

Ulta Beauty:

Building and Maintaining a Diverse Workforce

NRF FOUNDATION
RISE UP

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



About NRF Foundation RISE Up

RISE Up is the NRF Foundation training and credentialing program that provides foundational employability skills to help people land jobs and get promoted in retail and beyond.

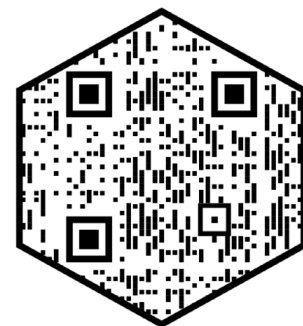
Case studies enhance students' learning of the RISE Up curriculum by offering unique perspectives from retail leaders and insights into current issues impacting retail business.

Benefits of RISE Up

- **Employability Skills**
Students learn the in-demand skills needed to land jobs and get promoted in retail.
- **Flexible Delivery Options**
Classroom, online or blended.
- **Scenario-Based Learning**
Realistic scenarios that support active learning to keep your students engaged while developing their problem-solving and decision-making skills.
- **Hands-On Activities**
Hands-on activities for skill development allow your students to apply and master key skills needed for the job and provide them with a safe environment to practice, identify and correct performance errors.



Learn more about
the NRF Foundation
RISE Up program:



Training Partner Resources

- [Help Center](#)
- [Webinars](#)
- [Reference Library](#)

Instructor Guide

The purpose of the Instructor Guide is to prepare you, the instructor, to deliver the activity for students to complete. The guide includes learning objectives, case study components for instructors and students, pacing and materials needed to complete the activity, instructor pre-work, step-by-step instructions, NRF Foundation RISE Up info, benefits, resources and an answer key.

INSTRUCTOR PRE-WORK

Before presenting the activity, students should have begun the RISE Up curriculum. This case study goes well with the Business of Retail course.

The case study activity and case questions require students to form a group of 3-4 people. The instructor can select the groups in advance or have students pick their group members. However, the activity and questions can also be done individually.

STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

- Hand out the case study activity and case questions.
- Read the objectives and background with the class.
- Move to the activity and go through the goal, role and scenario.
- Have students form groups of 3-4 people to complete the activity and case questions.
- Once all students have completed the activity, the instructor can have each group present.
- The case questions can be presented as well or used to prompt class discussion.



STUDENT MATERIALS

Case study, activity, vocabulary words and case questions.



TIME NEEDED

The activity will require 1-3 class periods depending on the duration of each class period. This activity can also be assigned for homework.

The case questions can be completed after the activity is completed, whether in class or for homework. It should take about 25-30 minutes to complete.



MATERIALS NEEDED

- Pen/pencils
- Copies of the case study activity and case questions (1 per student)
- Poster or 3-panel display board (optional)

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Objectives

- Research Ulta's website to learn more about the company's mission, vision and commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI).
- Perform a real-world role as if you are a General Manager hiring for Ulta Beauty.
- Apply critical thinking skills relating to hiring and employee satisfaction.

Background

Since 1990, Ulta Beauty has been a leader in creating a diverse product line for their customers. They offer a wide variety of products that focus on beauty – cosmetics, fragrances, bath and body products, and haircare products, along with a salon in each store. Their business plan features different price levels for beauty products to cater to a wide variety of customers. With 1,355 stores in 50 states, and partnerships with Target and Allure, Ulta Beauty employs approximately 37,000 employees.

Ulta Beauty already has a sharp focus on diversity with its products and positioning. Beyond this, Ulta Beauty has devoted an investment of \$50 million to their diversity, equity, and inclusion plan, \$25 million of which will go directly to media investments in multicultural platforms to build connections with diverse beauty supporters. Ten percent of this investment will be directly spent with the Latine and Black-owned media outlets and \$8.5 million of this investment will go towards brand marketing support for Black-owned, -founded, and -led brands.

The company aims to provide a diverse product line, along with making all guests feel welcome and included in their stores. Inclusion in Action, the quarterly, in-store training launched in 2021 to reinforce inclusivity and address unconscious bias, will



now be mandatory for Ulta Beauty distribution center and corporate associates in addition to a second year of curriculum for salon and store associates. Ulta Beauty provides dedicated workshops, panels, keynote speakers, and programming for key timeframes such as Pride Month and Black History Month. Maintaining this level of inclusivity requires hiring, training, and maintaining a diverse and inclusive group of store associates.

Here are other examples of how Ulta Beauty is working toward improving diversity, equity and inclusion in their company:

- Investing \$5 million in New Voices, a firm that invests in entrepreneurs of color to drive sustainable businesses and generational wealth.
- Allocating \$3.5 million to in-store merchandising support for Black-owned, Black-founded, and Black-led brands.
- Investing \$2.5 million in existing company training to increase the mandatory DE&I training to 3.5 hours for all employees.



Activity

Jump into this real-life exercise.

Read the goal, role and scenario and follow the directions to complete the case activity.

Case questions are also included below.

GOAL

Review how Ulta Beauty is trying to hire and maintain a diverse workforce across its business. Using the goals of the company, come up with ideas on how to create a diverse group of employees.

ROLE

Perform the role of a General Manager for an Ulta Beauty store.

SCENARIO

You are a General Manager for an Ulta Beauty store in a suburban section of a large metropolitan area. Because of the company's broad focus on **diversity, equity, and inclusion**, you are trying to draw new and diverse associates to your store. However, you are struggling to both hire a diverse headcount because of the demographics in your area. Keeping your current employee headcount is also proving to be a challenge because of burn-out and pay rates.

As General Manager, your role is to promote the positions available through as many communication channels as possible, review new applications, and interview potential new employees. You are also responsible for making sure your current employees are up to date on their diversity, equity, and inclusion training. Finally, you need to determine how to best keep your current employees, given that some challenges are not within your ability to change.

It is important as you move forward with reviewing and interviewing potential employees that you focus on the company's brand, their **brand promise** to their customers and how your new, diverse workforce will meet the company's new **DE&I** strategy.

From the Company

At Ulta Beauty, we're on a mission to use the power of beauty to bring out the possibilities that lie within each person. And, for us, that starts with our associates. We believe in the possibilities of our associates. The possibilities to dream big dreams. To be exactly who they are. To chart the course of their own career. The possibilities to imagine, to impact, and to grow. Here, we're inspired by doing work that is shaping the world and redefining beauty & retail – one idea, one project, one relationship at a time – and we love finding people who have that same passion.

These are the beautiful possibilities at Ulta Beauty.

Sign up to hear about what's happening at Ulta Beauty, including new job opportunities, [here](#).

To complete this project, you will need to recruit a team of 3-4 people and create a DE&I plan for your store to present to your class. Select at least one of the following mediums to work with:

- PowerPoint presentation
- Video (must be at least 10 minutes long)
- Poster or 3-panel display board
- Written report

Ideas to consider for hiring and retention of associates:

- Ways to encourage current employees (i.e. free samples, discounts on haircuts/products, etc.)
- Topics to highlight in the employee application
- Features of employment to bring up during the interview process
- Channels through which to promote your application and need for diverse employees
- “Out of the box” ideas (unique ways to attract new employees, keep current employees)

Vocabulary Words

Use at least 3-5 vocabulary words in your presentation:

BIPOC – abbreviation: Black, Indigenous, (and) People of Color

Brand Promise: An extension of the company brand that reflects the benefit of doing business with them – for example, providing quality customer service. (NRF, Retail Industry Fundamentals, pg. 47, 289)

Company Brand: The overall impression gathered from information that is seen, heard, and experienced, by customers who encounter a business, its products, and its services. (NRF, Retail Industry Fundamentals, pg. 47, 289)

Company Culture: The unique way that an organization’s employees interact with each other and with customers. The culture defines the personality of a company, and typically includes a variety of elements, such as work environment, company mission, value, ethics, expectations, and goals. A company’s culture can provide additional expectations for employees to deliver on the company’s brand promise. (NRF, Retail Industry Fundamentals, pg. 47, 289)

DE&I – abbreviation: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Diversity – noun: the condition of having or being composed of differing elements

Equity – noun: justice according to natural law or right; freedom from bias or favoritism

Generational Wealth – term: financial assets that are passed down through families to children, grandchildren, and beyond.

Inclusion/inclusive – adjective: allowing and accommodating people who have historically been excluded (as because of their race, gender, sexuality, or ability)

LGBTQIA+ – abbreviation: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning (one’s sexual or gender identity), intersex, and asexual/aromantic/agender

Multicultural – adjective: of, relating to, reflecting, or adapted to diverse cultures.

As you’re working on the project with your team, go to ulta.com/company/about-us to learn more about Ulta Beauty and the company’s background and diversity initiatives.

Case Questions

1. Why is it important for all Ulta Beauty stores to have a diverse pool of employees?
2. How does the diversity of employees improve the guest experience and the associate experience?
3. How can Ulta Beauty incorporate not only **Latine** and **BIPOC** individuals, but also **LGBTQIA+** individuals in their employee DE&I staffing plan?
4. Considering most of Ulta Beauty's employees are female, does the hiring of males improve their inclusivity? How would you encourage more males to apply?
5. What does diversity, equity, and inclusion mean to you?

Answer Key

- 1. Sample Answer:** It is important for all Ulta Beauty stores to have a diverse pool of employees because a workplace that encourages diversity brings together different ideas and perspectives, producing innovation and creativity. A diverse pool of employees can also lead to higher-quality work, better decision-making, and greater team satisfaction.
- 2. Sample Answer:** The diversity of employees can improve the guest experience because it promotes a wider perspective on customer needs, products, and company well-being.
- 3. Sample Answer:** Ulta Beauty can incorporate LGBTQIA+ individuals in their employee DE&I staffing plan by putting it in writing, creating support programs for LGBTQ+ employees, and making sure the company's policies and guidelines supporting LGBTQ+ inclusive practices and behavior are accessible to all employees, managers, and supervisors.
- 4. Sample Answer:** The hiring of males does improve Ulta Beauty's inclusivity because being inclusive means all people are welcomed and belong. I would encourage more males to apply to Ulta Beauty by making sure they are included in marketing and highlighting products for males or unisex products to make sure applicants and customers know that Ulta Beauty is for everyone.
- 5. Open Answer**