

Time to shift your hiring goal from 'culture-fit' to 'culture-add'

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By **Rianka Dorsainvil** | August 3, 2019 - 6:00 am EST

As a firm owner or decision-maker, you have the power to make an impact on this profession. Unfortunately, it's not always easy to know where you can "plug in" to the [diversity, equity and inclusion \(DEI\) movement](#). One key contribution we can all make to support the diversity and growth of the financial planning profession is to hire for culture-add, not culture-fit.

Hiring for "culture-fit" is something that's mentioned often within the financial planning profession. A culture-fit is the likelihood that an applicant will reflect and adapt to your existing [corporate culture](#). Many business owners believe that culture-fit is key when it comes to hiring.

However, culture-fit also can be detrimental to the growth of your organization — especially if you're hiring with DEI in mind. If you're only hiring people who can easily assimilate to your existing culture, you're never challenging your firm to grow, expand or hire incredible candidates who bring different perspectives to the table.

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"Culture-add," on the other hand, focuses on [finding applicants](#) who are an exceptional fit for a position based on their qualifications, as well as the unique perspective and background they'll bring to the job. For example, if you're trying to hire with culture-add in mind, you might look for a candidate who matches these descriptions:

- They have transferable skills that will add value to the position.
- Your organization can (and will) meet the structural needs required to support this new employee (for example, you're willing to develop a program for new moms or dads, or you're open to offering people time off to volunteer within their community).
- They're bringing something new to the table that will move your firm in the right direction.

There are several steps a firm can take to start hiring for culture-add rather than culture-fit.

1. Expand the search. By increasing the size of your [talent pool](#), you're more likely to find a wider range of applicants who are a fantastic culture-add to your organization.

2. Review and revise the job description. Have several people review the job description to make sure it's not indicating that you're looking for applicants of a specific gender or culture. In fact, consider adding a disclaimer to your job posting that notes that if people believe they're a good culture-add for your practice they should apply, even if they don't feel they meet all of your required qualifications.

3. Reevaluate the hiring process. Understand that unconscious bias is real and should be addressed in the hiring process. One way you can shed hiring bias is to remove names, contact information and schools from each application before reviewing them – so that you're truly reviewing candidates based on qualifications.

4. When in doubt, ask for help. Bringing in a professional who can help you hone your hiring process and how you view team growth can be incredibly helpful.

Rianka Dorsainvil is founder and president of Your Greatest Contribution.

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