

A fair chance at jobs, if HR managers stand up and be counted

FROM **WALTER JAYANDRAN**

I commend Associate Professor Eugene Tan for his commentary, "Go beyond 'nudges' in tackling discrimination" (Sept 25), on the Fair Consideration Framework (FCF).

As a former human resource professional, I wish to emphasise the role of HR in influencing the moral practices of an organisation.

Often times a hiring manager or the senior management tends to make hiring decisions not based on fair and non-discriminatory considerations, and HR has very little influence in such hiring decisions.

This is more so in small and medium enterprises where the HR man-

ager's role is relegated more to administer and facilitate decisions of the operations managers.

As Assoc Prof Tan highlighted, the application of the FCF has to be contextualised. There is a need to require companies to institute an ethical hiring policy and from it design a process that can be subject to metrics.

It need not be tedious, but a report on important selection statistics could be made mandatory where any falsification would be deemed an offence.

Ethics play a very important role during the recruitment process.

While there are laws in place that protect certain employees, job applicants really have no protection against discriminatory selection processes.

Some common ethical dilemmas that HR professionals face in hiring can include:

- Placing misleading advertisements for jobs.
- Misrepresenting the requirements of a particular position.
- Responding to a hiring manager who has asked you to find a way "around" not hiring a qualified candidate for discriminatory purposes.
- Not reviewing candidates based on their merits.

To help deal with these types of dilemmas, it is critical for HR professionals to be honest, consistent and objective throughout the recruiting process. When recruiting employees from agents, customers and competitors, employers should conduct themselves in a transparent fashion.

HR managers must keep an eye on diversity and equal opportunity as well as both ethical and legal hiring practices.

As issues arise, the HR manager must be adept at resolving conflicts between the demands of company culture and those of ethical behaviour.

Can the Ministry of Manpower devise a format for employers to report their compliance under the FCF?



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