

# Building an Inclusive Workforce

A Four-Step Reference Guide to Recruiting, Hiring, and Retaining Employees with Disabilities

### Introduction

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## Competence and Flexibility...

...they are vital skills that employers seek. Today more than ever, businesses need people with the ability to adapt to different situations and circumstances. And perhaps more than any other group, people with disabilities possess precisely these attributes. On a daily basis, people with disabilities must think creatively about how to solve problems and accomplish tasks. In the workplace, this translates into innovative thinking, fresh ideas and varied approaches

Niki Swann.

Student

English Teacher and Graduate

While research shows that people with disabilities make excellent employees, not all employers know how to effectively recruit, retain and advance such individuals. That's where this booklet comes in. It's a quick outline of four simple steps to increasing workforce inclusion, complete with Web links to resources available to help businesses benefit from the talents of qualified individuals with disabilities.

to confronting challenges and achieving success.

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Introduction

## Competence and Flexibility...

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This tool was developed by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability

Employment Policy (ODEP). To learn more about DOL's efforts to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities, visit ODEP's website at dol.gov/odep. For additional disability employment resources, visit Disability.gov's employer resources page at

disability.gov/employment/employer\_resources.

The people featured in this guide are people with disabilities—not models—photographed in their workplaces. Some of their disabilities are apparent, some are not. They reflect just a few of the millions of people with disabilities who add value to America's workplaces and economy every day.



### **Business Strategies that Work**

When it comes to doing business, inclusion of workers with disabilities offers a competitive edge. By incorporating people with disabilities into their human capital strategies, employers expand their pool of talent, skills and creative business solutions. The resources below illustrate how workplace practices that include people with disabilities benefit everyone and make good business sense.

 Business Strategies that Work: A Framework for Disability Inclusion

Identifies promising employment policies and practices for recruiting, hiring, retaining and advancing qualified individuals with disabilities

dol.gov/odep/topics/Employers.htm

Business Case for Hiring People with Disabilities
 Multi-media resource that illustrates how people with
 disabilities add value across six key areas common to
 all employers

AskEARN.org/businesscase

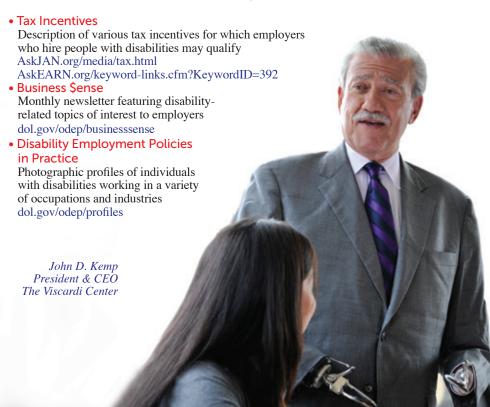
 Workplace Accommodations: Low Cost, High Impact

Summary of research revealing the low cost of accommodations for employees with disabilities relative to their positive impact

AskJAN.org/media/lowcosthighimpact.html



## **Business Strategies that Work**



**STEP 1 - Business Strategies that Work** 

## Creating an Inclusive Culture

Organizations that value and appreciate each person for their individual differences and experiences benefit from diverse perspectives. Creating such an inclusive culture isn't difficult, but does require some forethought. The resources below can foster a welcoming work environment that is flexible and open to the talents of all qualified individuals, including those with disabilities.

What can YOU do? Campaign for Disability Employment

Nationwide campaign that offers a range of resources to assist organizations in implementing internal disability employment awareness programs whatcanyoudocampaign.org

 National Disability Employment Awareness Month

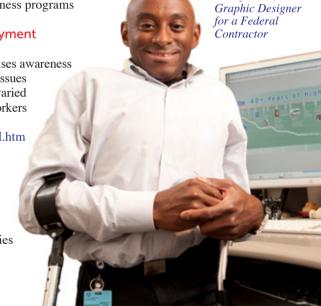
Annual outreach effort that raises awareness about disability employment issues and celebrates the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities

dol.gov/odep/topics/NDEAM.htm

• Add Us In

Program designed to identify and develop strategies to increase employment opportunities within the small business community for individuals with disabilities dol.gov/odep/addusin

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Kenny Allen.

## Creating an Inclusive Culture

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 A Toolkit for Establishing and Maintaining Successful Employee Resource Groups

Guidance for employers interested in developing or enhancing an Employee Resource Group (ERG) focused on disability AskEARN.org/docs/ERG\_Toolkit.pdf

• Emergency Preparedness Resources

Effective emergency plans and resources for employees with disabilities dol.gov/odep/topics/EmergencyPreparedness.htm

Disability Etiquette Resources

Information about disability etiquette in various workplace settings, including speaking engagements and customer service environments

AskJAN.org/topics/disetiq.htm

• Disability Nondiscrimination Law Advisor Guidance for employers on determining which federal disability nondiscrimination laws apply to their business or organization and how to ensure compliance with them dol.gov/elaws/odep.htm

For additional resources related to creating an inclusive culture, visit ODEP's Diversity and Inclusion webpage at: dol.gov/odep/topics/diversityandinclusion.htm and Changing Attitudes webpage: dol.gov/odep/topics/changing attitudes htm

R.J. Martin.

### **Recruiting and Hiring**

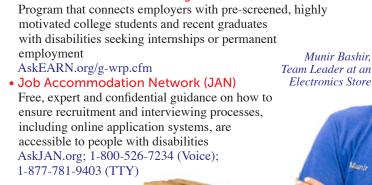
The goal of the recruitment and hiring process is to attract and identify individuals who have the best mix of skills and attributes for the job available. Ensuring that all qualified individuals—including those with disabilities—can participate in the process is critical to achieving this goal. The resources below can assist in understanding how to be disability inclusive in recruiting and hiring.

• Employer Assistance and Resource Network (EARN)
Free consultation and technical assistance for employers seeking to recruit

and hire qualified individuals with disabilities

AskEARN.org; 1-855-AskEARN (275-3276) (Voice/TTY)

Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP)



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### **Recruiting and Hiring**

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### Veterans Hiring Toolkit

Step-by-step guidance on how to proactively include transitioning veterans, including wounded warriors, in recruitment and hiring initiatives americasheroesatwork.gov/foremployers/hiringtoolkit

### National Resource Directory

Resources to assist employers in finding qualified veterans, including wounded warriors, and supporting them in the workplace national resourcedirectory.gov/employment

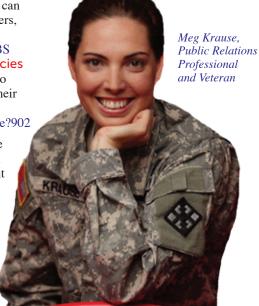
#### • American Job Centers

Nationwide network of centers that can help businesses find qualified workers, including workers with disabilities servicelocator.org; 1-877-USA-JOBS

Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies
 State agencies that link employers to
 job candidates with disabilities in their
 local areas

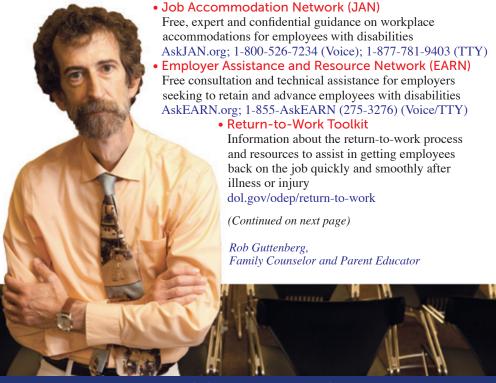
AskJAN.org/cgi-win/TypeOuerv.exe?902

For additional resources related to the recruitment and hiring of people with disabilities, visit ODEP's Recruitment and Retention webpage at dol.gov/odep/topics/recruitment andretention.htm and Accommodations webpage at dol.gov/odep/topics/accommodations.htm.



## Retaining and Advancing Valued Employees

Employers and employees both benefit from a work environment that facilitates the retention of all skilled, qualified workers through effective job accommodations for employees with disabilities. The resources below can assist in understanding how to effectively retain the talents of qualified employees with disabilities and help them advance and achieve workplace success.



STEP 4 - Retaining and Advancing Employees

## Retaining and Advancing Valued Employees

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- Workplace Flexibility Toolkit
  Tools employers can use to adjust time, location and manner in which an employee works dol.gov/odep/workplaceflexibility/
- Customized Employment/Flexible
  Work Arrangements
  Information about customized employment,
  a flexible work arrangement that can assist
  employers in retaining valued employees,
  including those with disabilities
  dol.gov/odep/topics/customizedemployment.htm
- Soft Skills
  Introduction to workplace interpersonal and professional skills for employees dol.gov/odep/topics/Youth/
- America's Heroes at Work
   Resources to assist in understanding how to support veterans and other employees who have traumatic brain injury (TBI) and/or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) americasheroesatwork.gov

For additional resources related to retaining and advancing people with disabilities, visit ODEP's Recruitment and Retention webpage at dol.gov/odep/topics/recruitmentandretention.htm and Accommodations webpage at dol.gov/odep/topics/accommodations.htm.

## Resources and Links for Federal Agencies

As the nation's largest employer, the federal government must model effective policies and practices that advance America's ideal of equal opportunity for all. In 2010, President Obama issued Executive Order 13548, which called on federal departments and agencies to increase the recruitment, retention and advancement of people with disabilities.

The resources on the next two pages can assist in fulfilling this directive.

### Toolkit for Federal Agencies on Implementing Executive Order 13548

Outline of five-step process and related resources to assist federal agencies in their efforts to increase the employment of people with disabilities dol.gov/odep/federal-hire

#### eFedLink

Online community of practice designed to help federal disability employment professionals advance federal employment for persons with disabilities eFedLink.org

### Federal Agency Employment Strategies: A Framework for Disability Inclusion

Outline of proactive disability employment strategies to attract and retain qualified job seekers with disabilities dol.gov/odep/topics/FederalEmployment.htm

#### • Workforce Recruitment Program

Program that connects federal employers with pre-screened, highly motivated college students and recent graduates with disabilities seeking internships or permanent employment wrp.gov

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## Resources and Links for Federal Agencies

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## Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program (CAP) Centrally funded accommodation program that provides assistive technology and services free of charge to federal agencies cap.mil

### • Federal Workplace Mentoring Primer

Overview of basic practices, strategies and available tools and resources for establishing formal mentoring relationships and programs within federal workplaces

AskEARN.org/fed-fwm.cfm

#### Veterans Preference Advisor

Guidance on preferences that veterans, including wounded warriors, may be entitled to with regard to federal employment dol.gov/elaws/vetspref.htm

#### • Federal Disability Hiring Programs

An overview of initiatives and flexibilities in hiring processes intended to increase the employment of people with disabilities in the federal government opm.gov/disability

### • Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)

A resource for laws, regulations, policy guidance, fact sheets, Q & A's, best practices and other information on disability discrimination eeoc.gov/laws/types/disability.cfm

For additional resources for federal employers, visit ODEP's Federal Employment webpage at dol.gov/odep/topics/federalemployment.htm.



### **CD-ROM**





# REAL PEOPLE REAL IMPACT



U.S. Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy dol.gov/odep

To order additional copies of Building an Inclusive Workforce, go to: promotions.usa.gov/odep.html