In both talent management and external appointments, the chair has taken a very practical and robust approach.

Marie said: “Inclusive talent management has taken us a while to get it right,” but she now feels the trusts is proactive in its succession planning.



“Inclusive succession planning has increased female and BME representation.”

What the organisation did

The trust had a robust way of applying succession planning. When considering new talent for executive board roles, the trust not only looked at the next layer down but the next layer beneath that. This meant that for each executive directors' role, two or three people were developed, who are diverse in terms of gender and ethnicity and ready to take up these posts. These employees have undertaken the National Leadership Academy's Nye Bevan programme, have had coaching and are ready to be interviewed.

Results and benefits

Being representative of staff is both about legitimacy and talent management. In terms of representation at board level within the trust:

- 40 per cent are female
- 53 per cent are BME.

In addition, staff are reassured that they have people at board decision-making level that are reflective of them and their communities and understand their experiences.

The trust was also recognised at the ENEL awards in 2020 for its work on developing an inclusive culture.

BRITISH HEART FOUNDATION AND MACMILLAN

The challenge

The British Heart Foundation (BHF) and Macmillan Cancer Support are two of the UK's largest charities. They encounter similar people problems, particularly when it comes to competing for talent from a relatively small pool. They both agree that developing talent pipelines and becoming an employment sector of choice are vital strategic concerns.

What the organisation did

The charity sector is not always the first choice for graduates, often because of a lack of knowledge about career progression opportunities, pay and reward, and the sector in general.

In 2016, neither organisation had a formal graduate scheme, further complicating talent attraction. So that year, they collaborated to create GradUnique, a jointly funded talent development programme.

The unique partnership makes the best use of combined resources, gives graduates experience in two organisations and nurtures the careers of talented and ambitious candidates. The graduates are at the heart of the programme and are involved in strategic organisation-wide projects from the beginning.

Going forward, both charities want to address the diversity of their intake, as according to Bright Network, 41 per cent of female graduates would consider the third sector, but only 25 per cent of male graduates would. They will continue to build links across communities to strengthen the reputation of the sector as an inclusive and innovative place to work.

Results and benefits

According to a Bright Network report, the charity sector has jumped from eighth to third in popularity for graduates.

There have been year-on-year increases in the numbers applying, from 521 in January 2016 to 999 in January 2019.

The first cohort in 2016 were successful in securing permanent full-time roles in either BHF or Macmillan Cancer Support or have gone on to take up roles in public health.

At the HR Excellence Awards 2020 they won the best talent management strategy of the year award. Judges described this as a 'great collaboration' that 'goes after a particular challenge.' The judges also praised the autonomy and development available to graduates and said it was both 'innovative and excellent.'



LEADERSHIP AND CULTURE

UNILEVER

The challenge

Unilever wanted to achieve gender balance across management levels by 2020 through developing a more thoughtful and sustainably inclusive culture.

What the organisation did

Senior leaders analysed workforce metrics across the company, uncovering the specific functions and regions with the most room for growth.

Five functions and regions were identified as hot spot areas where Unilever could strategically target its efforts to increase women's representation across the pipeline:

- Supply chain.
- Enterprise technology solutions.
- Finance.
- North Africa.
- Middle East.
- Africa.



“Women in executive leadership has increased to 33%.”

Unilever developed tools and processes to drive gender equity in recruitment and advancement. These included gender-balanced interview requirements, robust diversity and inclusion goals, KPIs and the gender appointment ratio, which is a measurement to track senior leaders' records in appointing women.

Work-life and flexibility offerings were customised according to the function and job to support employees across the globe, notably at Unilever's tea plantations and factories.

Mentoring, sponsorship, and coaching programmes for women are offered both formally and informally.

Safety measures and needs-based accommodations ensure comfortable and inclusive working conditions, especially in the hot spot regions.

Results and benefits

- From 2016 to 2019, women's representation increased across levels, regions and functions.
- The representation of women in executive leadership increased from 15 per cent to 33 per cent.
- The share of supply chain vice presidents who are women increased from 17 per cent to 30 per cent.
- Women now hold 49 per cent of management-level positions in Africa and 50 per cent of management-level positions globally.

Employees used the words 'fair,' 'inclusive,' 'safe,' and 'purpose-led' to describe the company's culture during its 2020 catalyst award-winning evaluation of Unilever's 'changing the game, unlocking the future' global initiative.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HEALTHCARE NHS FOUNDATION TRUST (NHFT)

The challenge

In 2016, the trust held a 'requires improvement' rating by the CQC. The trust felt it needed to work differently so it decided it would be better to give everyone in the organisation the tools and confidence to solve problems without needing to defer upwards.

That idea and the desire to break away from traditional management structures led to implementing 'distributed leadership', where every member of the trust's 4,200 staff feels like a leader and is able to make decisions without deferring to a manager.

What the organisation did

The first stage involved getting all staff to sign up to a way of acting at work and defined a set of agreed leadership behaviours. These behaviours were crowdsourced from more than 200 employees at one of the trust's regular leadership matters conferences. As a result, it developed a set of four defined behaviours:

- Being authentic.
- Embracing change.
- Taking responsibility.
- Working together.

These are now embedded across NHFT's entire ethos. Chris Oakes, director of HR said: "It's the bedrock of everything we do, it's not just a policy that's created and then sits on a shelf gathering dust."

The trust also places emphasis on improving diversity and works with employees to overcome their individual barriers to career progression and includes a reverse mentoring programme with BME members of frontline staff.

To ensure the leadership behaviours continue to be used, they now form the basis of appraisals and onboarding, as well as key staff communications, including a weekly email newsletter and a podcast that aims to maintain engagement.


Results and benefits

The trust's engagement score improved in 2018 and vacancies in December of that year were 8.7 per cent.

The engagement and leadership work also earned NHFT a string of accolades in 2019, including the CIPD people management award for best employee experience initiative; best wellbeing and staff engagement initiative at the Nursing Times Workforce Awards; and the Health Service Journal's staff engagement award.

The trust's most recent, outstanding CQC findings are being used as an example of best practice to support other trusts.

Chris highlights that all the work his team is doing boils down to improving care for patients and said: "We need to invest in our culture to make it work, the right culture will give the right care."



“Employees are empowered to make their own decisions.”

FURTHER GUIDANCE AND RESOURCES

NHS EMPLOYERS' TOOLS AND RESOURCES

- **Recruitment processes**
Developed to help organisations create more efficient recruitment processes and expand talent pools, these web pages include the latest guidance, tools, resources and examples from other NHS organisations.
- **Inclusive recruitment guidance**
This guidance pulls together a suite of information and tools, as a starting point to help you with your inclusive recruitment journey.
- **Inclusive recruitment supporting economic recovery**
This briefing for workforce leaders and HR professionals in the NHS highlights the impact of COVID-19 on the labour market and the role the NHS can play in supporting economic recovery, especially for those in our communities who have been hit the hardest.
- **International recruitment toolkit**
An interactive guide to encourage and enable good practice in the NHS.
- **Employing people in the NHS with learning disabilities**
NHS Employers has partnered with NHS England and NHS Improvement to provide a range of resources to encourage and support health organisations to increase their recruitment of people with learning disabilities. The aims of the resources are to raise awareness, highlight good practice, break down the barriers that both employers and potential employees may face, and create a culture that welcomes people with learning disabilities.

HR AND INCLUSION MEMBERSHIP BODIES

- **CIPD, Recruitment: An Introduction**
This factsheet looks at the main stages of the resourcing and recruitment process from defining the role to making the appointment.
- **CIPD, Building Inclusive Workplaces**
This report assesses the evidence on important questions relating to workplace inclusion, to better equip people professionals to truly deliver change and support their organisations to transform for the better.
- **CIPD, Neurodiversity At Work**
The guide aims to raise awareness among employers of neurodiversity in the workplace and to inspire more employers to take action to create more inclusive workplaces where neurodivergent individuals can thrive.
- **Inclusive recruitment support**
The Cabinet Office has produced a web page that includes guidance, case studies and information about how employers can attract, recruit, and retain people from a variety of backgrounds to enhance your business.
- **Stonewall, Sexual Orientation Employer Toolkit**
The toolkit introduces employers to the practical steps they can take to attract and retain staff from a lesbian, gay and bisexual background.
- **Business Disability Forum (BDF)**
This toolkit contains resources, blogs, case studies and videos to help shape and deliver an organisation's neurodiversity strategy.
- **Business in the Community, Inclusive Succession Planning**
This toolkit has been developed to support employers to develop inclusive talent pipelines.

GOVERNMENTAL BODIES AND INCLUSIVE RECRUITMENT RESOURCES

[Department of Works and Pensions \(DWP\), Employing Disabled People and People with Health Conditions](#)

This is a guide for line managers for recruiting, managing and developing people with a disability or health condition.

The DWP, working alongside Disability Confident and the CIPD, has updated this guide to reflect changes in the world of work since the pandemic outbreak and has added a range of additional links to further guidance from expert organisations.

[Equality Human Rights Commission \(EHRC\), the Equality Act \(2010\)](#)

A suite of resources support to employers to fulfil their responsibilities under the Equalities Act and recruitment.

[EHRC, What Equality Law Means For You As An Employer: When You Recruit Someone To Work For You](#)

The guidance on positive action (page 38 onwards) is about taking specific steps to improve equality in the workplace and support inclusive recruitment practices.

OTHER SECTORS

[Mayor of London, Inclusive Employers Toolkit](#)

This toolkit is a long-term strategy to change behaviours and generate a shift in attitude. It offers very practical and realistic achievements of short, medium, and long-term goals that all employers can strive towards.

[The Guardian Jobs, Guide to Inclusive Recruitment](#)

Guardian Jobs has produced a dedicated guide to help foster a more inclusive recruitment process, and how to retain those new recruits.

[University of St Andrews, EDI Online Inclusive Recruitment Guide](#)

The guide is inclusive of legislative/best practice to minimise potential discrimination and demonstrate compliance in providing equality of opportunity to applicants.

[Positive Action A guide for Police Recruitment](#)

This guidance is written to support chief constables, chief executives, senior managers, HR teams, positive action and diversity, equality, and inclusion practitioners.

[Royal Academy of Engineering, The Academy Diversity and Inclusion \(D&I\) programme](#)

This programme has collaborated with engineering employers to produce a toolkit on inclusive recruitment.

NHS EMPLOYERS

NHS Employers is the employers' organisation for the NHS in England. We help employers to develop a sustainable workforce, improve staff experience and be the best employers they can be.

Our practical resources and expert insights help make sense of current and emerging healthcare issues, to keep employers up to date with the latest thinking and ensure they are informed and equipped to support the NHS workforce.

We generate opportunities to network and share knowledge and we actively seek the views of workforce leaders to make sure their voice is front and centre of health policy and practice.




We also lead the national collective relationships with trade unions on behalf of the NHS and the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care.

NHS Employers is part of the NHS Confederation.



Contact us

For more information on how to become involved in our work:

-  diversityandinclusion@nhsemployers.org
-  www.nhsemployers.org
-  [@nhsemployers](https://twitter.com/nhsemployers)