

Best Practices in Manufacturing for Military Veteran Hiring

Supplier Diversity Program at Fender

Fender[®]

› About Fender

An American icon, Fender was founded in Southern California and has established a worldwide influence that extends from the studio to the stage—and beyond. Everyone from beginners to the world’s most acclaimed artists have used Fender instruments, amps and gear, making the company not only a revered industry leader but a cultural symbol that resonates globally. More than seven decades since founder Leo Fender built his first electric guitar, Fender’s reach transcends instruments and accessories, encompassing a range of innovative digital experiences that fuel musical expression and serve players at every stage—on every stage.



› Program Summary

Like so many other companies, 2020 was a year of change for Fender sparked by the national conversation around race and racial injustice in our country. Fender’s employees, in partnership with Human Resources, held meetings to discuss current events and how to create diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives to ensure that all employees felt supported, and that Fender’s activities reflected these values. As a part of that effort, Fender identified strategies to advance the recruitment, hiring, and retention of a diverse workforce. One of these strategies is a supplier diversity program.



While Fender is engaged in multiple recruitment efforts that will have positive impact on veterans, the supplier diversity program is of note due to its innovative approach and its disruption of traditional supplier procurement strategies in the instrument manufacturing industry. The purpose of Fender’s supplier diversity program is to create a robust and diverse supply chain by ensuring that companies owned by traditionally underrepresented or underserved populations, including communities of color, women, and veterans, are considered for procurement contracts. This increased level of supplier diversity is an important way to signal to diverse job seekers, including veterans, that the company recognizes and shares their values. Furthermore, it provides Fender with new and expanded talent pools of diverse individuals who are connected to these businesses.

Title of Project



Fender Supplier Diversity Program

Tags



Recruitment

Point of Contact



Ed Magee
EVP of Operations



As Fender's business grows, we want to see our employees develop and grow at the same pace."

– **Andy Mooney**, CEO Fender Musical Instruments Corp.

› Program Impact

The speed at which Fender began responding to the events of the summer by designing and implementing new and updated diversity strategies, including the supplier diversity program, speaks to the company's commitment to issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The supplier diversity program rolled out in the fall and is one of the first supplier diversity programs in the instrument manufacturing industry. Fender believes the program will provide an opportunity to invest in Veteran-

Owned Businesses and further raise the profile of Fender within the military veteran community which helps Fender build a robust supply chain and become an employer of choice among veterans and their families.



› Lessons Learned

- ✓ Supplier diversity programs are a unique strategy that businesses can employ to enhance their diversity recruitment efforts. The diversification of a company's supply chain can be a differentiator when marketing and recruiting to veteran jobseekers because it clearly communicates the values and principles of the company in a tangible and meaningful way.
- ✓ Robust talent pipelines of qualified veteran jobseekers with the skills and competencies necessary to succeed on the job do not simply appear overnight. Companies interested in connecting with diverse talent pools must be connected to those communities and have deep, authentic relationships in place. Supplier diversity strategies offer networks of new contacts and an ability to support and grow opportunities in those communities.
- ✓ The recruitment, hiring, and retention of veterans is a complex and multifaceted process. A supply chain diversity program is just one small piece of the overall jigsaw puzzle of activities that Fender is implementing to attract veterans to their workforce.