INCLUSION@WORK

A Framework for Building a Disability-Inclusive Organization

MEASURE SUCCESS
Accountability & Self-Identification

LEAD THE WAY
Inclusive Business Culture

BE TECH SAVVY
Accessible Information & Communication Technology

BUILD THE PIPELINE
Outreach & Recruitment

COMMUNICATE
External & Internal Communication of Company Policies & Practices

ENSURE PRODUCTIVITY
Reasonable Accommodations

HIRE (AND KEEP) THE BEST
Talent Acquisition & Retention Processes

SOURCE: "Inclusion@Work: A Framework for Building a Disability-Inclusive Organization." Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion, Cornell University, 2020, askearn.org/training-center/inclusionwork-trainings-webinars/.

Lead the Way: Inclusive Business Culture

Establishing an inclusive culture begins with leadership at the highest levels.

- Make equal employment opportunity for individuals with disabilities an integral part of your company's strategic mission

- Implement EEO initiatives with leadership as a catalyst

- Include disability as part of your company's diversity and inclusion policies and activities

- Develop and communicate policy statements of your commitment to diversity and inclusion

- Highlight inclusive practices in your hiring and advancement strategies

- Develop emergency management plans that address the needs of employees with disabilities

- Seek input regarding the existence of an accessible and disability-inclusive workplace environment

- Establish universal policies providing workplace flexibility and accommodations for all applicants and employees (e.g. telework, flextime, etc.)

- Establish an enterprise-wide team or affinity group
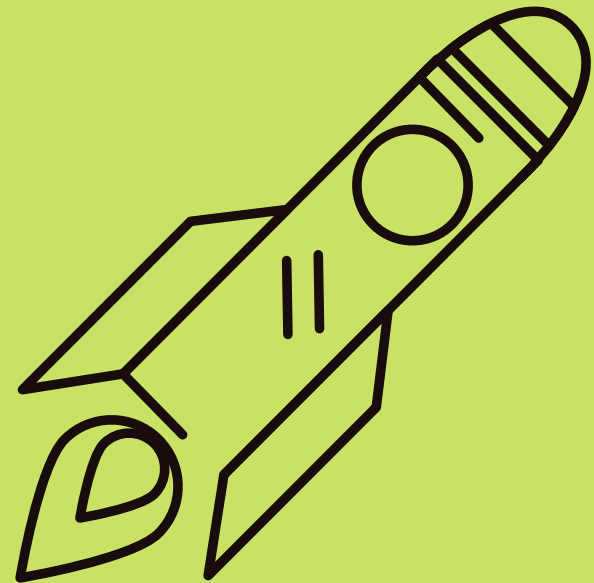
Build the Pipeline: Outreach & Recruitment

One of the greatest barriers expressed by companies is theinability to find qualified talent. Companies can build a pipeline of qualified candidates by developing relationships with a variety of recruitment sources.

- Public Resources - American Job Centers, State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies, state employment agencies, community rehabilitation programs, Veteran's Affairs offices, etc.

- Private Resources - professional organizations, consulting services and companies with expertise in disability

- Educational Institutions - many institutions offer programs for individuals with specific disabilities that can be contacted in addition to career services offices.

- Nonprofit and Social Service Agencies

- Peer Networking - referrals from your own business netwroks

Build the Pipeline: Outreach & Recruitment

Strategies listed by Inclusion@Work to attract and recruit individuals with disabilities include:

- Host briefings to include company tours, explanations of job openings and your selection process

- Establish an arrangement with recruiting sources for referral of applicants

- Create formal training and deliver to company employees responsible for recruitment on how and why to hire individuals with disabilities

- Build a talent pipeline through mentoring, internships, and work experience programs

- Go to career fairs targeting individuals with disabilities

- Provide an accessible online application

- Designate or coordinator or team responsible for targeted outreach programs

- Ensure involvement of existing employees with disabilities in recruitment activities and processes

Hire (and keep) the Best:
Talent Acquisition & Retention Processes

Inclusion@Work states that businesses should review policies and processes across the employment lifecycle to ensure they are facilitating the hiring, retention and advancement of individuals with disabilities.

- Have a central and clear process for requesting accommodations that is readily accessible to applicants and existing employees

- Indicate your encouragement for qualified applicants with disabilities to apply to job announcements; explain required qualifications and job duties in plain language

- Designate sufficient staff to handle any disability-related issues that arise during the application and selection process

- Provide training and career enhancement opportunities (e.g. apprenticeship programs, on-the-job training, job shadowing, mentoring, tuition reimbursement, etc.)

- Adopt disability management and prevention programs (stay-at-work and return-to-work)

Ensure Productivity: Reasonable Accommodations

An accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a job or work environment that enables a qualified person with a disability to apply for or perform a job successfully.

- Required by law to be considered

- Can include modifications to the application process, modifications to the work environment or the circumstances of how work is done, and/or modifications that allow employee to enjoy the benefits and privileges of employment

- It is typically expected that an employee with a disability disclose and/or request an accommodation

- Examples from Inclusion@Work include:
  - Job Coach, Reader or Interpreter
  - Ergonomic Chairs
  - Flexible Work Schedules or Telework
  - Job Sharing or Job Restructuring
  - Anti-Fatigue Floor Mats
  - Accessible Work Documents, Work Areas and Equipment
  - Assistive Technology Devices

Ensure Productivity: Reasonable Accommodations

Some tips from Inclusion@Work for businesses to navigate the Reasonable Accommodation process include:

- Have an open mind and explore options with the employee; monitor the accommodation to ensure success

- Develop written policies and procedures for processing accommodation requests

- Develop an accommodation fund and source of expertise

- Provide training on new strategies and devices

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- Utilize the Job Accommodation Network:

  - Guidance on accommodations

  - Publications and resources

  - Training Center

  - Accommodations Toolkit and Database

COMMUNICATE:
EXTERNAL & INTERNAL COMMUNICATION OF COMPANY POLICIES & PRACTICES

It is important to communicate your commitment to employing individuals with disabilities and having an inclusive and diverse work environment. Some ways businesses can communicate this according to Inclusion@Work are:

- Include employees with disabilities in marketing and recruitment materials

- Sponsor and participate in job fairs targeting job seekers with disabilities

- Host company career days, mentoring programs and community activities that people with disabilities can attend to learn more about your organization

- Foster awareness, acceptance and support internally by publicizing your company's commitment to disability inclusion in your newsletters, handbooks, etc.

- Establish a Disability Employee Resource Group that can identify policies and procedures that support a positive work environment for people with disabilities

- Hold management accountable for inclusion initiatives

- Create a recognition and awards program acknowledging individuals responsible for achieving progress and positive outcomes related to disability employment

Be Tech Savvy:
Accessible Information & Communication Technology

Individuals with disabilities may need accessible digital materials to be able to participate and be productive at work. Some examples of materials that should be accessible include:

- Online Job Application Systems

- Closed Captioning on videos

- Continuing Education and Training Resources

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- Use of an interpreter

- Simple Language and Design

Businesses can evaluate their digital accessibility by utilizing automated accessibility testing tools and by involving individuals with disabilities in the implementation and evaluation of their materials.

Some resources listed by Inclusion@Work include:

- EARN Technological Accessibility Webpage

- EARN and PEAT Fact Sheet: 10 Tips for an Accessible Website

Measure Success:
Accountability & Self-Identification

it is important to remember to ensure the effective implementation and success of all of your disability-employment policies, practices and procedures. Inclusion@Work suggests that businesses put systems in place to ensure accountability and continuous improvement related to:

- Ongoing Training and Professional Development related to disability inclusion

- Establishing Accountability Measures with benchmarks for outreach and recruitment, hiring, retention, advancement, training, and inclusive social activities

- Self-Identification (if appropriate)

- Establishing Accountability and Continuous Improvement Mechanisms

- Designating Responsible Individuals for each component of the disability-employment process (i.e. accommodations, hiring, communications, accessibility, etc.)

Some resources listed by Inclusion@Work for measuring success include:

- Disability Employment Tracker

- Disability Equality Index

ALL MATERIALS IN THIS PRESENTATION ARE SOURCED FROM INCLUSION@WORK TRAINING CENTER; PLEASE VISIT THE INCLUSION@WORK WEBSITE FOR MORE RESOURCES, MATERIALS AND WEBINARS.