Strategies for Improving Fire Department Diversity

Minneapolis Fire Chief John Fruetel
HR Generalist Krista Guzmán
Millennials are the largest generation in the U.S. labor force today.

In April 2018, more than one-in-three American labor force participants (35%) were Millennials, making them the largest generation in the U.S. labor force, according to a Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data.

City of Minneapolis workforce data from January 2019 shows that Millennials make up nearly 37% of our workforce.

35% of the Minneapolis Fire Department is projected to retire in the next 4 years.
Applicant Response

- A National Association of State Chief Administrators survey shows that state government job postings rose 11 percent from 2013 to 2017.
- Meanwhile, the number of people applying to state jobs dropped by 24 percent.
- CAOs cited noncompetitive salaries, negative perceptions about public service and insufficient recruitment as reasons.

The Jobs People Aren’t Applying to Anymore
The biggest application drops between 2013 and 2017

- Law enforcement: 63%
- HR professional: 54%
- Nurse: 50%
- Administrative: 44%
- Legal Professional: 39%
- Social worker: 39%
- Firefighter or EMT: 38%
- Education professional: 34%
- Maintenance worker: 33%
- Transportation: 33%
- Scientist: 30%

Source: National Association of State Chief Administrators
Before Posting the Job

Think about:

- Are you trying to reach a specific community or audience?
- What is the diversity of your current workforce?
- How have you recruited for the position in the past?
  - What challenges did you have?
  - How many applications did you receive?
  - Did you receive any feedback from applicants?
- Do the minimum qualifications and job duties accurately reflect the position?
- What are the key competencies most needed for the job?
Targeted Recruitment Strategies

- Help you reach the correct audience
- Help you find the best way to communicate
- Help you maximize your time
- Saves money
How effective is your testing?

Have you analyzed the results?

How many applicants have you lost in your hiring process?
- What were the reasons?

Have you partnered with the community?
Adverse impact is the negative effect an unfair and biased selection procedure has on a protected class. It occurs when a protected group is discriminated against during a selection process, like in a hiring process.

How do you measure it?

• The Four-Fifths rule states that if the selection rate for a certain group is less than 80 percent of that of the group with the highest selection rate, there is adverse impact on that group.
Think Outside the Box

When you speak with applicants, what are the reasons they are not being selected?

Are there other ways you can reach your targeted audiences?

Can you re-evaluate your position minimum qualifications or job duties?

Can you build a new pathway to employment?
Support for Change

- Is your organization prepared to change?
- Will you be faced with resistance after the change occurs?
- What is your communication strategy for the change?
- How will you get buy-in from key stakeholders?
What did we do in Minneapolis?
Specific Strategies

GOAL: Reflect the Community the Minneapolis Fire Department serves AND hire the most qualified candidates as Firefighters
What were the results?

- **Doubled** Female Applicants
- **Tripled** People of Color Applicants
EMS Pathways Academy
What were the results?

29 Total Firefighters Hired out of the EMS Academy Program since 2016
Questions?

- Fire Chief John Fruetel
- HR Generalist Krista Guzmán
- Phone: 612-673-2890