



Courtesy of the [National Association of Colleges and Employers](#).

As you become more engaged in racial justice and social impact, you may become increasingly conscious of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) during your job search activities. You may want to know if a potential employer values DEI.

“Conscious job seeking is searching for employment or contractor opportunities that align with your vision, mission, values, and goals,” explains Chelsea C. Williams, founder and CEO of College Code.

According to Williams, students using conscious job-seeking change their mindset from just getting a job to actually seeking an opportunity that aligns with their “big picture.”

Although DEI is not an important value for every student, for those who believe it matters, it is important to ensure that they are working within a company whose values match theirs. Williams says that a company that truly values DEI:

- Has made commitments to foster a safe and healthy work environment;
- Is taking actionable steps to improve representation across all levels and titles;
- Holds leaders, managers, and employees accountable for actions and behaviors; and
- Has sought to center equity through all aspects of the employee process—recruitment, training and development, promotions, pay, benefits, and more.

You can assess an organization's commitment to DEI, in part, by asking potential employers questions that can help you to differentiate between organizations that have taken performative steps in this area and others that are truly committed to advancing DEI and have made progress.

“Asking questions will often provide students with an understanding of where the company is in their DEI journey,” Williams notes.

Williams offers a list of thoughtful questions that students might ask recruiters during interviews or other interactions to assess their organizations' DEI priority and commitment:

- How does your organization define diversity? What lenses of diversity has your organization made a direct commitment toward?
- Does your organization have a chief diversity officer (CDO) or a designated leader to drive DEI and engage internal and external stakeholders?
- What social causes does your organization support?
- Does your organization actively support diverse suppliers, contractors, and small businesses?
- Has your organization made any formal commitments in support of racial equity?
- How does your organization center diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging?
- Does your organization offer any formal employee training around biases, anti-racism, or general DEI?
- How has your organization prioritized executive accountability toward DEI advancement?
- Does your organization have any affinity groups or committees to support diverse populations? If so, how do these groups contribute to the culture of the organization?
- Does your organization complete an annual compensation equity analysis?
- What resources has your organization provided to its employees in support of COVID-19 and racial injustices?

The answers you receive could help you make a decision about which employers to pursue employment with and those with whom, perhaps, to end the recruiting process because their values do not align.

“Students are looking for authenticity and progress from employers,” Williams explains. “An organization may not check off all their boxes around DEI, but maybe it has made the commitment to do and be better. That's wonderful!”