

# Reset

Tags: [#diversity](#) [#recruiting](#)

Creator: johnny-taylor-jr

## Dialogue

This is an extraordinary time in the war for talent.

Companies that hunker down to ride out the storm often emerge from shelter bewildered to find competitors that innovated, gambled, and invested—and won.

When you discuss recruiting with HR professionals, 48 percent of them will tell you their biggest problem is finding a deep enough pool of talent to make good choices about hiring. When you ask managers what is their biggest frustration with HR? They can't source talent as effectively as they would like. So, there's complete convergence.

How much of a problem is this?

His message --> "Do good and do good."

Older workers:

Reports from the Urban Institute and ProPublica underscore the reality: more than half of older US workers say they've been pushed out of longtime jobs before they chose to retire.

In this decade, the 65 to 74 and 75 and older age groups are projected to have growth rates of 55 percent and 86 percent, respectively.

Workers with disabilities who are able and willing:

A study from Accenture...found that companies that make efforts to hire those with disabilities performed better and saw, on average, 23 percent higher revenue.

Veterans - the data is really striking on performance and retention. There are a lot of misperceptions about veterans. Where would you invite people to perhaps consider different thinking on recruiting veterans?

There are many organizations that have set very specific metrics on diversity goals -- and even have set up bonus structures to incentive leaders and recruiting teams to

bring in talent that's been traditional overlooked. Obviously well intended, but in reading your book I know you have a different way of looking at this.

You mention about your daughter:

In many ways, it's like a moment I had with my daughter the other day. I asked her to take out the garbage. And her response? "Are you going to pay me an allowance?" My response? "No, I'm not. You're going to eat tonight."

More on this:

I'm not going to bonus people for hiring Black workers or the formerly incarcerated. That's ridiculous. What I would tell anyone who works for me is that this is what SHRM stands for. This is our fundamental commitment. It is one of our cultural truths.

We should do three things: invent, invest, and implement those programs best suited to our culture and communities.

Owner, CEO, executive director, -- where would you invite them to start?

For the person who is managing a team. What can they do?

What have you changed your mind on?

## Reserve

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) - unpaid leave.

Worked at Blockbuster

## Quotes

*Highlight [124]:* What are the real reasons people have not looked beyond the same-old, same-old yet? Ignorance? Laziness? Complacency? Fear of the unknown? Fear of lower profits? Let's focus on the top executives for a minute. Do they like the status quo? Are they only comfortable with someone like them? What would happen if an HR executive brought you a CFO candidate in a wheelchair? It's a gut check. As humans we're all flawed, but you have to ask yourself the hard questions. Can you see yourself across the desk from a disabled Black woman or an aging veteran from the Iraq War? As I've mentioned before, there is intersectionality in our society. A lot of people tick a ton of checkboxes, if you will, but they are not commonly considered. Now you're seeing the belly of the beast, where fear of discomfort lives. But here is what's really uncomfortable—losing. Losing the competition for talent. Losing the edge in your industry. So, ignore pools of uncommon talent at your own risk, because these people can be transformative assets for your organization. Where are these skilled workers? They are on various networks, they are companies of one, they are all ages, they are

military veterans, and they are even former offenders. Smart leaders can learn to find the right talent, effectively develop them on the job, and keep them passionately engaged in a way that also creates a desirable culture of community, collaboration, and innovation. (See the resources section at the back of the book for more.)

*Highlight [125]:* When you discuss recruiting with HR professionals, 48 percent of them will tell you their biggest problem is finding a deep enough pool of talent to make good choices about hiring. When you ask managers what is their biggest frustration with HR? They can't source talent as effectively as they would like. 2So, there's complete convergence. It's about growing that talent pool to include untapped resources, increasing the pipeline, and closing the skills gap. We have to unlock the talent and tap the potential by valuing workers who have been overlooked, marginalized, and discarded. Morally, it's a move in line with diversity and inclusion (D&I). Morally, we can all have a warm feeling about it. But businesswise, it's a cold, hard necessity.

*Highlight [126]:* America has a youth-obsessed culture, no question. But businesses that reflect this bias are only shining a mirror on their own shortcomings and insecurities. To hire so narrowly young means to overlook older talent with institutional knowledge, a history of key relationships, and a focused approach to accomplishing goals.

*Highlight [128]:* THE ADVANTAGES OF HAVING DISABLED WORKERS IN THE WORKFORCE A study from Accenture, in partnership with Disability:IN and the American Association of People with Disabilities, found that companies that make efforts to hire those with disabilities performed better and saw, on average, 23 percent higher revenue.

*Highlight [128]:* Veterans (Warriors around the World): There are so many misperceptions about veterans in the workplace that we hear about in HR: "Why bother? They're going to get called up or relocate anyway." . . . "I need someone who can lead, not just follow orders." . . . "I'm concerned about bringing PTSD into the workplace." The arguments against hiring veterans are hollow, ignorant, and play into every Hollywood stereotype of soldiers unable to function in the civilian world. Let's start with a basic fact: only 14 percent of the active duty military are combat specialists. Now, add other truths, such as the increasing diversity of the military and the additional education many of them have compared to civilian peers.

*Highlight [129]:* VETERANS IN THE WORKFORCE DATA • Sixty-five percent of veterans have some college education or higher, making them more educated than their civilian peers. • Sixty-eight percent of employers report veterans perform "better than" or "much better than" their civilian peers. • Fifty-seven percent of veterans stay at their jobs longer than the median tenure of 2.5 years (for subsequent roles after their first job following active duty).

*Highlight [129]:* Formerly Incarcerated (Second-Chance Payoff): We are long past the Willie Horton stigma of the 1988 presidential campaign, back when a criminal on furlough went on a violent crime spree as America was discussing felon rehabilitation. The point is, one example blew up the entire cause for years. But what we've seen of late is how smart CEOs, such as Jamie Dimon at Chase, are making it a point (and a successful one) to expand their talent pool by hiring employees with criminal records. A couple of years ago, Chase reported hiring twenty thousand workers in the United States, and 10 percent of them had a criminal history. Phenomenal. Chase went so far as to "ban the box" by removing the question of criminal records on its applications. As Dimon stated in a press release: "When someone cannot get their foot in the door to compete for a job, it's bad for business and bad for communities that need access to economic opportunity." <sup>4</sup>We simply need to be thoughtful about removing barriers for those who have made mistakes that led to periods of incarceration, while maintaining our own unique culture and cultural truths. The numbers back this up. As the US government reports, for the formerly incarcerated, employment within a year after their release reduces the chance of recidivism from 32.4 percent to 19.6 percent. And yet 75 percent of those released from prison remain unemployed a year later, according to the American Civil Liberties Union.

*Highlight [135]:* For some businesses, the Rooney Rule works to hold leaders and recruiters accountable to an inclusive net. I'm not so sure about that. As background, the Rooney Rule was implemented by the NFL in 2003, after dozens of head coaching positions over the years had been filled by white males while successful Black coaches were passed over. Named after the late Dan Rooney, who owned the Pittsburgh Steelers and chaired the NFL's diversity committee, the Rooney Rule required teams to interview at least one minority candidate for head coaching and general manager positions. This isn't a quota, because no one is required to hire a Black coach or executive. The spirit of the rule is about opportunity, a chance for a minority candidate to win the interview, to open minds, and for the league to bring about change without mandating it. But let's be clear: the Rooney Rule is flawed. White coaches still take most of the top jobs (only two of seven head coaching openings went to minority candidates by early 2021) and some teams have been fined for circumventing the guidelines. <sup>8</sup>In fact, the Rooney Rule has done a lot to undermine the process by making interviews performative in some cases. But, no question, the Rooney Rule's vision of inclusive interview practices has reverberated. Corporations have taken the NFL's cue by prioritizing diversity hiring practices. In the past two years, several Fortune 500 companies, from Johnson & Johnson to Accenture, have been requiring interview panels to be diverse.

*Highlight [136]:* The classic example is this notion of a company committing to making their next CEO a Black man or Black woman. This is the easy out of a public relations move. We've seen this with President Biden who, sadly in my opinion, made this kind of pronouncement when he said the next US Supreme Court justice was going to be a Black woman. Some people may think that's the right call. Personally, I believe it would have been much better to say, I guarantee you that I'm going to have a diverse slate of

candidates and make the best decision under those circumstances. By opening up opportunity instead of placing stakes on a narrow benchmark, you are creating a much bigger opening for success on the whole, whether you are president of the United States, the CEO of a company, or an HR professional involved in a search. The minute you apply an expectation—we win the diversity game if we hire a Black executive—you can also erode some credibility.

*Highlight [137]:* In my position, I'd also say to anyone who does not subscribe to that and refuses to do it, and continues to only recruit from Harvard or only seek talent from certain backgrounds: You won't be here very long. I'm not going to bonus people for hiring Black workers or the formerly incarcerated. That's ridiculous. What I would tell anyone who works for me is that this is what SHRM stands for. This is our fundamental commitment. It is one of our cultural truths. Throughout my career, I've seen the responses to this standard play out. And I can honestly say the stories don't always end the way you would expect. In one instance, we had a Black leader who only hired Black workers. Now, think about how limiting that can be to your talent pool. That's not embracing our commitment.

*Highlight [139]:* When I got to SHRM, I recognized one problem with our business was that we were so freaking formulaic. There was a template for everything we did. In sticking to the same-old, same-old, we didn't pivot or adjust with new thinking and ideas. Adaptation wasn't part of our culture, and it was a little frustrating to witness that in real time. The reality is, if I message you that we want to increase our focus on untapped talent pools, and I direct the HR department to ensure it tactically accomplishes this goal by reaching out to different audiences, by visiting campuses, by implementing other strategies, that is now a line item in your job description. If you don't achieve that part of your job after a year, you won't likely be here. That's it. Diversity is not a box on an Excel spreadsheet. I don't have to incentivize you by allocating 10 percent of your bonus to go out and find the best hires in untraditional talent pools, which is also a way of saying we want a more diverse, highly qualified workforce. If you don't follow through on an important initiative, it means you are engaging in insubordination. In many ways, it's like a moment I had with my daughter the other day. I asked her to take out the garbage. And her response? "Are you going to pay me an allowance?" My response? "No, I'm not. You're going to eat tonight." It's simple, right? Searching uncommon talent pools, from the formerly incarcerated to veterans, from aging workers to disabled employees, has to become the norm. When we look beyond ourselves—by leaving our comfortable cul-de-sacs of hiring, by thinking differently about where skilled labor comes from—we're not doing a chore. And we're not engaging in charity either, with "mercy" hires. We're laying the groundwork with talent, establishing principles to guide us, and cultivating a culture for the future of our workforce. This is the job. Do good, do good.

*Highlight [140]:* To win the future of work, you must look past traditional talent pools—truly inclusive organizations leverage differences for both growth and innovation. The problem is that finding a model for great inclusion is almost impossible. People ask me

all the time, "Who is getting diversity and inclusion right?" I am confident that no one is getting it right. There are those who get it relatively right. That means some are simply trying harder than others, with programs ranging from truly inclusive leadership development to social efforts for seeding relevant fields. Others engaging in relative rightness include those investing in their communities or innovation programs for diverse populations. As leaders, the lesson is clear, and not in relative terms, either. We should do three things: invent, invest, and implement those programs best suited to our culture and communities. If the imperative is inclusion for females in STEM, then focus on those programs and do not feel negligent or guilty for homing in on one area. More importantly, define diversity as more than intersectionality. In its current form, intersectionality is the state of the art but falls woefully short of achieving prioritized identity factors. Focus on stackable diversity, where the core is true identity, and distal factors are relevant but not as important as core factors. "Stackable diversity" is an alternate view of intersectionality, where a person's identity is defined by stacking identity characteristics from least important to most important. (The most important play a vital role in defining the individual's view of themselves.) This represents a cleaner view of how humans manage (cognitively speaking) their identity and perceptions of inclusion.

## **References**

Notes prepared by Dave Stachowiak at [CoachingforLeaders.com](http://CoachingforLeaders.com)