

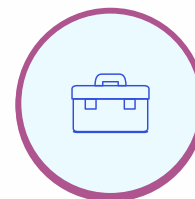


THE TOOLKIT

A collection of resources designed to provide practical tools for women and non-binary undergraduate students.

When You're Called a Diversity Hire

Have you every been super proud of a new job offer, internship, or leadership position, and shortly after, felt a slap in the face by a classmate telling you that you only received the position because you're a girl? This is called a "diversity hire" and not only is this offensive, but it's simply not true. There is often a stigma that women get jobs easier than men and are therefore less qualified than their male counterparts. While you and I know this to be wrong, in this issue of The Toolkit, you will get insightful tips on how to deal with colleagues that hint that you were a diversity hire.



"I'VE HEARD IT MULTIPLE TIMES: YOU ONLY GOT THIS INTERNSHIP BECAUSE YOU'RE A GIRL. HE SAID THAT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN WAY HARDER FOR HIM TO GET IT BECAUSE HE'D JUST BE ANOTHER GUY IN THE APPLICANT POOL. IN HIS EYES, ME GETTING THE INTERNSHIP HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH MY NEAR-PERFECT GPA, PREVIOUS RESEARCH EXPERIENCE, OR PROGRAMMING SKILLS."

- PHYSICS MAJOR

Tips & Tools

1

Focus your attention on what you bring to the group. Concentrate on what ideas you can offer and what perspective you bring to the table rather than focusing on your differences. Share your interests with your classmates that have deemed you as a diversity hire and discuss your passion for the position that you received. Wave off their comment by answering back with excitement, stating what specific skills or experiences you're going to be weaving in to this new position. You could say, "I am super excited to bring a new perspective to the team. I think that my experience at xyz will be really valuable."

2

Tap into your supportive community. You have allies and supporters that you can go to for specific advice on how to handle your situation. You should share your experiences and sometimes, frustrations like these, with the people in your inner network of trust. It's possible that they have had a similar situation and that they can give you specific insight on how to navigate the situation. Plus, it feels good to have your supporters remind you that your new position has nothing to do with your race or gender, and has everything to do with your experience and abilities.

3

Don't ignore it. If the behavior continues and you consistently feel marginalized, it might be worth filing a complaint with HR or the equivalent in your situation. Keep track of the peers that do this so that you can provide a log and prove a pattern of harassment. It's important to speak up for yourself if reoccurring behavior gives you negative feelings about working with others or doing your job.

4

Be confident in your abilities. In the end, anything that someone says is their problem, not yours. Don't let these people bring down your confidence level and make you feel undeserving of your accomplishment. Don't let others decide your abilities, be confident in your own. Diversity hire comments will go away as you achieve and produce, but in the meantime, don't let the people that are definitely more closed-minded get to you.

Further Reading

"[Practical Advice If You've Ever Been Called a Diversity Hire](#)" by Fast Company | Medium
 "[6 Ways Diversity and Inclusion Impact the Cost and Effectiveness of Recruiting](#)" by Paolo Gaudiano | Forbes
 "[How the Fed is Trying to Fix the White Male Problem](#)" by Jeanna Smialek | New York Times

A note from the author

The most important thing to take away from this is that there is no such thing as a diversity hire, that you were hired for your skills, experiences, and the insight that you bring to the table. You were hired or given the position because you earned it. Companies will never waste money by hiring someone that they think is unqualified for the job. It's simply too costly of a mistake. We encourage hiring people from diverse backgrounds because studies have shown that diversity enhances the output and efficiency of a time. However, you will never be hired solely on this; you will be hired because you are qualified. Remember, that you are qualified and deserving of where you are. -Kaitlin Gili, CEO