



Adecco

# The Disability Inclusion Imperative

Mining untapped  
talent pools for great  
permanent hires

We're all about people.  
Permanently.

#AllAboutPeople

# Mining untapped talent pools for great permanent hires

At Adecco, we believe in talent, not labels. We connect thousands of people who are at-risk in the labour market with purposeful jobs each year.

With the pandemic prompting people to re-evaluate their careers, we believe employers must capitalise on the Great Resignation to reimagine the composition of their workforces. It's time to rethink outdated hiring processes, reach out to under-represented populations, and capture thousands of highly skilled and hitherto overlooked talent for permanent roles.

This series highlights the very real, long-term benefits that workers from underserved

communities who might once have been excluded from work bring to companies.

In this paper, The Disability Inclusion Imperative, we share our thinking on how workers with disabilities can help employers solve some of their toughest permanent hiring challenges. We offer our tips on recruiting and onboarding people from this demographic, and we explain how you can ensure that people with disabilities can thrive for the long-haul at your company.

It is our core mission to make the future work for everyone.

“ It is our core mission to make the future work for everyone. We believe in talent, not labels, and we know that differences are not deficits ”

Whatever your permanent recruitment needs, Adecco is here to help. We are, after all, #AllAboutPeople. Permanently.



# Why you need persons with disabilities on your workforce

Employers are overlooking a huge talent pool that's brimming with innovative potential. This group is reported to have average retention rates of 85% after one year of employment and is contributing to 28% higher revenues, 2x higher net income, and 30% higher profit margins for some companies.

**Who are these great employees?**  
**Persons with disabilities.**

According to groundbreaking research from Accenture, in partnership with Disability:IN and the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD), including employees with disabilities brings a range of benefits, including "increased innovation, improved productivity, and a better work environment." Because of their lived experiences, disabled people often have qualities like "resilience, perseverance, and commitment," qualities that employers increasingly seek in these transformative times.

Yet, despite the ongoing global labor shortage, people with disabilities are still disproportionately unemployed or underemployed and are too often missed from companies' inclusion agendas. Many employers don't understand the work they can do and focus more on inclusion challenges than on the value they can add. As a result, people with disabilities often experience unequal hiring and promotion and are subject to unequal pay.

It doesn't have to be that way. Let us show you how.

**1 billion**

people in the world have some form of disability, the largest minority group worldwide

**50%-70%**

working age people with disabilities unemployed in industrialized countries. (80%-90% in developing countries)

**+12.6%**

increase in US unemployment rates among people with disabilities during the pandemic (v's +7.9% average)

**75%**

of knowledge workers believe pandemic-induced changes in working life will create more employment opportunities for the disabled people

**-7% GDP**

the cost of excluding people with disabilities in some countries

**2.9 x faster sales growth**  
**4.1 x faster profit growth**

achieved by companies led by executives focused on disability engagement are than their peers

# Sourcing talent with disabilities

The most immediate challenge for many employers looking to build more inclusive workforces is knowing where to begin. You can start by making sure your hiring process makes every qualified candidate feel encouraged – and empowered – to apply. You can achieve that by taking a customer-experience approach to candidates and new hires. Here's how to do it:

## Work towards making your website accessible

Are your candidate attraction videos captioned for people with hearing impairments? Is your company's website optimized for users with sensory issues? Enlist external accessibility specialists, where necessary. Always include contacts for technical support or requesting an accommodation.

## Build a disability-positive employer brand

Your employee value proposition should be enticing to people of all abilities. Embed inclusive positioning in all candidate-facing materials. Showcase any existing persons with disabilities at your company, and be sure that your company imagery is disability-positive.

## Write disability-friendly job descriptions

Job descriptions don't just explain what the work is for a role. They paint a picture of what your company is like to work for. So, include a statement encouraging applicants to apply even if they might not check every single box. Take time to think carefully about the 'essential requirements.' And avoid phrases like 'high

energy' or 'fast mover' that can accidentally bias your job descriptions.

## Actively target persons with disabilities in your sourcing

If you keep looking in the same places, you'll keep finding the same types of candidates. Venture further by partnering with advocacy groups, reaching out to disability service teams at schools and universities, and attending disability job fairs.

## Demonstrate your willingness to help

It's up to candidates to decide whether they want to tell you about their disability, and, in many countries, it's illegal for you to ask. Some candidates may wish to disclose a disability, however, and this gives employers a great opportunity to provide targeted help. Candidates may be unsure of how much information to share or how to share it, so make it easier for them with accessible forms, clear guidelines, and friendly, encouraging in-person opportunities.

Continued...

## Make sure interviews are accessible

Ask every candidate what would help them perform at their best, regardless of disability status. Be ready to make accommodations, but don't pigeonhole candidates. Well-intentioned recruiters rushing to help without understanding individual candidates' needs can do more harm than good.

## Set up a review panel

Review panels are a great way to build objectivity into what can be subjective decisions. Consider building a panel comprised of people from different departments, backgrounds, and ability levels to review candidate shortlists and selection processes for potential bias.



## Defining disability

Disability is a fundamental part of the human condition. Most of us have a disabled person in our extended families. Almost all of us will have a physical impairment at some point in our lifetimes, especially as we get older. These can include mobility and physical impairments, sensory disability, cognitive impairment, psychological disability, and many other potential impairments.

Definitions of disability are constantly evolving. For the UN, disability isn't just a physical attribute, but rather the attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder people with impairments' full participation in society.



# Nurturing persons with disabilities for long-haul success

All employees need training and support. Yet, employers often balk at the perceived cost of adaptations like widening doors and installing wheelchair ramps. But disability inclusion doesn't need to be costly. For example, in the US, 56% of employers told the Labor Department's Job Accommodation Network that accommodating employees with disabilities added no costs, while the rest reported an average of \$500 per employee.

Here are some practical ways you can help employees with disabilities thrive for the long-haul:

**Awareness training.** Start by creating the culture persons with disabilities need to thrive. Include disability awareness in mandatory diversity inclusion training. Dispel any misconceptions and promote the many benefits of inclusion.

**Flexible policies.** Flexibility helps persons with disabilities do their job successfully. Indeed, workers of all abilities are increasingly demanding flexibility at work. You can help by considering granting non-standard hours and break times, permitting service animals at work, and exempting certain employees from mandatory overtime.

**Physical adjustments.** Consider auditing the accessibility of your workplace. Many modern workplaces are inclusively designed and already meet many of the requirements. Potential alterations include accessible toilets, handles and switches, and making emergency or evacuation routes (and procedures) safe for persons with disabilities. Also, retrofitting for employees (and/or customers) with disabilities may qualify for tax incentives depending on your jurisdiction.

**Home office options.** The pandemic has shown the world how working from home long-term

is not only achievable but beneficial for persons with disabilities. Working from home lets workers make personal adjustments, free of fear of stigma or discrimination.

**Assistive tech.** Assistive technology can 'level the playing field' for many employees with disabilities. In office settings, this could include voice recognition software, adapted keyboards, and screen readers. In more manual environments, accessible tools, such as adapted hammers and screwdrivers, or lifts and hoists for getting in and out of work vehicles, can have a transformative effect.

**Mentoring.** What do my colleagues think of my disability? Do I fit in here? Am I getting the same opportunities as everyone else? People with disabilities are highly likely to face stresses that other employees might not. Mentoring can provide support where management might not. Having a mentor can allow employees to explore potential issues and challenges.

**Disability network.** Consider creating a group to provide ongoing support – and a sense of belonging – for employees with disabilities. Such groups are also great for advocacy and can play an essential role in nurturing employees with disabilities for the long haul.



## Whatever your permanent recruitment needs, Adecco is here to help.



We see *The Great Resignation* as an opportunity to revitalise tired, homogeneous workforces with an injection of fresh-thinking talent.



We develop programmes and pathways to reduce workforce barriers and strengthen employability through training.



We embrace workers across the whole diversity spectrum – and mine untapped talent pools that others ignore.



We reimagine outdated strategies across the entire recruitment process. We reject well-trodden paths.

**Persons with disabilities are capable of great work.  
Let Adecco's Permanent Recruitment service help you hire them.**

Our parent company, The Adecco Group, is part of [The Valuable 500](#) initiative, alongside companies like Apple, Google, EY, and the BBC. It's a growing global movement dedicated to placing disability on the business leadership agenda.