OLIVER WYMAN | UpwardlyGlobal

EXPLORE NEW TALENT POOLS

EMBRACE THE OPPORTUNITY FROM SKILLED LEGAL IMMIGRANTS

AUTHORS

Ana Kreacic
Partner and Chief Knowledge Officer
Oliver Wyman

Tammi Ling
Partner
Oliver Wyman

MARSH   GUY CARPENTER   MERCER   OLIVER WYMAN

MARSH & McLENNAN COMPANIES

EXPLORE NEW TALENT POOLS

Immigrants have flocked to the United States since its founding, attracted to its economic opportunities, family reunifications, and/or refuge from conflict. During these 242 years, the US has become a global powerhouse and a melting pot of innovation, talent, and culture. While the United States is often known as the land of opportunity, for many skilled legal immigrants (SLIs) this promise is not realized. As the US looks to improve productivity and fill the talent loss from 10,000 baby boomers retiring every day,[1] it is critical for US employers' hiring agendas to tap into the expertise of SLIs.

Oliver Wyman surveyed and interviewed over 400 US employers, SLIs, diversity experts, and Chief HR Officers, to better understand the challenges SLIs face in entering the workforce and to find realistic corporate hiring strategies and solutions. We worked in partnership with Upwardly Global, a nonprofit organization focused on helping immigrants and refugees find employment and rebuild their professional careers in the United States.

Today, there are 8.5 million skilled legal immigrants in the US who are college educated, hold either permanent resident status or US citizenship, and were born outside of the United States.[2] While SLIs have been an important factor in the success of the US economy, many struggle to find employment, despite their high education and skillset, and are at least 50% more likely to be unemployed or underemployed than their US-born counterparts.[3] Their lack of a professional network and knowledge of job search norms in the US presents an untapped talent opportunity that offers employers the possibility of filling in key skills or regional gaps – recently arrived immigrants are 35% more likely to move for a job-related reason than US-born individuals.[4] Employers also benefit from diverse-thinking individuals that help innovate and build a strong company culture – from Oliver Wyman's survey of SLIs, more than 70% of SLIs would recommend their current company and are likely to stay at that company.

Oliver Wyman surveyed and interviewed over 400 US employers and SLIs to understand existing challenges and opportunities.

This report goes beyond describing SLIs and the reasons they can help employers obtain the skills, perspectives and leadership to realize their company's aspirations. Our research provides three strategies that can help employers hire SLIs:

1. Recognize and offset positive biases
2. Develop standardized frameworks to evaluate candidates
3. Establish partnerships to attract diverse candidates to your organization

SLIs offer a deep pool of skilled talent to employers – talent that is needed for US economic growth and development. These three strategies can help companies build stronger, more effective, and more inclusive teams that leverage the capabilities of SLIs.

[1] Washington Post, July 2014; [2] US Census Bureau, July 2015; [3] Migration Policy Institute, December 2016;
[4] New American Economy, June 2017

SLIs CAN ADD VALUE TO YOUR HIRING AGENDA THIS YEAR

MEET SETH

Seth has 10 years of managerial experience with global accounting firms in Egypt and Dubai and is moving from Dubai to San Jose, California to be with his family. While he has a green card that allows him to permanently work in the US, he cannot find employment that recognizes his education and experience. It takes a median of 10 weeks to find employment in the US,[5] but after arriving in San Jose, Seth spent more than a year in search of work.

SLIs are at least 50% more likely to be unemployed or underemployed, as compared to the US-born population with a comparable educational background.

Seth's story is not unique. SLIs are also often misidentified in US immigrant discussions because they are college educated and, as permanent residents or US citizens, here to stay, with no work sponsorship or visas required. And like Seth, while they may have left their homes, their families, and their jobs behind, they have skills and experiences that are transferrable across borders and critical to many US employers.

WHY NOW?

1. The United States is facing **increasing difficulty filling open jobs** as a result of skills, demographic, and geographic gaps.

2. SLIs provide a significant **untapped talent market** that can help employers succeed.

3. **Diversity of various types,** from race and gender to thought and experiences, **results in better outcomes for firms.**

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[5] Bureau of Labor Statistics, December 2017

Exhibit 1: Understanding SLIs

A civil engineer
from the
#2 university
in Guatemala
8 years of hands-on
experience

An experienced
IT manager
from Bulgaria
15 years of
industry
experience

A bilingual business
manager from the
Philippines
11 years of
business
experience

A successful
accountant
from Egypt
10 years of
professional
experience

MYTH BUSTERS

FACT

SLIs have the unrestricted right to work
in the US permanently and do not
require a visa or work sponsorship

MYTH

*"I can't hire a skilled legal immigrant
at my organization because they
require a work sponsorship or visa"*

Employers legally must consider the
applications of legal permanent
residents and US-born citizens equally

*"As an employer, I am legally obligated
to prioritize the applications of
US citizens for available openings"*

Recently arrived immigrants are ~50%
more likely to be college educated
than US-born residents[6]

*"Most legal immigrants
to the US are unskilled"*

[6] Migration Policy Institute, June 2017

1. DIFFICULTY FILLING OPEN JOBS

In today's job talent market, skills are not properly matched. Politicians have acknowledged this issue, with U.S. Secretary of Labor, Alexander Acosta, recently saying, "There is an obvious mismatch between worker skills demand and supply."[7]

It may seem counterintuitive that the US, a country that so many aspire to work in, faces talent shortages, but the issue is acute. More than 45% of US employers reported difficulty filling jobs in 2016.[8] Skills shortages, demographic gaps, and geographic requirements are among the primary reasons why companies are unable to find the appropriate candidates.

More than 45% of US employers reported difficulty filling jobs in 2016.

First, skill sets are evolving at an increasing pace. Along with programming and technical expertise, communication and organizational skills, and cultural intelligence and bilingualism are in high demand in the US.[9] For skilled positions that require a bachelor's degree, the needs are particularly pronounced in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). There is rapid growth of employment in STEM occupations, with more than one million jobs expected to be created between 2012 and 2022 which is expected to further exacerbate the skills gap.[10]

Changing demographics is also a key driver. 15% of the US population is currently 65 or older, and this population is expected to double by 2060.[11] As the population ages, the need for more individuals to join the workforce is increasing. Finally, location matters. Specific industries, such as manufacturing, are disproportionately affected if they are located outside major metropolitan areas, where traditional talent can be harder to attract.

All this adds up to a difficult situation for employers. Unfilled jobs cost the US $160 billion annually, and if skilled positions are left unfilled for more than 30 days, 77% of companies say their operations are hurt.[12]

SLIs offer hiring managers a talent pool with a wide array of experience and skills that can fill available jobs, and mitigate the financial and productivity burdens many US employers face. From a skills gap perspective, STEM is a great example of this. As of 2015, foreign-born individuals comprised 20-25% of the US STEM workforce, double the percentage that they constituted in 1990.[13] Oliver Wyman's research suggests that healthcare professionals in particular recognized the opportunity that SLIs provide. They reported 14% fewer issues finding strong SLI candidates, recognizing that technical skills and expertise are readily transferrable to the US. They also reported 20% less difficulty accurately assessing foreign degrees or applicable equivalents and 13% fewer issues attracting SLIs to their geographies.

[7] US News, June 2017; [8] Manpower Group, 2016/2017 Talent Shortage Survey;
[9] Business News Daily, October 2016; LinkedIn, August 2016; Hayes, The most in demand soft skills for 2018 and beyond; CNBC, April 2017;
[10] Bureau of Labor Statistics, Spring 2014; [11] US Census Bureau, April 2017;
[12] Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR) on behalf of Indeed, November 2014; US News, March 2016;
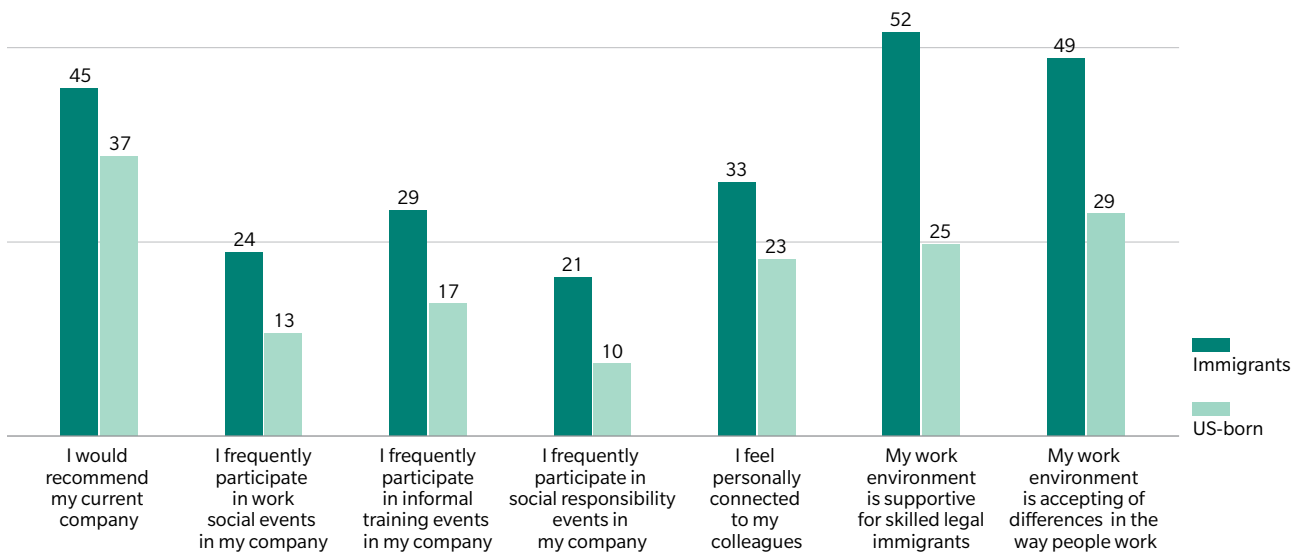[13] American Immigration Council, June 2017

2. AN UNTAPPED MARKET

While SLIs can help fill skills gaps, given their higher unemployment rate relative to the US-born population, they also provide a significant untapped talent market that employers can access. With almost 2 million SLIs in low-skilled jobs or without a job, there is a plethora of stories in which SLIs struggle to find a job despite their qualifications and experience.[14]

Immigrants have historically proven to be essential to the growth of the economy, playing an out-sized role in the founding of US companies. Immigrants found almost a quarter of all new businesses, while accounting for less than 15% of the US population. In 2017, almost 20% of Fortune 500 companies were founded by immigrants, and another 25% were founded by the children of immigrants, including companies like Google, AT&T, and Chobani.[15] More than 20% of Inc. 500 CEOs, leaders of the fastest growing private companies in the US, are immigrants.[16]

SLIs also help to build a strong company culture. From Oliver Wyman's research, as seen in Exhibit 2, SLIs are twice as likely to participate in work community events and social responsibility events at their companies as compared to US-born employees.

Exhibit 2: Feelings on Belonging and Inclusion at their Employer
Immigrants and US-born Respondents, "Very likely" responses on 5-point scale, in %

	Immigrants	US-born
I would recommend my current company	45	37
I frequently participate in work social events in my company	24	13
I frequently participate in informal training events in my company	29	17
I frequently participate in social responsibility events in my company	21	10
I feel personally connected to my colleagues	33	23
My work environment is supportive for skilled legal immigrants	52	25
My work environment is accepting of differences in the way people work	49	29

[14] Migration Policy Institute, December 2016; [15] Brookings Institution, December 2017; [16] Inc. Magazine, February 2015

3. THE VALUE OF DIVERSITY

Discussions about diversity in the United States are nearly impossible to miss, and the impact of diversity on the bottom-line and team innovation is well documented. A University of Florida study shows that a higher-level of diversity in the workforce benefits overall company performance as compared to less diverse peers.[17] The top quartile of racially and ethnically diverse organizations is 35% more likely to have financial returns above the industry median.[18]

Teams with diverse backgrounds and personalities drive better and more innovative solutions than homogeneous teams.

Many companies have clearly expressed their desire to attract a more diverse workforce. A Forbes study found that 65% of the 321 large global company executives surveyed plan to recruit a diverse workforce.[19] Of these executives, nearly all reported that their companies have diversity and inclusion strategies. Desire, however, doesn't always result in impact. Employers have struggled for decades to recruit and retain diverse workforces, and 57% of employees thought their company should be doing more to increase diversity in the workplace.[20] These bottom-line results are built over time.

Recent research expands on the impact of diversity beyond traditional racial or gender lines. According to a Stanford Graduate School of Business study, teams with more generally diverse backgrounds and personalities drive better and more innovative solutions than homogeneous teams.[21] Part of this is attributed to homogeneous teams, at times, lacking the intellectual conflict and debate necessary for innovation. Considering the varied experience and geographic profiles of SLIs, they offer another opportunity for firms to drive towards better results.

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[17] University of Florida, February 2016; [18] Forbes, January 2015; [19] Forbes Insights, July 2011; [20] Glassdoor, November 2014;
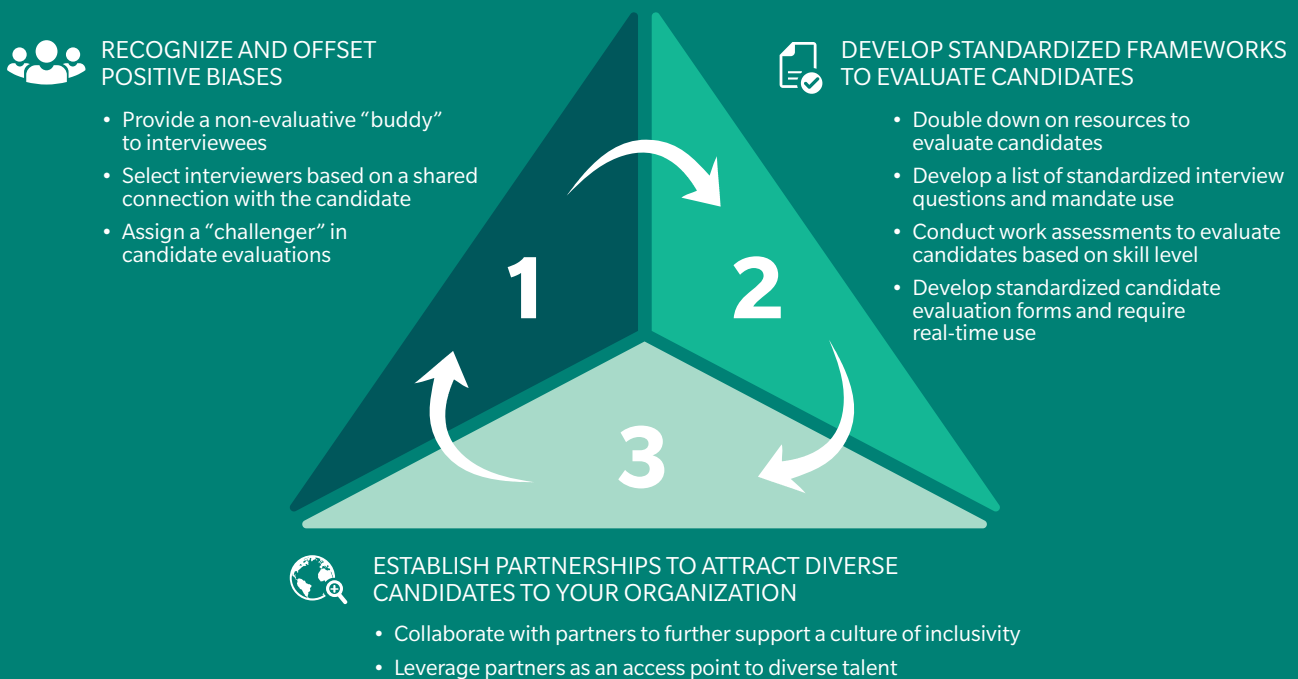[21] Stanford University, August 2006

EMBRACE THE OPPORTUNITY

The business case for inclusion of SLIs is clear. So how do you attract and hire SLIs?

Our research identified three key areas for employers to focus their efforts to actively level the playing field and build strong teams. These best practices are applicable to recruiting a diverse workforce more broadly, and SLIs in particular. We summarize these in Exhibit 3.

1. **Recognize and offset positive biases:** Acknowledge the positive biases favoring "more familiar" candidates and create opportunities for SLIs to connect with your organization and its employees.

2. **Develop standardized frameworks to evaluate candidates:** When screening resumes and conducting the interview process, ensure fair evaluation of all candidates based on their skills and potential contributions to the team.

3. **Establish partnerships to attract diverse candidates to your organization:** Leverage internal and external partnerships to improve the flow of diverse candidates and promote an environment of diversity and inclusion at your organization.

Exhibit 3: Corporate Best Practices for Hiring SLIs

RECOGNIZE AND OFFSET POSITIVE BIASES
- Provide a non-evaluative "buddy" to interviewees
- Select interviewers based on a shared connection with the candidate
- Assign a "challenger" in candidate evaluations

DEVELOP STANDARDIZED FRAMEWORKS TO EVALUATE CANDIDATES
- Double down on resources to evaluate candidates
- Develop a list of standardized interview questions and mandate use
- Conduct work assessments to evaluate candidates based on skill level
- Develop standardized candidate evaluation forms and require real-time use

ESTABLISH PARTNERSHIPS TO ATTRACT DIVERSE CANDIDATES TO YOUR ORGANIZATION
- Collaborate with partners to further support a culture of inclusivity
- Leverage partners as an access point to diverse talent

1. RECOGNIZE AND OFFSET POSITIVE BIASES

The first step towards actively leveling the playing field is recognizing how unbalanced it is today. An abundance of positive biases help "more familiar" candidates in their application and interviewing process.[22] SLIs are often at a distinct disadvantage due to a more limited professional network and unfamiliarity with US culture and recruiting norms. The following best practices can help level the playing field.

PROVIDE A NON-EVALUATIVE "BUDDY" TO CANDIDATES DURING THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

How do most candidates hear about a job opportunity? Usually, it's through a connection from their network: 60-80% of candidates find a job through personal relationships.[23] This network helps push the candidate along and can provide them with the inside scoop about a company's culture. For SLIs, lacking a network at the companies they are applying to is a distinct disadvantage.

60-80% of candidates *find a job through* *personal relationships.*

One way to help mitigate this is by providing a "buddy" to all candidates during the interview process. The "buddy" acts as a non-evaluative source of knowledge for the candidates; their responsibilities include reaching out to the candidate prior to their interviews to answer questions about the organization's culture and work style. For greatest impact, a "buddy" should be assigned prior to the first round interview, though if resource constrained, organizations could assign them prior to final round interviews.

These "buddies" are particularly valuable for SLIs as they help mimic the benefits of a broader network that other candidates might have. As seen in Exhibit 4, from Oliver Wyman's research, while only 20% of SLIs surveyed received a "buddy" during their own interview process, 77% of those with a "buddy" believed it was moderately to extremely impactful in helping to hire SLIs.
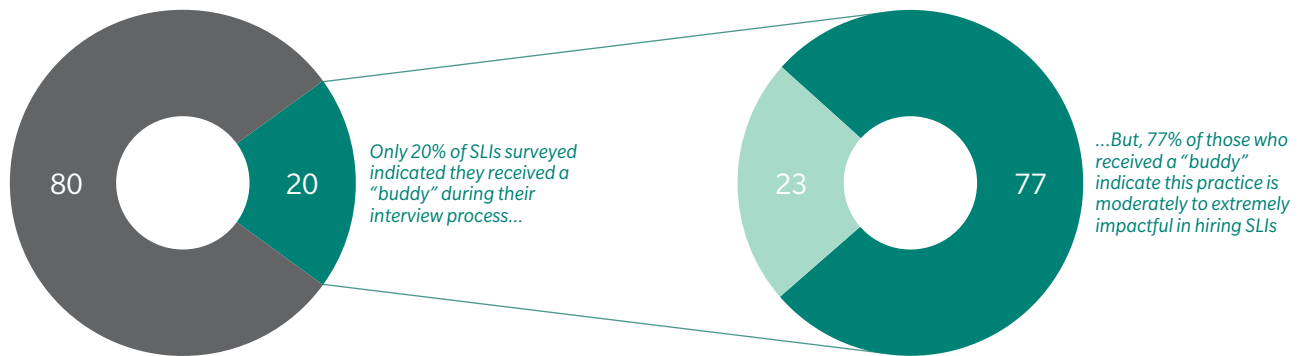
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[22] Harvard Business Review, April 2016; [23] Fox Business, April 2011

SLIs WHO RECEIVED A "BUDDY":
% OF ALL RESPONDENTS

IMPACT OF A "BUDDY":
% OF SLIs WHO RECEIVED A "BUDDY"

Only 20% of SLIs surveyed indicated they received a "buddy" during their interview process...

...But, 77% of those who received a "buddy" indicate this practice is moderately to extremely impactful in hiring SLIs

SELECT INTERVIEWERS BASED ON A SHARED CONNECTION WITH THE CANDIDATE

After surviving the resume screen and learning the ins-and-outs of the company from a buddy, next comes the interview process. For better or worse, it's human nature to favor individuals because they are similar to you.[24] SLIs have an uphill battle if they have difficulty connecting with their interviewer about memories at their alma mater, an unforgettable old coworker, or a shared cultural phenomenon. Nostalgia and shared experiences create strong connections, regardless of an individual's particular capabilities or qualifications.

Employers are almost as likely to connect with someone with whom they have a shared hobby or sports interest as they would with someone who attended their university.

The good news is that connections can be actively addressed and integrated into the interview process. To the extent possible, companies can match interviewers and interview based on a point of commonality.

[24] Inc., January 2012

TO WHAT EXTENT ARE YOU AS AN INTERVIEWER MORE LIKELY TO CONNECT WITH A CANDIDATE IF THEY ...
IN %

Are the same gender	44
Are the same ethnicity	51
Share an interest in a particular hobby or sport	67
Went to the same university	72
Worked previously in the same firm	77
Worked previously in the same industry as you	83

Substantially more
likely to connect

Slightly more
to connect
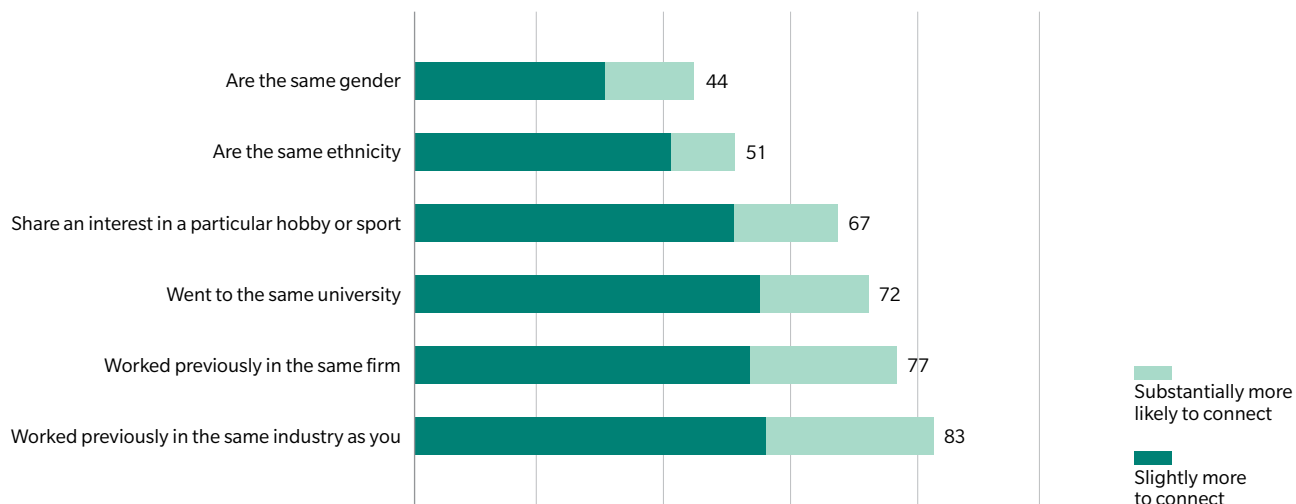
Oliver Wyman's research found that employers are almost as likely to connect with someone whom they have a shared hobby or sports interest as they would with someone who attended their university. Exhibit 5 gives examples of similarities companies may use to pair interviewers and candidates, and the likelihood of these creating a connection.

ASSIGN A "CHALLENGER" WHILE MAKING HIRING DECISIONS

The final step of any interview process is the hiring decision. A critical role at this point in the process is the "challenger." This is an individual, assigned in advance, who may already be involved with the interview process. During hiring decision discussions, the "challenger" is there to probe deeper on the recommendations from each interviewer and ask if they are also considering how the candidate will complement the team.

In playing this role, a challenger can help to minimize "groupthink," which encourages the hiring of the same type of person.[25] They do this by asking questions, encouraging active discussions, and probing individuals further to ensure they are not just agreeing with the rest of the group to avoid conflict and move the process along.

2. DEVELOP STANDARDIZED FRAMEWORKS TO EVALUATE CANDIDATES

As various studies have shown, the candidate evaluation process can be littered with bias, which often favors the majority group candidates rather than minority group candidates, including SLIs.[26] Standardized frameworks help employers focus on the experience, skills and capabilities that are important to the position being filled, thus minimizing this bias.

Companies like Google have recognized the value of structuring their interview process, and developed standardized interview questions specifically to mitigate the unconscious bias that generally leads to a lack of diversity within a firm.[27] However, there's room to further this impact across companies.

Adoption of standardized frameworks and evaluation practices is limited in small organizations, which often fill roles on a one-off basis, and even in large companies, the implementation of standardized interviewing is inconsistent. A standard interview guide does little good if it is not implemented consistently.

66% of employers have experienced the negative effects of bad interviewing.

Non-standardized interviews don't just harm the candidate, who loses an employment opportunity, but also can greatly affect employers. According to the National Business Research Institute (NBRI), 66% of employers have experienced the negative effects of bad interviewing which led to the hiring of candidates who are not suited for the position. This results in not only a loss of productivity for the firm, but wasted resources on training, HR, interviewing, and additional job postings for a replacement hire.[28]

Based on a study of 19 different assessment techniques, unstructured job interviews are a poor predictor of hiring, predicting only 14% of an employee's future performance. This is substantially worse compared to structured interviews, which are almost twice as predictive of employee performance.[29] To bring in the most qualified candidates (while diminishing biases), companies should standardize the interview process – from the actual interview to how the candidates are evaluated.

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[26] Business Insider, July 2015; [27] Business Insider, September 2014; [28] National Business Research Institute (NBRI), December 2012;
[29] Wired, April 2015

DOUBLE DOWN ON RESOURCES TO EVALUATE CANDIDATES

Simply put, one set of eyes is not enough to ensure the best hiring decisions. Condorcet's Jury Theorem illustrates exactly that: adding incremental members to a jury for making a decision increases the chance of arriving at a correct decision, assuming each member has a greater than 50% chance of voting correctly.[30] In most business circumstances, adding just one individual at the resume screening and interview stages of the process can be beneficial.

69% of those who mandate a second resume screener believe that it contributes to successfully hiring SLIs, but only 29% of employers currently require this practice.

Why is this important for resume screening? Oliver Wyman's research indicates 69% of those who mandate a second resume screener believe that it contributes to successfully hiring SLIs, but only 29% of employers currently require this practice. This disconnect implies candidates are falling through the cracks, and a second set of eyes can help to diminish the individual bias of any single reviewer.

For some organizations where this may be impractical to implement across-the-board, the mere possibility that an application may be screened by another individual may result in a more objective evaluation. Take the example of a departmental coffee room that had an "honesty box," in which people are supposed to place money when buying a drink based on a poster with prices. From a Newcastle University study, when the poster with prices also had pictures of eyes, people were almost three times more likely to place money in the box than when the poster had flowers on it.[31] Individuals act more intentionally when they feel like their actions are being monitored and evaluated; so simply requiring a second reviewer on a random subset of applications may help mitigate individual bias.

The same logic justifies the merits of adding a panel-style interview as a part of the interview process. This type of interview can help to ensure candidates are asked the appropriate questions and evaluated against relevant criteria. The benefits of this practice are two-fold. First, it helps train newer interviewers on best practices because they can learn by example. And second, because the interviewers are in the same room hearing the same responses from the candidate, this encourages each interviewer to think more consciously about the justification of their decision making and consider their individual biases.

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[30] Essay on the Application of Analysis to the Probability of Majority Decisions, Marquis de Condorcet, 1785; [31] New Scientist, June 2006

DEVELOP A LIST OF STANDARDIZED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND MANDATE USE

For many in the workforce today, it's easy to look back on the interview process – even when it results in a job offer – with a sense of puzzlement: How was I being evaluated? Why were certain questions asked? Did this interview actually test my ability to perform the job?

This best practice aims to better link the interview experience with the job requirements, and at the same time helps provide clarity and consistency in the interview process, also recognizing that candidates applying for the same role may not be interviewed by the same interviewers. For each position being filled, the hiring team should align on a standardized set of capabilities required and a related set of interview questions to be asked of each candidate. Questions should be aimed at addressing technical skills as well as behavioral aspects and be asked consistently across interviewers to ensure candidates are evaluated against the same set of questions.

*"With an unskilled interviewer, you are not sure what information is coming out. **Your connection is sometimes weighted more heavily than your skills."***

Oliver Wyman's research shows that only half of organizations use standardized questions in interviews today. By not standardizing the questions, interviewers can be subject to individual bias by focusing on a candidate's likeability rather than their capability, especially if the interviewer is not experienced or skilled with interviewing. One employer we spoke to reiterated this risk: "With an unskilled interviewer, you are not sure what information is coming out. Your connection is sometimes weighted more heavily than your skills."

One way of implementing this is for organizations to create a view of the capabilities they want to test, and develop five to six potential questions for the interviewer to choose from within each of the capability categories. This reminds interviewers of the capabilities to be tested in a standardized framework while still providing the interviewer with some flexibility in selecting the exact questions to ask.

According to Oliver Wyman's research, 70% of employers who have required standardized interview questions found they contributed to successfully hiring SLIs. One hypothesis is that as SLIs likely face language and cultural barriers and may struggle with idioms, jargon, or acronyms,[32] and given the framing of certain questions and interview protocols can greatly differ across countries, interviewing SLIs using a more standard set of questions allows them to focus on demonstrating their knowledge and potential.

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[32] Journal of Al-Frahids Arts, 2013, Vol. 3

CONDUCT WORK ASSESSMENTS TO EVALUATE CANDIDATES BASED ON SKILL LEVEL

Another way to help understand whether a candidate can perform the job well is through a work assessment. These are skill-based, industry-specific examinations that mirror the tasks performed directly on the job. When conducted consistently across candidates, they provide employers with a way to compare the relative abilities of candidates on tasks directly relevant to the position.

For SLIs, work assessments provide a particularly appealing opportunity because they increase the focus on competencies and reduce the impact of individual biases. From Oliver Wyman's research, 37% of SLIs indicated that the first job they took in the United States was not reflective of their qualifications, and the use of a work assessment could help employers identify and tap into the SLIs full potential.

Extensive research shows that work assessments are the best predictor of how someone will perform in a job.[33] 73% of employers who use work assessments find it impacts their likelihood of hiring SLIs, based on Oliver Wyman's research.

DEVELOP STANDARDIZED CANDIDATE EVALUATION FORMS AND REQUIRE REAL-TIME USE

Evaluating candidates based on a consistent framework shouldn't sound revolutionary, but applying the framework consistently surprisingly is. While 38% of employers indicated their company has standardized forms to evaluate candidates, our interviews with employers indicate that only a fraction of firms use the forms consistently, underscoring the issue of standardized candidate evaluation form adoption.

Standardized evaluation forms help employers choose the best candidate because they:

1. allow comparison across candidates based on the capabilities which are considered important for the job; and

2. minimize reliance on stereotypes and "likeability" guiding impressions. For SLIs, requiring evaluation across a predetermined set of criteria can help to diminish the bias "more familiar" candidates can gain simply by being similar to their interviewer.

37% of SLIs indicated that the first job they took in the United States was not reflective of their qualifications and the use of a work assessment could help employers identify and tap the SLIs full potential.

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[33] Wired, April 2015

There must be improvement on the implementation of this practice. Mandating that interviewers submit their evaluation forms immediately after each interview can help to ensure that the form is filled in based on fresh, top-of-mind information, especially in situations where multiple candidates may be seen over the course of days or weeks.
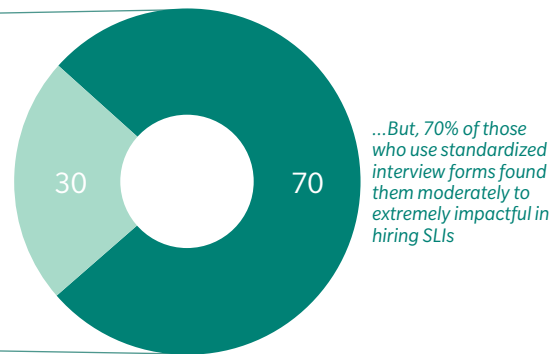
On many candidate evaluation forms today, in addition to assessing the candidate on their capabilities, a section is dedicated to "cultural fit." The use of cultural fit as a criterion is often interpreted, whether actively or subconsciously, as evaluating, "Is this person like me?" and "Do I like this person?" This disadvantages more diverse candidates, including SLIs, and misses the point about the team as a whole. The "fit" criteria should ask the question whether the candidate complements the skills and viewpoints already at the organization, pushing the thinking towards, "Will this person complement and bring fresh perspectives to our team?" Considering candidates in terms of not only their individual characteristics but also their contributions to the team as a whole can be a more productive approach to "fit" questions.

Exhibit 6: Impact of Standardized Review Forms on SLI Hiring

EMPLOYERS USING STANDARDIZED REVIEW FORMS:
% OF ALL RESPONDENTS
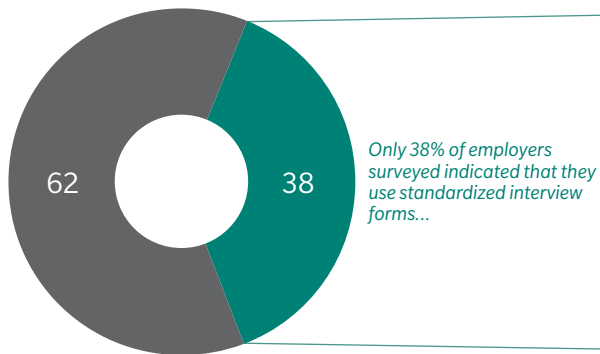
IMPACT OF STANDARDIZED REVIEW FORMS:
% OF EMPLOYERS USING STANDARDIZED
REVIEW FORMS

62 · 38

Only 38% of employers surveyed indicated that they use standardized interview forms...

30 · 70

...But, 70% of those who use standardized interview forms found them moderately to extremely impactful in hiring SLIs

3. ESTABLISH PARTNERSHIPS TO ATTRACT DIVERSE CANDIDATES TO YOUR ORGANIZATION

The current talent recruitment channels for candidates in most companies follow a familiar pattern: post onto the company website, scrape LinkedIn, engage recruiters, and use job posting boards. But this status quo isn't good enough for enabling companies to reach and hire diverse talent.

Internal or external partnerships with groups that focus on diversity and inclusion (for example, Employee Resource Groups within an organization, or non-profits external to the organization) offer the opportunity for companies to create connections with, improve access to, and gain a better understanding of diverse candidates.

COLLABORATE WITH PARTNERS TO FURTHER SUPPORT A CULTURE OF INCLUSIVITY

Internally, Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are best known as platforms and support networks for diverse employees and those with special interests.

One particularly helpful way that ERGs can engage with their organization is through facilitating reverse mentoring sessions. As the name suggests, reverse mentoring flips the traditional mentorship model on its head by having a minority group mentor the established majority group. This is often most effective for those in senior leadership positions who have a large impact on their company's culture through their "tone from the top." In this process, diverse individuals, including SLIs, can mentor others in their organization and provide them with a window into their different experiences, cultural norms, and viewpoints.

Externally, partners such as non-profits whose missions are to support diverse individuals, including SLIs, can provide opportunities for employees to volunteer (for example, as mentors or through joining networking sessions). Offering corporate volunteering opportunities such as these also has the benefit of attracting and retaining millennials and Gen Z, who are more socially conscious, which is important for building the workforce of the future.

Some non-profit partners also offer employees an opportunity to assist with programming such as mock interviews. These types of interactions, where employees interact directly with diverse individuals, allow employees to better understand different cultural norms and backgrounds, helping to break stereotypes.

This can be exemplified by employer partners that have participated in mock interview volunteering sessions with Upwardly Global. In a focus group Oliver Wyman conducted, following an Upwardly Global mock interview session, a hiring manager volunteer said: "In the mock interview, I found myself having a lot of 'aha' moments. I interviewed someone from Brazil, and it didn't seem like there was much enthusiasm or passion during the interview, but afterward he had a fun and engaging personality. Through our conversation, I learned that in Brazil, they are taught that work is very serious, and you shouldn't be smiling. And from a US employer perspective, that comes off as uninterested."

It is this understanding of different cultural norms, breaking of stereotypes, and creation of networks for SLIs that can help to influence individual outcomes when employers are interviewing diverse candidates, and ultimately create a stronger culture of inclusion.

"In the mock interview, I found myself having a lot of 'aha' moments... In Brazil, they are taught that work is very serious, and you shouldn't be smiling. And from a US employer perspective, that comes off as uninterested."

LEVERAGE PARTNERS AS AN ACCESS POINT TO DIVERSE TALENT

In addition to learning and gaining more exposure to diverse groups through partnerships with ERGs and volunteering opportunities with non-profits, these partnerships can also provide a direct access point to a more diverse talent pool.

ERGs can help to organize recruiting events and set up a pipeline for diverse talent. ERG members can speak openly to candidates about their experiences, creating an appealing and welcoming environment, as well as a network for the candidates that otherwise wouldn't exist. Some external partners may also provide databases or "head-hunting" style support to help employers connect with diverse candidates with relevant experience.

Oliver Wyman's research shows that filling a knowledge or skills gap within the company was the number one benefit for employers who have hired SLIs – and partnerships offer a way to tap into this talent pool.

Employers who have already established partnerships to access diverse talent recognize the value of these relationships. From Oliver Wyman's study of employers that partnered with Upwardly Global, 68% felt that participating in programming offered through this partnership has had an impact on the way they interact with colleagues or job candidates with an immigrant background. 92% of the same employers indicated they were as willing or more willing, with almost 40% more willing, to onboard and mentor immigrant employees after participating in a volunteering program organized by Upwardly Global. Partnerships with the right organizations can support both employers and qualified candidates.

Almost 40% of employers indicated they were more willing to onboard and mentor immigrant employees after participating in a volunteering program organized by Upwardly Global.

IMPLEMENT THESE HIRING BEST PRACTICES TODAY

SLIs offer a deep pool of skilled talent to employers. More likely to move for open jobs compared to their counterparts, SLIs bring relevant experience and diverse perspectives to the workforce.

Employers looking to take advantage of this talent pool should focus on leveling the playing field in the selection and interview process. With the three strategies outlined here to aid companies in focusing their efforts and build strong, effective, and inclusive teams, employers will be well positioned to attract, fairly evaluate, and hire talent.

AUTHORS

ANA KREACIC
Partner and Chief Knowledge Officer, Oliver Wyman
ana.kreacic@oliverwyman.com

TAMMI LING
Partner, Financial Services, Oliver Wyman
tammi.ling@oliverwyman.com

Ana Kreacic is the Executive Sponsor of the Women of Oliver Wyman (WOW)
Employee Resource Group and sits on Oliver Wyman's global Inclusion Council.
She also sits on the National Board of Directors for Upwardly Global.

Tammi Ling is a member of Upwardly Global's New York Leadership Council.

www.oliverwyman.com

OLIVER WYMAN