

What can hiring and human resource managers do to bring more women and girls into and up through cybersecurity?



OUTREACH

Seek Out Visitors:

Reach out to community organizations to invite groups to see your workplace in action for a day and learn what cybersecurity jobs really look like. Offer free child care for these events.

Seeking Second and Third Careers:

Explicitly encourage applications from individuals in pursuit of a career change, for example, former military or network administrators looking to expand their skillsets. Mothers seeking full-time work as their children become more independent are a particularly large population of experienced employees, and are often contactable through organizations like MotherCoders and Moms Can Code. This allows seasoned employees to enter the workforce and incorporate their existing expertise into cybersecurity.

Internships without the Commute:

Work with schools and other community centers to conduct virtual internships and webinars that reach students, early-career professionals, or career changers who are looking to expand their STEM knowledge and network, but who are not able to commute to a worksite. For example, consider programs that connect with underprivileged communities, single parents, or spouses of deployed members of the military.

Consider Your Workforce Geography:

Which of your work roles actually needs a daily physical presence in the office? If remote employees are a possibility, get creative about what “remote” can mean, and look for employees from geographically diverse areas. Be explicit about your policies on remote hiring. If you are interested in applications from rural areas, distant cities, or from parents of small children, saying so can encourage applications from these potential teleworkers.

THE HIRING PROCESS

Shift Your Focus:

Instead of evaluating job applications for specific qualifications like degrees, look for applications that show evidence of quick learners, competency, and motivation.

Blind Review:

Remove names and other information indicating gender from job applications before they are reviewed.

Structure Your Process:

Approach each interview with a consistent process, set of questions, and means for comparing candidates' responses to those questions. If a test or other evaluation is administered to some candidates, use it with all candidates.



Women make up less than one-quarter of the cybersecurity workforce, which can lead to less innovation, inferior design, seriously underutilized human potential, and needlessly unfilled jobs in a growing field. In short, this lack of gender diversity means poorer security.

To counter this trend, we convened a diverse group of experts from corporate, academic, nonprofit, and government backgrounds. Their job was to generate new ideas, share emerging efforts, and consider strategies to bring women into and up through cybersecurity careers. This series of one pagers features these ideas, efforts, and strategies.

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