

Forbes / Leadership / [#LikeABoss](#)

MAR 21, 2017 @ 07:50 AM

49,859



EDITOR'S PICK

The End Of Culture Fit

**Lars Schmidt**, CONTRIBUTOR*I cover recruiting, retention, employer branding and culture.* [FULL BIO](#) ✓

Opinions expressed by Forbes Contributors are their own.

TWEET THIS



A hiring process built around an undefined notion of "culture fit" is fraught with bias.



The notion of culture add reflects their desire to ensure all voices, opinions, views, upbringings, etc. are reflected by their staff makeup.



Arnaldo Capo (R) and Paul Schumacher play foosball while attending the NYC Uncubed tech recruiting event. (Photo by Mario Tama/Getty Images)

As more companies strive for diversity and inclusion, the term “culture fit” is falling out of favor.

The notion of hiring for culture fit was established as a foundation of many corporate recruiting processes. The term was embedded in career sites, integrated into interview processes, and touted as a competitive advantage for many organizations in the tech community. Over the years, the term has taken on more of

a tribal meaning. People who think like us. People who work like us. People who live like us. Please who look like us.

A hiring process built around an undefined notion of "culture fit" is fraught with bias. 🐦 In some organizations "culture fit" has become a weaponized phrase that interviewers use as a blanket term to reject candidates that don't match the hiring manager's view of the ideal candidate; and as such, it has become the embodiment of [unconscious bias](#). Most interviewers are more likely to hire people like themselves and discount those who are different. This type of thinking hinders diversity and leads to homogenous cultures.

Companies are beginning to drop the idea of culture fit altogether. As more companies shift their recruiting focus towards intentional diversity and inclusion efforts, they're reframing their thinking to how diverse candidates can add to their culture – not fit into it.

Structuring for success at Facebook

Like much of Silicon Valley, Facebook has been searching for ways to increase their diversity. To create a more inclusive hiring process, they prohibited the term "culture fit" when providing feedback on what interviewers liked or disliked about a candidate, requiring interviewers to provide specific feedback that supported their position. They reviewed their interview process to proactively identify unconscious bias and took steps to remove them from their process.

Facebook restructured their interviews to focus on alignment with their [five core values](#) and developed a "[managing unconscious bias](#)" training program, which they've since made available to the public. While this training is not mandatory, almost 100% of senior leadership and over 75% of non-leadership employees have voluntarily completed the courses.

“ “At Facebook, we've explicitly asked interviewers not to use the term 'culture fit' when giving feedback on a candidate because that phrase can easily allow bias to influence the outcome of an interview. As part of a larger effort to help people identify and correct for the biases that we all inherently have, interviewers at Facebook go through managing bias training and are encouraged to use the skills they've learned when interviewing candidates.”

– Facebook Spokesperson

Facebook also began [publicly sharing](#) their diversity numbers. Their last report from July of 2016 shows that current representation in senior leadership is 3% Black, 3% Hispanic and 27% women. New senior leadership hires at Facebook in the US over the last 12 months, 9% are Black, 5% are Hispanic, and 29% are women.

Their diversity report also illustrates their short, medium, and long-term plans to deliver a more inclusive workforce. These actions include the unconscious bias training detailed above, focused diversity sourcing efforts in recruiting, student programs (Facebook University, CODE.org support, Computer Science & Engineering (CS&E) Lean In Circles), and initiatives like TechPrep that introduces programming to pre-high school age students.

Lars Schmidt is the author of [How to Recruit in 2017](#) and [Employer Branding for Dummies](#).