Responding to Employer Requests for Diverse Candidates
University of Missouri - St. Louis
Career Services

For employers and universities, diversity is a key issue. It is important to note that employers and colleges are coming at the issue of diversity from different directions. In general, for employers, concern about diversity is focused on sourcing, attracting, and hiring diverse candidates. As a result, they look to career services for help in gaining access to diverse candidates. Career Services at the University of Missouri - St. Louis is committed within the legal limits to providing assistance to employers that have diversity inclusion initiatives.

For career services practitioners, the issue of helping employers gain access to diverse candidates can be murky. First, there are legal constraints that can make it difficult for them to give employers "easy" access to diverse candidates. The career services office can help employers develop an inclusive pool, but is legally prevented from helping employers develop a pool limited to just diverse candidates. In addition there are ethical issues at stake; career services professionals are bound to "refer all interested students for employment opportunities without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, or disability." (NACE Journal, Fall 2005)

Given the demographic and work force realities, it is essential for career services and employers to look for ways to work together that don't require either group to compromise goals, legalities, or ethics. For both, it is an issue of significant importance in the realm of career development, recruitment, and hiring.

Recruiting through minority departments and organizations and holding information sessions geared to minority students, along with other recruiting sources and activities that are open to all students, is proper affirmative action (taken from the National Association of Colleges and Employers). These targeted activities must be designed to increase the diversity of the candidate population, not decrease it.

Keeping these policies in mind, the University of Missouri - St. Louis will take the following steps when an employer requests assistance with their diversity inclusion initiatives:

1. Company should post the position and/or recruiting event with Career Services, so that all students have equal access to the opportunity.
2. Career Services will notify the Office of Multicultural Relations and the Diversity Coordinator in the Office of Student Life of the position posting and/or recruiting event.
   - Both offices will then advertise the opportunity and/or recruiting event to students that interface with their offices/student organizations.
   - Referrals, applications and registration for programs will go directly to the company requesting assistance with the initiative.