

Hiring People with Disabilities

Hiring and retaining qualified employees is the number one staffing issue cited by employers, a concern that will become more pressing with the ever changing and aging workforce. To remain competitive, employers are looking beyond the traditional labor sources to access skilled, qualified candidates. This includes focusing their recruitment efforts on alternative sources of available job candidates, including those who are typically under-represented.

Facts for Employers

- ❖ People with disabilities have equal or higher job performance rates, higher retention rates and lower absenteeism than people without disabilities.
- ❖ According to a National Survey of Consumer Attitudes towards Companies that Hire People with Disabilities, 92% of the American public view companies that hire people with disabilities more favorably than those that do not. And, 87% of the public would prefer to give their business to companies that hire people with disabilities.
- ❖ People with disabilities are experienced problem-solvers with a proven ability to adapt. They bring unique perspectives and experiences to the workplace.
- ❖ Job accommodations for people with disabilities are usually low cost or no cost.
- ❖ A recent study conducted by the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) revealed that 56% of workplace accommodations cost absolutely nothing. Of those accommodations that did have a cost, the typical one-time expenditure by employers was \$600.

Tax Incentives for Employers

Tax incentives can provide an added benefit for employers by offsetting costs associated with accommodating an employee or making their facilities and services accessible. These benefits include:

- ❖ Work Opportunity Tax Credit – up to \$2,400 per year.
- ❖ Small Business Tax Credit – up to \$5,000.
- ❖ Tax Deduction to Remove Architectural and Transportation Barriers to People with Disabilities and Elderly Individuals – up to \$15,000 per year.
- ❖ Disabled Access Credit – encourages small businesses to comply with the ADA. This credit is available to eligible small businesses and is equal to 50% of the eligible access expenditures which do exceed \$250 but do not exceed \$10,250, for a maximum credit of \$5,000 a year.

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Resources for Employers

The Department of Labor's **Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP)** provides leadership on disability employment policies and practices through research yielding authoritative and credible data on employment of people with disabilities.

1-866-487-2365, <http://www.dol.gov/odep/>

Employer Assistance & Resource Network (EARN) provides free consulting services and resources to support the recruitment and hiring of people with disabilities.

1-866-327-6669, <http://www.earnworks.com/>

Job Accommodation Network (JAN) provides information about accommodations and related issues to facilitate the employment and retention of workers with disabilities.

1-800-526-7234, <http://www.jan.wvu.edu/>

Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers (DBTACs) provide information, training, and technical assistance on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

1-800-949-4232, <http://www.dbtac.vcu.edu/>

US Business Leadership Network (USBLN) promotes best practices in hiring, retaining, and marketing to people with disabilities. <http://www.usbln.org/index.html>

Internal Revenue Service can be contacted for further information regarding tax incentives for employers hiring people with disabilities.

1-800-829-4933, <http://www.irs.gov/businesses>

South Dakota Division of Rehabilitation Services provide employers with access to candidates with disabilities and various employment supports.

1-800-265-9684, www.state.sd.us/dhs/drs

Employer Resource Network (ERN) addresses labor needs in S.D. communities by connecting the business community and rehabilitation professionals and providing a qualified applicant pool to prospective employers. <http://www.sd-ccd.org/ftw/ern/index.html>

DakotaLink provides information and resources on assistive technology devices and services.

1-800-645-0673, <http://www.dakotalink.com>

People with disabilities have contributed to our society in many areas, including the political leadership of Franklin Roosevelt, the scientific innovation of Stephen Hawking, and the music composition of Beethoven. People with disabilities will continue to define the future whether they be the next world leader, the returning veteran, your next-door neighbor, or you.

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