



Creating and Sustaining a Competitive Advantage

Senior-level executives, managers, human resources directors, and diversity coordinators understand the value of hiring people with disabilities... it's about increasing performance, productivity, and profitability.

Expanded pool of workers

As the workforce ages and as labor and skill demands increase, employers must tap into all potential employees to remain competitive.

Improved retention of skilled and experienced employees

Workplace accommodations and modifications can help employers retain employees — successfully and cost-effectively returning them to work after illness, injury, or disability.

Cost-effective employment strategies

The typical cost of a job accommodation is \$600 or less — quite often, it costs nothing.*

A larger customer base

Employing people with disabilities can provide insight into how to serve customers with disabilities — accessing purchasing power estimated to be worth over \$200 billion.

* JAN 2006

Employer Resources



Productivity Tools & Strategies when Hiring, Accommodating & Retaining Employees

Job Accommodation Network
www.jan.wvu.edu
800.526.7234 – V/TTY



Recruiting, Hiring & Business Case Resources

Employer Assistance & Recruiting Network (EARN)
www.earnworks.com
866.EARN.NOW (866.327.6669) – V/TTY



Publications, Fact Sheets, Interview & Hiring Tips

Office of Disability Employment Policy
U.S. Department of Labor
www.dol.gov/odep
202.693.7880
877.899.5627 – TTY



CIRCLE OF CHAMPIONS

Innovators in Employing All Americans



The statements expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Department of Labor. Nor does mention of tradenames, commercial products, or organizations imply the endorsement by the U.S. Department of Labor.

Over 18 million
American workers
with disabilities
contribute to
U.S. businesses
and organizations.*

* Reference: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

The **Circle of Champions (CoC)** is the distinguished group of U.S. businesses and organizations that received the **Secretary of Labor's New Freedom Initiative Award** for innovative and proactive efforts to recruit, hire, and promote people with disabilities. The CoC is now working to share proven strategies with businesses that want to hire and retain talented employees.

Innovative Practices for Large and Small Businesses

COMMITMENT—Integrate disability into the company's full range of employee initiatives, including internships, recruiting, mentoring, hiring, training, promotion, and diversity.

- *Cingular Wireless* created a task force of company leaders and people with disabilities to analyze processes and essential functions of positions and develop recommendations on effectively attracting and integrating people with disabilities into its workforce. These recommendations have enabled, and will continue to enable, Cingular to offer an environment that is attractive for all its employees.
- Through its Disability Advisory Council, *Merck* not only develops and uses innovative tools to accommodate and engage employees with disabilities, but the company also provides a variety of resources to help eliminate any fears or discomfort about working with colleagues or employees who may have a disability.

INNOVATION—Implement creative and flexible work places and practices that fully employ technology, telecommuting, flextime, and other strategies for building a 21st century workforce.

- *Hewlett-Packard* uses assistive technologies for meetings, including real-time captioning and video conferencing that benefit employees with and without disabilities. HP is also committed to ensuring that products, programs, services, and information are available to customers with disabilities or age-related limitations.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION—Work proactively to recruit and retain qualified workers — two of the top issues facing employers today — by using the services, resources, and publications available through the Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP).

- *Computer Sciences Corporation* is working with the DOL-supported Employer Assistance & Recruiting Network (EARN), a free service that connects employers with skilled job candidates.
- *TecAccess* utilizes free services like EARN, ODEP and vocational rehabilitation centers to gain access to people with disabilities who are ready to work as well as information on how to accommodate and better understand this workforce.

COMMUNICATION—Share effective strategies and practices with other companies and learn from the experiences of business peers and community organizations.

- *Bank of America* shares its employment model with other companies; three of those companies are now starting their own initiatives for employing people with disabilities.

LEADERSHIP—Increase leadership opportunities within the company or organization, and assume a visible leadership role in the business community by developing internship opportunities, awards programs, and other activities.

- *Microsoft*, in addition to serving as a national corporate sponsor for Disability Mentoring Day and sponsoring a federal IT internship program, developed a year-long mentoring program for youths with disabilities at its corporate office.

EVALUATION—Make recruiting, hiring, training, retaining, and promoting employees with disabilities a part of manager performance evaluations.

- *Booz Allen Hamilton* evaluates and rewards its managers based on their implementation of supervision and management practices that support diversity, including hiring and mentoring employees with disabilities.



To learn more about the **Circle of Champions** and other successful strategies, visit www.dol.gov/odep