

The Three Cs of Disability Inclusion: What's in It for Your Company, Clients, and Candidates



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Introductions



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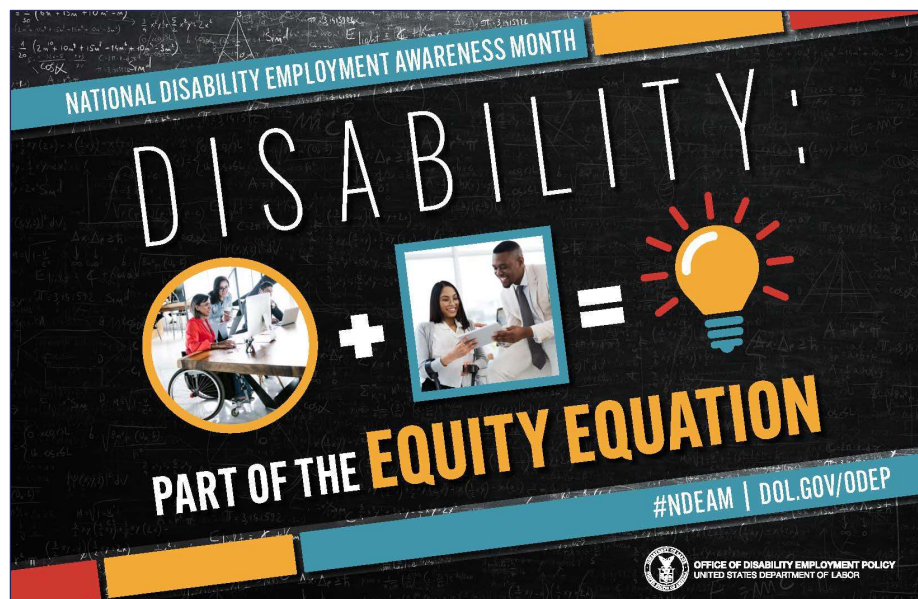


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Disability: A Dimension of Diversity & Inclusion

- Represents talent with a variety of skills and abilities, just like any other population
- Crosses all other diversity dimensions
- Population is large and growing
 - According to the CDC, approximately one in four adults (25.7%) in the United States, or 61 million people, report living with at least one disability
 - 30.4 million working age individuals
 - 20+ million grew up post-ADA
 - 82% of disabilities are acquired
- Research indicates bottom-line benefits



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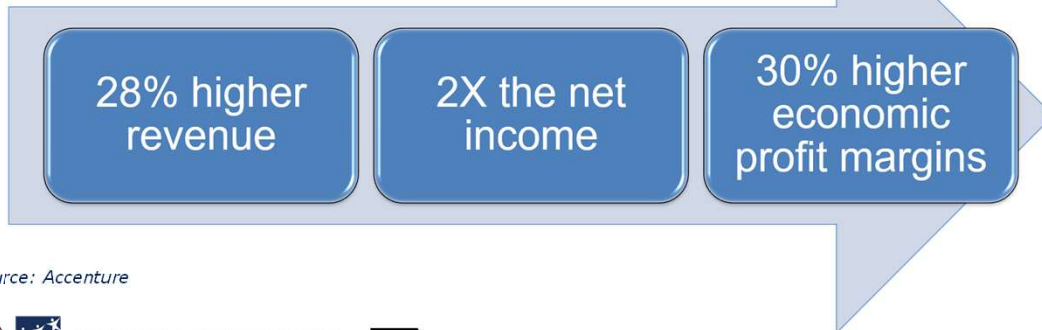


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The Business Case for Disability Inclusion

Over four years, leaders in disability inclusion had, on average...



Source: Accenture



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A Strong Business Case

- Increased diversity and inclusion
- Favorable public perception
- Large consumer market
- Increased retention

Source: American Institutes for Research



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Disability Inclusion Journey - Where Are You and Where Do You Strive to Be?



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Framework for Disability Inclusion

- Inclusion has to occur through all phases of employment
 - Recruitment to retention to advancement
- Important to prepare the workplace and workforce for disability inclusion
- Works best when leaders champion it across the company, but everyone plays a part
 - Educate recruiters, hiring managers, supervisors and co-workers
- Communication matters – both internal and external
- Don't do it alone – reach out to disability-targeted organizations and resources



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Disability Awareness and Etiquette

- Language matters – use “people first” language which recognizes that individuals are more than their disabilities; “identify first” is preferred by some people within the disability community
- Don’t ask questions about a person’s disability unless it is brought up by the person
- When offering assistance, wait until the offer is accepted; then listen to or ask for instructions
- Speak directly to the person regardless if interpreter or job coach is present
- Don’t be afraid to ask questions when you are unsure you understood the person



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Self-Identification and Self-Disclosure

- Self-identification is the voluntary and confidential process by which people can notify their employer that they identify as a person with a disability, for data collection
- Self-Disclosure is sharing information about one’s disability with specified personnel that may personally affect the individual
- For reasons other than self-identification
 - Secure reasonable accommodations
 - Through an employee resource group (ERG)
 - Personal storytelling



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The Choice to Disclose

- Very complex and personal decision to make
- Relationship to accommodations
- Can be a stressful experience/decision, especially with “invisible” symptoms
- Employee may ultimately decide not to disclose
- Timing, how much information, who is appropriate person?
 - Before interview? At interview? Once receive offer? Once start job? Never?
 - Supervisor, co-workers, civil rights center/specific office
- Questions feelings of safety, concerns about impact



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Disclosure Dilemma: Advantages and Disadvantages

ADVANTAGES

- Reduces stress
- Educates others about disability
- Allows opportunity to ask for accommodations now or in the future
- Freer to examine health insurance and other benefits
- Feels more comfortable

DISADVANTAGES

- Fear of rejection, ultimate fear of losing job
- Fear being pigeon-holed at work, passed over for promotions
- Don't want to be seen as different or weak by others
- Want to maintain privacy



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Implications of hidden/invisible symptoms or non-apparent disability (1)

- According to Center for Talent Innovation Study (2017)
 - 30% have a disability
 - Of all employees with disabilities, 62% have an invisible disability
- “But you look so good” mentality by others prevents them from “accepting” hidden disabilities as real
- Peers don’t understand that you can’t always “see” symptoms of non-apparent disabilities



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Implications of hidden/invisible symptoms or non-apparent disability (2)

- According to ADA and other legal protections, individuals don’t need to disclose unless requesting accommodations but may feel the stress of not telling others
 - Am I being dishonest?
- Hidden symptoms can cause just as many limitations as visible ones
- May be even more stressful for that employee
 - Don’t want to be seen as different or getting preferential treatment so may be hesitant to ask for needed accommodations



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Reasonable Accommodations

- Most employers report no cost or low cost for accommodating employees with disabilities
 - 56% of accommodations cost absolutely nothing
 - 39% experienced a one-time cost
 - Of those accommodations, median one-time expenditure was \$500
- Employers experience multiple direct and indirect benefits after making accommodations

Source: Job Accommodation Network (JAN), <https://askjan.org/topics/costs.cfm>



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Promising Practices for Employers

- Environment of openness and support, especially in regard to disclosure
- Be supportive if employee discloses for disclosure sake but no need for accommodations at present time
- Variability of symptoms may require accommodations to change from time to time
- Importance of confidentiality from managers/supervisors as well as co-workers
- Be open to questions about accommodation process and employer-sponsored benefits



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Case Example (1)

Situation

- Mechanic in manufacturing facility
- Wounded in combat/TBI
- Could not recall simple lists

Solution

- Manager developed solution - zero cost!
- Accommodation became a best practice in the facility



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Case Example (2)

Situation Neurodiverse employees recruited to a high-tech company in the workplace

Solutions

- Group of programmers had similar requests
 - Smaller cubicles
 - Noise cancelling headphones
 - Sunglasses
 - Darker environment
 - Including blackout curtains
 - Very literal communication

Company Benefit Reported

- Code went to market quicker and more accurate than other departments



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Case Example (3)

Situation

- An employee who works in a cubicle setting experienced migraine headaches that were triggered by noise
- Was located in a high traffic area by the copy machine



Solution

- Moved to an area with less traffic
- Provided environmental sound machine



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Case Example (4)

Situation

- Customer service representative with Long COVID had respiratory issues, including frequent coughing
- She had difficulty talking on the phone for long periods of time



Solution

- Reassigned to a customer service position where she performed job duties using online chat, instead of on the phone



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What's In It For...Our Company

- Increase in diversity initiatives
- Diverse workforce that represents the public
- Dedicated and committed talent pool with innovative ideas
- Workforce represents the population – engage with multiple populations
- Increase in retention
- Set yourself apart – offering up untapped workers to your clients



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What's In It For...Our Clients

- Best fit for the job
- Diverse workforce that represents the public
- Dedicated and committed talent pool with innovative ideas
- Decreased recruiting costs
- Increased consumer/marketplace brand
- Enhanced company culture



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What's In It For...Our Candidates

- Dedicated and committed talent pool with innovative ideas
- Openness to bring whole self to work
- Comfort in self-identifying and disclosing and requesting accommodations to perform the best at work
- Assistance in overcoming barriers, advocates for assimilating into company
- Staffing agency is ambassador for what you need



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Resources



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Resources (1)



- Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion (EARN), <https://AskEARN.org/>
- Job Accommodation Network (JAN), <https://AskJAN.org/>
- Partnership on Employment & Accessible Technology (PEAT), <https://www.peatworks.org/>



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Resources (2)

EARN's Inclusion@Work Framework
<https://askearn.org/page/inclusion-at-work-a-framework-for-building-a-disability-inclusive-organization>

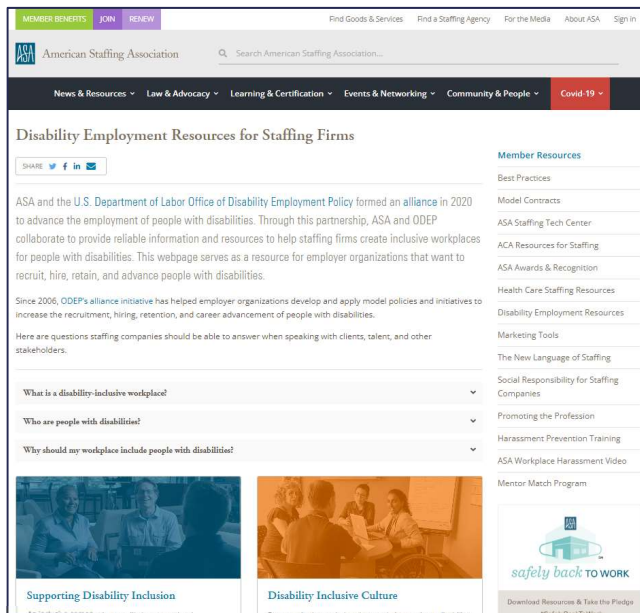


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Resources (3)

American Staffing Association
 Disability Employment Resources
 for Staffing Firms
<https://americanstaffing.net/odep/>



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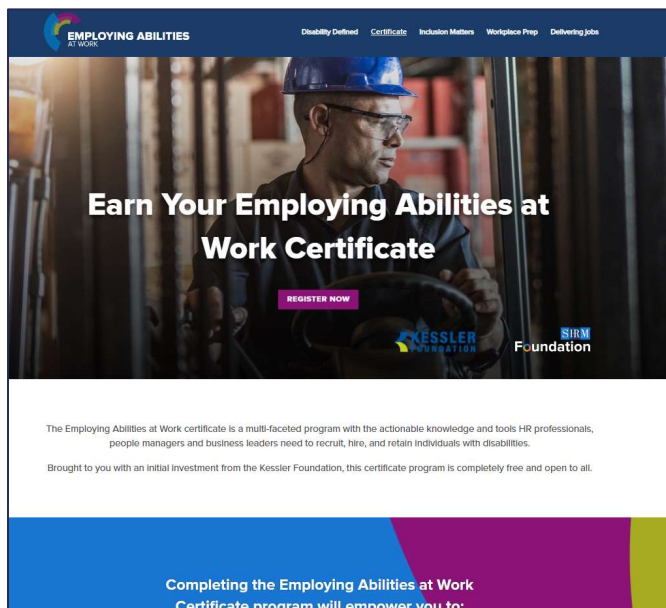


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Resources (4)

SHRM Foundation Employing
 Abilities at Work Certificate
<https://employingabilities.org/certificate/>



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Questions and Thank You

Thank you for your time and participation!

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