

Building a Diverse Local Trail Champion Team: WABA Trail Rangers

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Outline for today

- *Making sure you have the best employees and the best run program, which means:*

Diversity, equity and inclusion in hiring and management



WABA Trail Ranger Job Description

- Ride on the trails of NE, SE and SW DC
- Paid by the local Department of Transportation
- Focused on increasing trail use, supporting trail users and reporting/fixing maintenance issues
- Hiring qualifications:
 - Lived trail experience
 - Good people skills
 - Make good decisions: can problem solve, prioritize and self delegate
 - Wants the job currently on offer (ie won't leave for FT in 2 months)

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Hiring

- Write a really good job description
 - Candidates self-screen! Lived experience and identity shape how people make decisions.
 - We:
 - Don't require a college degree
 - Do require Trail Rangers consider structural oppression and power in their job
 - Address common assumptions:
 - WABA provides the bikes
 - Deemphasize the physical demands of the job
 - Emphasize the problem solving and collaboration side of the job
 - Have a clear list of skills all candidates must have and skills we are looking for 1 team member to have
 - Try to make clear this is NOT a summer college kid job
 - Clear pay and how scheduling works

Interviews and candidate selection

- Reduce bias in selection
 - Name blind initial review, rank based on qualifications and skills in job description
- Screen for the skills I care about:
 - Cover letters
 - I ignore formal writing skills but I do care about attention to detail/following directions
 - Are you invested in supporting and increasing trail or bike access?
 - Interview questions:
 - How do you resolve conflict?
 - Tell me about a time you persuaded someone about a cause? What was a challenge?
 - Tell me about a time that you experienced an abundance of diversity or lack of diversity?
 - Interview process:
 - Group interview screens for collaboration and group skills

Management concepts

- Diversity
- Equity
- Inclusion
- Tokenizing
- Patronizing
- White savior complex
- Emotional labor
- Micro-aggressions
- Racism
- Structural bias and oppression
- Internal bias



Onboarding

- Let employees tell their stories and have agency
 - Minimal introductions by me unless they've requested it
 - Working with your coworkers in a public setting across lines of difference
 - Right as an employee to have agency and decide
 - What options do you have as a WABA employee re: street harassment?
 - Does your coworker want intervention when they are being mis-gendered or talking with a hearing person as a Deaf employee?



Outreach

- How to do outreach
 - Beyond the content, what should you keep in mind?
 - Common assumptions and stereotypes of the bike advocacy movement, and WABA in particular (what history, assumptions and baggage might you represent as a Trail Ranger?)
 - Common assumptions across lines of difference
 - Be careful of advice-giving being patronizing or mansplaining, especially unsolicited.
 - Are you assuming anything about a trail users income or knowledge level in what you say? If so, why?
 - Are you more or less helpful based on who is asking you questions?



Management

- Retention, retention, retention
- Make the implicit explicit
 - Weekly articles about different topics
- Promote diverse candidates and give them real power
- Regular individual check-ins:
 - I didn't consider the implications of the KKK in town last year

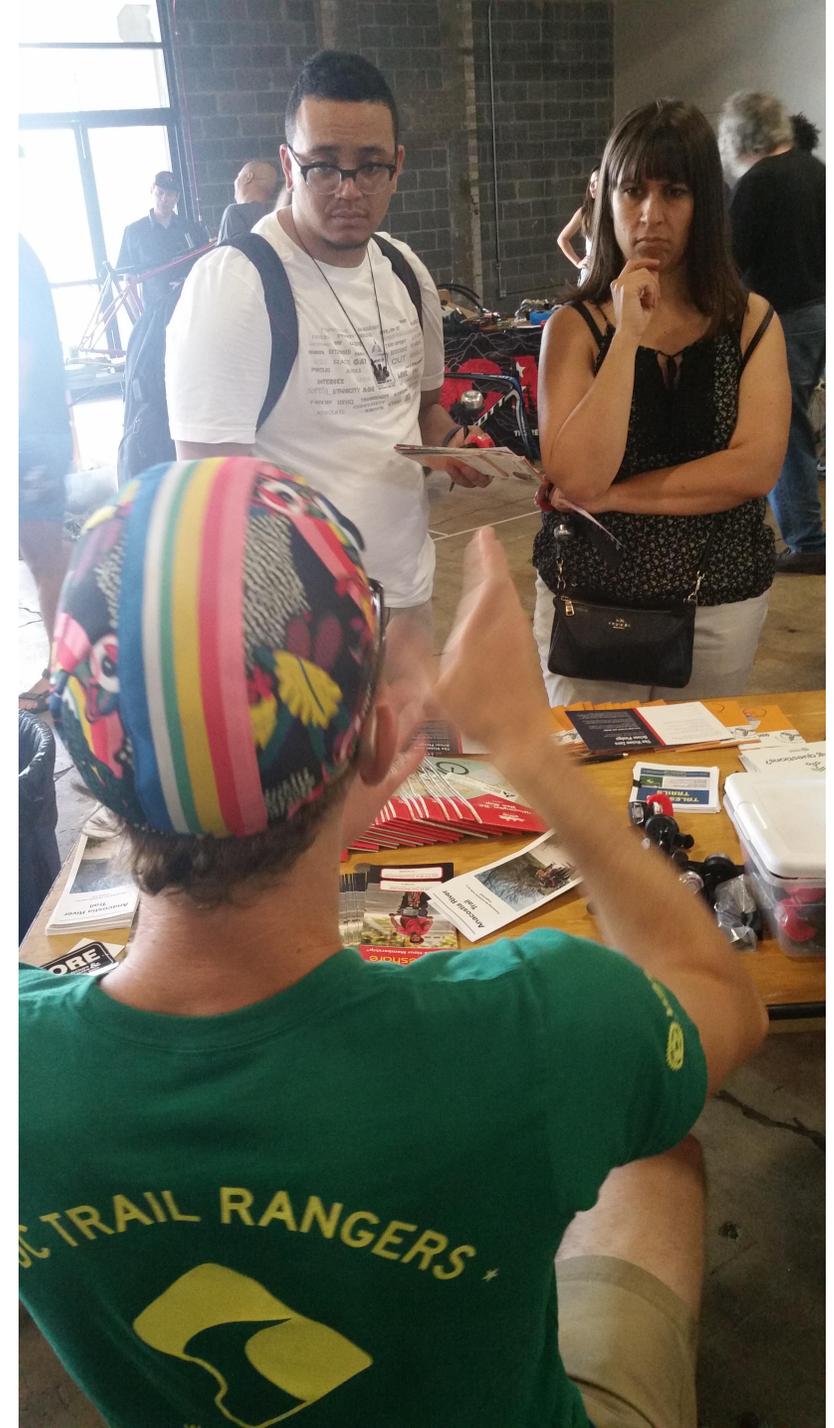


Managing for tokenizing and stereotyping

- Lots of constant checking:
 - Who is doing a disproportionate amount of paperwork?
 - Who is going to more of the fancy events?
 - Who is appearing in promotional photos more?
 - Who am I talking with more? Who am I giving specific advice to?
 - Am I telling a story about racism to my black colleague to seek their approval?
 - Am I avoiding check-ins with a Deaf employee?
- Ask:
 - Preferences on pronouns, names
 - Employee knowledge on their lived experience

Therefore, we have:

- Team knowledge on neo-Nazi graffiti
- Nuanced conversations on roles of the police on trails
- More thoughtful program on identity, power and running the program
- Multi-lingual – this year is American Sign Language and English



Learn More

- Race to Lead reports
- So You Want to Talk About Race, Ijeoma Oluo
- The Management Center:
 - Managing for Racial Equity, Inclusion and Results

waba.org/trailranger

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