

WORK SUPPORT VIRTUAL DESKTOP GUIDE

Recruiting Qualified People with Disabilities

If you are interested in expanding your recruiting efforts, consider the following:

- OVERCOME FEARS & CONCERNS
- DEVELOP RELATIONSHIPS WITH PUBLIC REFERRAL RESOURCES
- COMMUNICATE YOUR COMPANIES' DESIRE TO RECRUIT AND HIRE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
- BECOME A PARTNER WITH YOUR LOCAL SCHOOLS
- JOIN A BLN
- DEVELOP AND TARGET ONLINE RECRUITING
- UTILIZE TELECOMMUTING AS A FLEXIBLE WORK OPTION
- UTILIZE TEMPORARY & STAFFING SERVICES

This desktop guide has been developed and produced by Virginia Commonwealth University's Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Work Place Supports. We have developed this guide with the assistance of members of the VCU Business. Bob Peck with Cendant Membership Services and other business consultants gave us viable input. We hope you find the information contained in this guide helpful as you develop and implement a comprehensive recruitment effort that is effective for your organization. If you have suggestions for information to add to this guide please contact Mike Barcus at (804) 828-1851.

OVERCOME FEARS & CONCERNS

1. Why should I recruit and hire from this labor pool?

First and foremost, the answer is because it makes good business sense. Currently, there is full employment in the country and in order for your business to grow, you will need workers who are qualified, dependable, and be an asset to the company. However if you have never recruited, hired, or worked with a person with a disability you probably have lots of questions which creates a hesitation in hiring people with disabilities. Here are several major questions and concerns business leaders have reported as reasons they were reluctant to hire people with disabilities.

2. What is it going to cost my business to accommodate the workplace so people with disabilities can both work as well as visit my business?

Your fears and concerns are important and shared by lots of businesses, but let us share some information that will show why they are unfounded. Here are some answers to your question. Studies have shown that more than half of the accommodations cost less than \$500 and over 80% cost less than \$1,000. Approximately 20% cost nothing at all. In addition there are resources available to help with some of the accommodations as well as several tax credits that will assist the removal of architectural barriers to your workplace. Remember, if a person needs an accommodation and it is an undue hardship for your business it does not have to be implemented. (Reference JAN) Even if you don't hire individuals with disabilities, the easier it is for people with disabilities who live in your community as well as the aging citizens to access your business, the more profit your company will enjoy. It is important to note that people with disabilities

represent a major market who have needs like other customers. They have substantial buying power.

3. Will my insurance rates go up?

Many businesses express fear and concern that if they hire workers with disabilities the companies insurance costs will go up. A survey of human resource managers, conducted by Cornell University, has found that companies' health, life and disability insurance costs rarely rise because of hiring employees with disabilities. However, attitudinal stereotypes about people with disabilities are still pervasive in the workplace, causing them to be hired less and fired more than workers without disabilities

4. How will hiring people with disabilities affect the morale of my other employees?

Your concern about your other employees is one that every good manager or owner needs to consider in hiring any new employee. Depending upon your other workers experiences with working or socializing with people with disabilities, they may be uncomfortable at first, but usually this doesn't last very long. Most of the time, you need to make sure your other workers are not trying to assist the person with a disability too much. It has been reported by a number of employers that having persons with disabilities in the work environment causes other employees to work harder and be more productive.

5. What happens if the person with a disability doesn't work out in my company?

This concern has been asked by many businesses. The issue of a person with a disability experiencing performance problems which might lead to termination is an issue that many employers fear. It is never easy to terminate someone from a job, however if the employee is not able to do the work and after efforts have been made to correct the performance but without results, you are within your rights to terminate the employee with a disability just as you would any other employee.

6. How do I deal with a person with a disability in an interview situation and what if I say the wrong thing?

One of the biggest fears expressed by people is what do I do when I meet and interview someone with a disability. What is the proper etiquette? What do I say? Do I offer my hand? Do I move furniture? What if I make a Mistake or say something stupid? All of these are normal feelings when you first meet someone with a disability. However, the more contact you have with people with disabilities and the more interviews you conduct, the more comfortable you will become in dealing with people with disabilities. There are certain etiquette tips that can be provided to you and other businesses as well as training opportunities for interviewing applicants with disabilities. If you make a mistake, just shake it off and move on. We are all humans and make mistakes. The applicant with a disability will understand.

Now that your fears and concerns have been eased, you are ready to get started with recruiting from this large labor pool to help you with your labor shortage. Also, you may wish to get involved with a local disability group in your community to offer your services in developing resumes, conduct mock interview classes as well as other activities which will put you in contact with this target customer and applicant population.

Good luck with your recruiting efforts.

For More Information Contact:

PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

<<http://www50.pcepd.gov/pcepd>>

1331 F Street, N.W.

Washington, DC 20004

Voice: (202) 376-6200

TDD: (202) 376-6205

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

REHABILITATION RESEARCH & TRAINING CENTER

<<http://www.worksupport.com>>

1314 West Main Street

Richmond, Virginia 23284-2011

Voice: (804)-828-1851

Fax: (804)-828-2193

TTY: (804)-828-2494

DISABILITY AND BUSINESS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTERS (DBTACs).

<<http://www.adata.org/dbtac.htm>>

The National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) of the U.S. Department of Education has a network of programs to provide information, training, and technical assistance to businesses and agencies with duties and responsibilities under the ADA and to people with disabilities who have rights under the Act. There are ten regional Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers (DBTACs).

DEVELOP RELATIONSHIPS WITH PUBLIC REFERRAL RESOURCES

If hiring people with disabilities doesn't cost me a substantial amount of money, my other employees are okay with the idea, and I can make decisions to let the person go if the employee doesn't meet the expectation, then where do I find potential workers with disabilities.

There are many organizations both public and private that offer recruiting services and assist persons with disabilities with their employment search. Many of these organizations offer services which may include:

- ◆ Prescreened, qualified candidates
- ◆ Prospective employee testing and training
- ◆ Disability education programs
- ◆ Job analysis
- ◆ Analysis of options for reasonable accommodations
- ◆ Information on assistive devices and services
- ◆ Information on and assistance with financial incentives (e.g. On-the-job training programs, disabled access tax credit to small businesses, work opportunity tax credit)
- ◆ Links to resources and up to date information

You can contact the following resources.

State Vocational Rehabilitation. <<http://trfn.clpgh.org/srac/state-vr.html>>

The State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies assist persons with disabilities to locate employment by developing and maintaining close relationships with local businesses. Furthermore, they assist persons served to become tax paying citizens and to reduce their reliance on entitlement programs.

Workforce Recruitment Program. <<http://www50.pceptd.gov/pceptd/projects/workforc.htm>> The Workforce Recruitment Program for College Students with Disabilities (WRP) is a resource for businesses nationwide to identify qualified temporary and permanent employees from a variety of fields. Applicants are highly motivated post-secondary students and recent graduates eager to prove their abilities in the workforce. To get names, background and contact information on candidates whose skills match your needs, call Job Accommodation Network (JAN) at 1-800-526-7234.

Project EMPLOY. <<http://www50.pceptd.gov/pceptd/projects/projecte.htm>> The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities is seeking to expand employment opportunities for persons with mental retardation through Project EMPLOY. Project EMPLOY was initiated as a result of current research on best practices. The findings indicated that employment barriers inherent in negative stereotyping can be eliminated through a program of demonstration, outreach, and education when coupled with technical assistance.

The Business Leadership Network (BLN)
< <http://www50.pceptd.gov/pceptd/projects/business.htm> >

The Business Leadership Network (BLN) is a national program led by employers in concert with state Governor's Committees, that engages the leadership and participation of companies throughout the United States to hire qualified job applicants with disabilities. This program offers employers access to a pool of applicants with disabilities, pertinent disability employment information, a network of companies sharing information on specific disability employment issues, the opportunity to provide training and work experience for job seekers with disabilities, recognition for best disability employment practices, and access to a largely untapped market for goods and services.

COMMUNICATE YOUR COMPANIES' DESIRE TO RECRUIT AND HIRE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Reach out to the entire community and develop direct contacts with people with disabilities. There is no better way to establish credibility and communicate a desire to recruit individuals with disabilities than to develop relationships that let the disability community know your interest in recruiting and hiring.

For example, Denise Roy a recruiter with Electronic Data Systems (EDS) in Herndon, Virginia, has developed relationships with local community disability organizations and is reaching out to inform their membership about EDS's commitment to recruit and hire individuals with disabilities.

- ◆ Send your vacancy announcements to disability-related organizations and agencies.
- ◆ State on your job announcements an interest in receiving applications from people with disabilities.
- ◆ Establish Internship And Mentoring Experiences For Individuals With Disabilities.
- ◆ Make your buildings and grounds accessible.
- ◆ Volunteer to serve on advisory boards.

- ◆ Participate in job fairs and or exhibits at conferences and meetings sponsored by local disability-related organizations.

Some community disability organizations with which to develop relationships may include:

ARC <<http://thearc.org/misc/stateloc.html>> The Arc (formerly Association for Retarded Citizens of the United States) is the country's largest voluntary organization committed to the welfare of all children and adults with mental retardation and their families.

Brain Injury Association State Affiliates < <http://www.biausa.org/States.htm>>
The mission of the Brain Injury Association is to create a better future through brain injury prevention, research, education and advocacy.

Centers for Independent Living. < <http://www.designlinc.com/designlinc/centers.htm> >
Independent Living Centers create opportunities for independence and to assist individuals with disabilities to achieve their maximum level of independent functioning within their families and communities.

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill < <http://www.apollonian.com/namilocals/default.asp>>
NAMI is a self-help, support, and advocacy organization for families and friends individuals with serious mental illnesses. Local affiliates share valuable information on medications, housing, research, community-based care, and many other issues.

United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) < <http://www.ucpa.org/html/history/network.html>> United Cerebral Palsy's mission is to advance the independence, productivity and full citizenship of people with cerebral palsy and other disabilities, through our commitment to the principles of independence, inclusion and self-determination.

These are just a few of the many disability organizations that may be located within your community. There are many others with which you should communicate. Start today and develop relationships with the disability community in your locality and let them know your interest in recruiting and hiring.

BECOME A PARTNER WITH YOUR LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM

School-To-Work opportunities bring the workplace into the schools. Existing programs such as supported employment, transitions services, community-based vocational training, cooperative education, tech prep, apprenticeship, and career academies are considered the foundation for comprehensive school-to-work systems. School-To-Work opportunities transform workplaces into places of learning. Successful school-to-work partnerships require strong bridges that connect schools and workplaces. These "connecting activities" include:

Coordinating classroom instruction and workplace experiences so that the instructional program in school reinforces student work experiences.

Providing regular communication, planning, and consultation between the students, employers and school personnel.

Forming permanent two-way links with the business and the school, working as partners to help students achieve by communicating their expectations of what students should learn and be able to do.

Creating links to the full range of post-secondary options including college, since most jobs today and in the future will require post-secondary education.

As an employer:

- ✓ Become a partner with your schools and other interested employers.
- ✓ Work with school to assure school curriculum prepares students with current job skills
- ✓ Provide work experience for School To Work students.
- ✓ Hire qualified graduates of School To Work programs.

For information on School-to-Work Initiatives in the states and territories.
<<http://www.stw.ed.gov/Database/State1.cfm> >

Contacts For Transition Systems Change & School-to-Work
<<http://ici2.coled.umn.edu/ntn/states/default.html>>

For additional information, contact:

The National School-To-Work Learning and Information Center
400 Virginia Avenue, Room 150
Washington, DC 20024
Phone: 1-800-251-7236
Fax: 202-401-6211
E-mail: stw-lc@ed.gov

JOIN A BUSINESS LEADERSHIP NETWORK (BLN): SOURCE FOR RECRUITMENT

The Business Leadership Network (BLN) was initiated through assistance from the President's Committee for Employment of People with Disabilities. This program offers employers access to a pool of applicants with disabilities, pertinent disability employment information, a network of companies sharing information on specific disability employment issues, the opportunity to provide training and work experience for job seekers with disabilities, recognition for best disability employment practices, and access to a largely untapped market for goods and services. There are currently several states with a Business Leadership Network (BLN); become active in the BLN in your state. <<http://www50.pcepd.gov/pcepd/projects/business.htm#states> >

For Example:

The Colorado Business Leadership Network (CBLN) <<http://www.info@cbln.org/>> is a partnership sponsored by the Presidents Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, The Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and Synergy Human Resource Development Associates, Inc. The CBLN provides education, support services, and a peer network to serve businesses and help with all the resources needed to recruit, hire, train and support both new and current employees with disabilities. The CBLN operates a variety of services, programs and activities to assist businesses in attracting new employees and customers with disabilities such as:

- ◆ Education: CBLN provides diversity resources, customer service and recruiter training programs; membership meetings, seminars, and special events.
- ◆ Job Advertisement: CBLN provides a recruitment service that will assist in advertising job opportunities to Denver area community resources.
- ◆ Membership: CBLN provides networking opportunities, information and discount rates for job ad services and education programs.
- ◆ Employer Support: CBLN provides individualized assistance in developing customized recruitment activities.
- ◆ Training and Consulting: CBLN assist employers and organizations outside Colorado in developing, establishing and financing local BLN initiatives.
- ◆ Recruitment outreach support
- ◆ Job accommodation information
- ◆ Access to resources and incentives

DEVELOP AND TARGET ONLINE RECRUITING

More and more businesses are going online. You can find potential employees all over the Internet. The Web is faster and cheaper than using traditional methods. Advertising on the large general-purpose job boards such as The Monster Board or Career Mosaic is certainly easy enough.

However, you have no way of knowing if you are reaching candidates with disabilities. So the best approach is to ask any board on which you are thinking of advertising for its demographic data. Questions you may want to ask any general-purpose job board, before posting in their pages, include:

- ◆ Is there a resume database and does your fee allow you access?
- ◆ Who is the target audience for this job board?
- ◆ Does the job board specialize in reaching candidates with disabilities?
- ◆ How does the job applicant contact you?
- ◆ How many people are accessing this site?
- ◆ How are the job announcement entered?
- ◆ How are the postings updated or deleted?

You need to do some research to find boards that actually reach candidates with disabilities. Many individuals with disabilities will post their resumes in any one of the several "Resume Databases" available online.

Some Web sites that specialize in services for businesses and qualified applicants with disabilities include:

National Business and Disability Council (NBDC). <<http://www.business-disability.com/home.asp>> The National Business & Disability Council (NBDC) provides corporations with a full range of services to assist them in successfully integrating people with disabilities into the workplace. Job Seekers is a resource that Fortune 1000 corporate leaders trust to find the people they need in today's business climate. College graduates can post their resumé and present their skills to Fortune 1000 companies that are committed to hiring qualified people with disabilities. Positions are available in all areas, including engineering, information technology, finance, and more. Users can search for job openings listed by National Business and Disability Council (NBDC) Member companies.

JOBAccess. <<http://www.jobaccess.org>> The goal of JobAccess is to enable people with disabilities to enhance their professional lives by providing a dedicated system for finding employment. Using Job Access, companies can post job descriptions, essential duties, and contact information. By searching geographical areas and job categories, qualified persons with disabilities can match their experience and expertise to company requirements.

Independence Bank <<http://www.ind-bank.org>> The Independence Bank contains resumes of qualified professionals with disabilities from across the nation and around the world and is especially intended for use by individuals with disabilities. The Independence Bank is open to all professionals with disabilities regardless of race, sex, or ethnic origin. The site includes a client's resume entry form and update page as well as an employer's search engine.

CAREERS & the disABLED. <<http://www.eop.com/mag-cd.html>> CAREERS & the disABLED, is the nation's first and only career-guidance/recruitment magazine for people with disabilities who are at college, graduate, or professional levels. Each issue features a special Braille section. CAREERS & the disABLED has won many awards, including several "Award of Excellence" acknowledgments from the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities.

America's JobBank < <http://www.ajb.dni.us> > This site provides job listings for job seekers and also allows postings by employers. Post jobs free of charge after registering with the service.

UTILIZE TELECOMMUTING AS A FLEXIBLE WORK OPTION

One of greatest employment barriers for many people with disabilities is the lack of dependable and reliable transportation. Another barrier to employment for many people with disabilities is the lack of necessary work supports to ensure success. Telecommuting provides companies with the opportunity to successfully integrate workers with disabilities for whom the traditional workplace presents obstacles. Through the use of telecommuting, many businesses wanting to keep employees with disabilities on the job have:

- ◆ Retained valued employee talent;
- ◆ Reduced employee turnover and recruitment costs;
- ◆ Controlled the rising cost of disability benefits; and
- ◆ Complied with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

A well designed telecommuting program can offer businesses an opportunity to save money while increasing productivity.

The following resources may be of assistance as you set-up and manage your telework program.

Midwest Institute for Telecommuting Education (MITE). <<http://www.mite.org/>> MITE has trained over 10,000 employers via customized training, group presentations, and its acclaimed four-part seminar series. They have developed a suite of products that include a 240-page implementation manual, telecommuter video, and a comprehensive telework policy agreement. MITE specializes in the areas of:

employment law and liability issues,
start-up strategies,
technical and remote office setup,
supervisory issues,
evaluation and productivity metrics, and
development of company telecommuting policies.

Smart Valley, Inc.--98 Telecommuting Guide <http://www.svi.org/telecom_guide/> : This guide also includes discussion on Telecommuting Policy, as well as provides a sample Telecommuting Agreement, Telecommuting Security Policy Checklist, a Glossary of Common Terms, Cost Benefit Analysis Worksheet, Furniture, Equipment and Supplies checklist, other Resources.

Telecommuting "How-To" Resources-Gil Gordon/Telecommuting <<http://www.gilgordon.com/resources/howto.htm> > This is a comprehensive list of telecommuting and telework resources and links from around the world. It is part of a large site on telecommuting provided by Gil Gordon Associates.

International Telework Association and Council <<http://www.telecommute.org/>>
204 E Street, N.E.,
Washington, DC 20002
(202) 547-6157
FAX:(202) 546-3289
email: TAC4DC@aol.com

The American Telecommuting Association <<http://www.knowledgetree.com/ata.html> >
1220 L Street, NW, Suite 100
Washington, DC 20005
1-800-ATA-4-YOU
email: YourATA@aol.com

UTILIZE TEMPORARY & STAFFING SERVICES

Outside staffing arrangements are playing an increasingly important role in providing labor market flexibility and helping American businesses better manage their labor costs. The temporary help and staffing industry has become a national private sector jobs clearinghouse, providing individuals with scheduling flexibility, skills training, and a "foot in the door" facilitating entry or re-entry into the work force.

Temporary and staffing agencies work with people with disabilities in the same way they work with people without disabilities. The focus on the job placement process for all applicants is on individual abilities, job skills, and interests. The temporary staffing industry uses job assessment services, temporary job assignments and work skills training to assist individuals with disabilities to find employment. Most temporary staffing agencies provide:

- ◆ individualized applicant assessment,
- ◆ systematized skill assessments for a variety of job tasks,
- ◆ matching employee skills to workplace demands,
- ◆ individualized training, and
- ◆ accommodations as part of the placement process.

For example, Lift, Inc. is a non-profit corporation that identifies, trains, and hires computer professionals who have physical disabilities through contracts with major corporations who eventually hire them directly. Lift employs its candidates under contract with various companies throughout the country. To its corporate clients, it provides a proven human resource development program for high performance computer professionals. Lift provides:

- ◆ A not-for-profit "partner" participating in a profitable business relationship.
- ◆ A source of intelligent highly motivated programmer-analyst candidates, who have been carefully screened and tested.
- ◆ A professionally designed and administered training program adapted to business unique system and documentation standards.
- ◆ A one-year trial contract period with proven techniques for project assignment, supervision and appraisal.
- ◆ A dependable source of trained computer specialists whose performance is competitive with that of non-disabled contemporaries.

For more information on temporary and staffing services contact:

The National Association of Temporary and Staffing Services (NATSS) <<http://www.natss.org/chapters.htm>> , was founded in 1966 as the Institute of Temporary Services to ensure that competent temporary help services were available to business and industry while simultaneously providing flexible employment opportunities to the workforce.

MANPOWER <<http://www.manpower.com/mp10.html> >

Manpower has provided employment opportunities for millions of people around the world. Manpower has more than 3,200 offices in 50 countries. Manpower's systematic approach to interviewing, testing and training means a seamless method of placing individuals in office or industrial assignments.

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