Pinterest Met Its External Hiring Goals in 2019 for Women, Underrepresented Minorities

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For the first time in the six-year history of Pinterest's inclusion and diversity report, the company met all three of its external hiring goals, along with achieving incremental increases in representation.

Chief human resources officer Jo Dennis said in a blog post Thursday that Pinterest boosted its hiring rate for full-time female engineers to 27% in 2019, topping its goal of 25%.

The company aimed to hike its hiring rate of underrepresented minority engineers by 8%, and it exceeded that number, tallying a 9% jump. Underrepresented minorities are defined as employees of Native-American and Pacific Islander, Latinx and African-American descent.

And across the company—business and product—Pinterest increased hiring rates for underrepresented minority employees by 14% last year, surpassing its 12% target.

Dennis wrote, "As one of the first companies to set annual public hiring goals in 2015, we want to hold ourselves accountable to tackling this societal issue. Meaningful and sustainable progress takes time, and while we are far from where we'd like, we can see considerable change in our workforce since we started."

She added that women now account for 25% of the total number of engineers at Pinterest, up from 24% in 2018 and 19% in 2015.

And underrepresented minorities now make up 10% of total employees, up from 9% the previous year and 3% in 2015, along with 7% of engineers, versus 6% in 2018 and less than 1 percent in 2015.

Dennis also highlighted some of the company’s relevant initiatives in 2019.

Pinterest added skin tone ranges to its platform last January, helping to ensure that Pinners saw search results on topics such as makeup and hair ideas that were relevant to their respective skin tones.

Emotional well-being activities were introduced for its search experience in the U.S. last July, and Pinners who search for terms indicating that they may be struggling—such as “stress

quotes” and “work anxiety”—now see well-being activities that they can partake in directly via the Pinterest application.

Last November, Pinterest released a public guide to support employee gender transition.

And the company revealed last December that it would limit the distribution of content on wedding venues that were formerly slave plantations.

Dennis wrote, “While we’ve made several changes that we’re proud of, we can see a few areas where we need to improve and where, frankly, our progress has not improved quickly enough. We recognize that leadership diversity is our biggest area for opportunity and focus. Despite exceeding our hiring goals, the overall representation of underrepresented talent could increase more quickly.”

She also outlined three steps Pinterest will take in 2020 and beyond:

- **Ensure business leader ownership of inclusion and diversity outcomes:** Diversity at Pinterest is not a human resources initiative—it’s something we all own. This year, the leadership and inclusion and diversity teams partnered closely in co-creating a multiyear strategy to guide us through the next several years. We also designated business representatives to champion I&D in every business unit.
- **Build a laser focus on specific efforts to diversify Pinterest leadership:** Our executive team is partnering on leadership diversity through a variety of tactics. This starts with building relationships with internal and external talent proactively, including “reverse mentorship” relationships. We also require at least two underrepresented candidates at the final onsite stage for any leadership role with our diverse slate approach. In addition, we internally track specific leadership

hiring aspirations and metrics, rather than simply an aggregated hiring goal.

- **Don’t neglect retention:** We learned that if we want to create a working environment where people can do their best work, we need to invest further in understanding what drives retention. We’ve expanded accountability metrics for inclusion and diversity to include retention and engagement parity, alongside hiring. These are reviewed with the executive team, as well as each business unit, on a quarterly basis at a minimum.

Dennis concluded, “Inclusion and diversity is not only a value: It’s foundational to making the best decisions and building the strongest teams over time, and we recognize that we still have work to do. We are committed to building, developing and nurturing a balanced team for Pinterest, evolving our strategies as we learn and holding ourselves accountable to driving the changes we all want to see. In 2020, we will continue to infuse inclusion and diversity into Pinterest rewards, values and expectations, and we will continue to hold ourselves accountable publicly with all of you.”

https://www.adweek.com/digital/pinterest-met-its-external-hiring-goals-in-2019-for-women-underrepresented-minorities/