

STEM RECRUITMENT



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RECRUITING WOMEN IN STEM

European Schoolnet says that 'skills in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) are becoming an increasingly important part of basic literacy in today's knowledge economy. To keep Europe growing, we will need one million additional researchers by 2020.' It's a boom time for STEM recruiters but how can you get the best talent for the job? It is possible by tackling gender bias head on.

Unconscious Bias

In a Tedx Talk entitled The surprising neuroscience of gender inequality Janet Crawford reported that: 'a Yale University study looked at bias in the hiring for the traditionally male role of police chief. In this study, purportedly gender-blind participants were asked to review two applications. When no names were attached, they overwhelmingly preferred the application that had more education. But when a male or female name was attached, they overwhelmingly preferred the application with a male name.' So, it turns out we all suffer from unconscious bias.

The Echo Chamber

Microsoft claims that, 'When it comes to gender balance amongst European students of science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM), men still outnumber women. There are almost four times more men than women in Europe taking ICT-related studies and worldwide.' Homogenous views create an echo chamber of agreement and this means your product/ service won't necessarily appeal to the wider market. To get better results in the workplace you need the diversity that represents your customer or

client base and if women are buying or using your product then it makes business sense to hire them too.

Improve Job Descriptions

As simple as it sounds, the first step is to look at your job descriptions. Does the role appeal to men and women? Hire Women in Tech has an excellent round up of job description examples that show that even a change in a couple of words can make a profound effect on which gender it appeals. If you're not sure then try out Kat Mansfield's Gender Decoder to see if your unconscious mind has written gender biased job descriptions.

Rewrite Your Job's Expectations

The Harvard Business Review reports that, 'men apply for a job when they meet only 60% of the qualifications, but women apply only if they meet 100% of them.' Women are not applying for roles because they view job descriptions as a checklist rather than a wish list. Be honest about the qualifications or experience you do expect the candidate to have but give wiggle room for the less important ones otherwise you might be alienating high-flying female candidates.



BUILDING AN ADAPTABLE WORKFORCE

With a shortage of candidates for STEM roles how do you attract and hire the best talent available? Think about building an adaptable workforce...

Hire outside of STEM

Entrepreneur Eric Berridge makes a strong case for hiring outside STEM backgrounds after sending in a barman to speak to a client that his engineers were failing to please. Instead of diving deeper into the rabbit hole, Jeff the barman changed the conversation with the client, questioned the project and ultimately created a solution. As a consequence, and a lot of hard work, this computer consulting firm was the first to ever reach 10 billion dollars in annual sales. Although it's not possible for every company to hire bar staff like Jeff to fix complex technical issues, the anecdote highlights that the importance of looking for bright sparks that can think outside the box – even if their CV doesn't tick all the HR boxes.

Adaptability to change

The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training's current analysis of online job vacancies across the EU highlights workers' adaptability to change as the skill most sought after by European employers. Workers that can adapt to any circumstances are valued more highly than any other skill. And is this a skill that you can find on a CV? Sadly not. It's more important than ever to find a candidate that has the right mindset and chemistry that can make a significant impact on the business - so how can you do that?

What if...?

Venture Investor Natalie Fratto might have the answer. To test people's adaptability in job interviews, Fratto asks 'what if' questions rather than asking for past examples of behaviour. By making potential employees look to the future she forces their brains to simulate and tests their resilience to change. Having a workforce that can bounce and roll with the punches can give the company the edge in our fast-paced moving world and that can hold more long-term weight.

So, step away from the 'tell me a time when' questions and prove your own adaptability by asking 'what if...?'



HOW TO RECRUIT RESEARCH SCIENTISTS

The shortage of highly skilled candidates across the scientific sector is never far from the headlines. Even during the recent recession, where you would expect the number of jobseekers to exceed the number of available jobs, recruiters were still struggling to fill vacancies. Now economies are recovering, this problem is set to worsen.

Recruiters are having to come up with new ideas to find the candidates they are looking for.

The European Union: A home market of 500 million people

One of the major advantages of recruiting in the European Union is that there are few barriers to trade and movement of people left between EU countries, giving them a home market of almost 500 million people.

In other fields, language and mutual recognition of degree types will often pose barriers to the movement of labour; however, when recruiting research scientists these barriers are minimal. Science degrees awarded across Europe have excellent levels of international recognition, plus larger companies working in English will find that not only will the vast majority of highly skilled workers speak excellent English, but today many European University diplomas are also issued in English.

A collaborative mindset

Scientists are well versed in the benefits of international collaboration. Especially as the scientific questions we seek answers to are growing ever more complicated, this spirit will only become stronger.

This can work to a recruiter's advantage: for the right job candidates are open to the idea of travel and settling in a new location. We see this particularly in younger candidates.

The benefits of an international workforce can also be felt on many levels. A culturally diverse workforce can improve its problem solving capabilities, and its communications possibilities across Europe, and even globally.

Increase your chances of finding the perfect candidate

Working together with EuroScienceJobs, where we specialise in international job opportunities, you can increase the number of suitable applications for your vacancy, and thereby increase your chances of finding the perfect specialist candidate.

We have helped a Dutch pharmaceutical company find Arabic-speaking pharmacovigilance experts, with candidates coming from the UK, Belgium, Germany, France and even further away. We also helped a company based in Barcelona find biochemists who spoke Mandarin.



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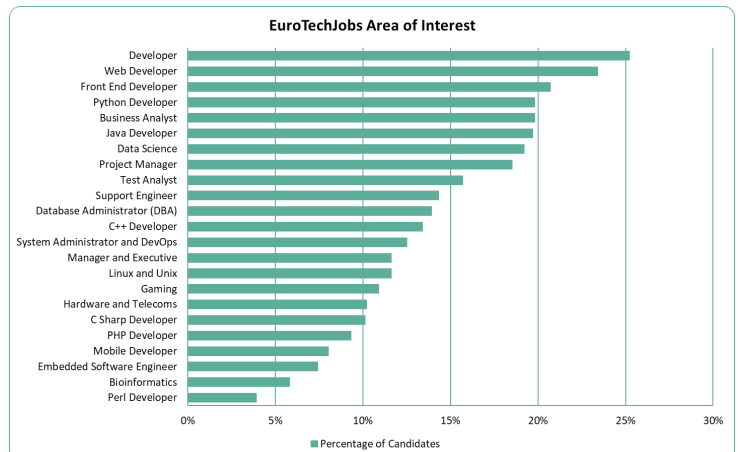
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