



Attracting Hires With Disabilities: A Brief Guide for Employers

Many employers are actively looking to hire people with disabilities these days. It's good for diversity, builds team morale, and is just good business besides. You may be interested in doing the same – but holding back due to the possible costs and complexities involved.

You'll be happy to know that it's not as hard as you might think, and the benefits far outweigh the costs, as [a report from CNBC can confirm](#). Below are some suggestions on how you can attract and retain individuals with disabilities:

Approach organizations that help people with disabilities

To hire people with disabilities, you need to find them. There are several organizations in the USA that help place individuals with disabilities. Approaching the ones that are active in your neighborhood should give you access to a solid pool of qualified candidates. [The SHRM offers a list](#) of some likely organizations. Besides these organizations, you can check with universities, colleges, job fairs, employment centers, and independent living centers.

Create an accessibly-formatted job advert

Your job advert needs to be accessible to individuals with disabilities. For printed advertisements, [Enhance the UK advises](#) you to include a font that is simple to read and a minimum of 12 points large.

You should avoid italics – they can be confusing. If you're posting digital adverts, you should make the advert readable by screen readers or include a video (or both).

Including downloadable PDF documents with the job advert, if possible, might be a good idea – they contain accessibility features that make it easier for people with disabilities to read the information contained (as well as fill in forms). You can use a PDF editor for creating or making changes to documents. [Check into editing a PDF online for free](#) – PDF editors allow you to upload documents online conveniently, make changes, and then download the file again.

Include custom branding and messaging

To make your job advert more attractive to individuals with disabilities, it's a good idea to include disability-inclusive branding. Some suggestions are talking about organizational values that prize diversity, highlighting the perks on offer (like remote work, flexible hours, and career training), and including a non-discriminatory job description that only lists the skills required for the job at hand.

Modify your recruitment process

It's a good idea to [change your recruitment process](#) to make it more accessible. For instance, you could offer an alternative to application forms (like a contact number for someone in your company). Some people with disabilities have difficulties with attending in-person interviews (or have problems like anxiety). You could offer written interviews, video calls, and stand-in interviews instead.

Educate your employees and change up your culture

Making individuals with disabilities feel welcome may require an organization-wide culture change. First, it's a good idea to gain buy-in from employees. You should communicate your expectations with your team and, if necessary, create and disseminate educational content about inclusivity. You can also host programs or events centered around inclusivity if it makes sense.

Make sure your workspace caters to their needs

Your workplace may not be equipped at present to cater to the needs of someone with a physical (or similar) disability. You should go over your infrastructure and [make sure it's disability-friendly](#). Some suggestions are making your entrance accessible to wheelchairs, allowing service animals in the building, getting disability-ready devices, installing special seating, getting rid of loud noises, letting in more natural light, and more.

Educate and help your employees with disabilities advance their careers

Last, but not least, you need to have a game plan in place for managing and mentoring your new employees. Some suggestions are offering performance reviews, creating an educational program, sponsoring their education externally, and helping them chart out a career progression path. Offering incentives and perks can also help you retain your new employees.

Conclusion

The [Employer Assistance and Resource Network](#) on Disability Inclusion (EARN) advises you to take a 4-phase approach to hiring the differently-abled: recruit, hire, retain, and advance. You can learn more about the recommended best practices on their website. As with any new hiring process, you will get

better with time and experience. Any efforts you make in this direction will be more than worthwhile, netting you benefits like more productivity from your employees and a healthier business overall.

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