



# Building an Inclusive Workforce

A Four-Step Reference Guide to Recruiting, Hiring, and Retaining Employees with Disabilities

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**CD-ROM**



U.S. Department of Labor  
Office of Disability Employment Policy  
[dol.gov/odep](http://dol.gov/odep)



# Competence and Flexibility...

...they are vital skills that employers seek. Today more than ever, businesses need people with the ability to adapt to different situations and circumstances. And perhaps more than any other group, people with disabilities possess precisely these attributes. On a daily basis, people with disabilities must think creatively about how to solve problems and accomplish tasks. In the workplace, this translates into innovative thinking, fresh ideas and varied approaches to confronting challenges and achieving success.

While research shows that people with disabilities make excellent employees, not all employers know how to effectively recruit, retain and advance such individuals. That's where this booklet comes in. It's a quick outline of four simple steps to increasing workforce inclusion, complete with Web links to resources available to help businesses benefit from the talents of qualified individuals with disabilities.

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*Niki Swann,  
English Teacher  
and Graduate  
Student*



# Competence and Flexibility...

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This tool was developed by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP). To learn more about DOL's efforts to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities, visit ODEP's website at [dol.gov/odep](http://dol.gov/odep). For additional disability employment resources, visit Disability.gov's employer resources page at [disability.gov/employment/employer\\_resources](http://disability.gov/employment/employer_resources).

*Patty Rivas,  
Grocery Store  
Owner*

*The people featured in this guide are people with disabilities—not models—photographed in their workplaces. Some of their disabilities are apparent, some are not. They reflect just a few of the millions of people with disabilities who add value to America's workplaces and economy every day.*



# Understanding the Business Case

When it comes to doing business, inclusion of workers with disabilities offers a competitive edge. By incorporating people with disabilities into their human capital strategies, employers expand their pool of talent, skills and creative business solutions. The resources below illustrate how workplace practices that include people with disabilities benefit everyone and make good business sense.

- **Business Case for Hiring People with Disabilities**

Multi-media resource that illustrates how people with disabilities add value across six key areas common to all employers

[AskEARN.org/businesscase](http://AskEARN.org/businesscase)

- **Workplace Accommodations: Low Cost, High Impact**

Summary of research revealing the low cost of accommodations for employees with disabilities relative to their positive impact

[AskJAN.org/media/lowcosthighimpact.html](http://AskJAN.org/media/lowcosthighimpact.html)

- **Tax Incentives**

Description of various tax incentives for which employers who hire people with disabilities may qualify

[AskJAN.org/media/tax.html](http://AskJAN.org/media/tax.html)

[AskEARN.org/keyword-links.cfm?KeywordID=392](http://AskEARN.org/keyword-links.cfm?KeywordID=392)

- **Business Sense**

Monthly newsletter featuring disability-related topics of interest to employers

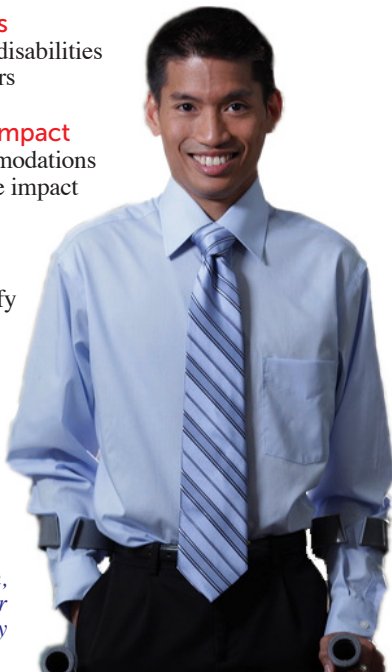
[dol.gov/odep/businesssense](http://dol.gov/odep/businesssense)

- **Disability Employment Policies in Practice**

Photographic profiles of individuals with disabilities working in a variety of occupations and industries

[dol.gov/odep/profiles](http://dol.gov/odep/profiles)

*Mat McCollough,  
Executive Director  
of a Municipal Agency*



# Creating an Inclusive Culture

Organizations that value and appreciate each person for their individual differences and experiences benefit from diverse perspectives. Creating such an inclusive culture isn't difficult, but does require some forethought. The resources below can foster a welcoming work environment that is flexible and open to the talents of all qualified individuals, including those with disabilities.

- **What can YOU do? Campaign for Disability Employment**

Nationwide campaign that offers a range of resources to assist organizations in implementing internal disability employment awareness programs  
[whatcanyoudocampaign.org](http://whatcanyoudocampaign.org)

- **National Disability Employment Awareness Month**

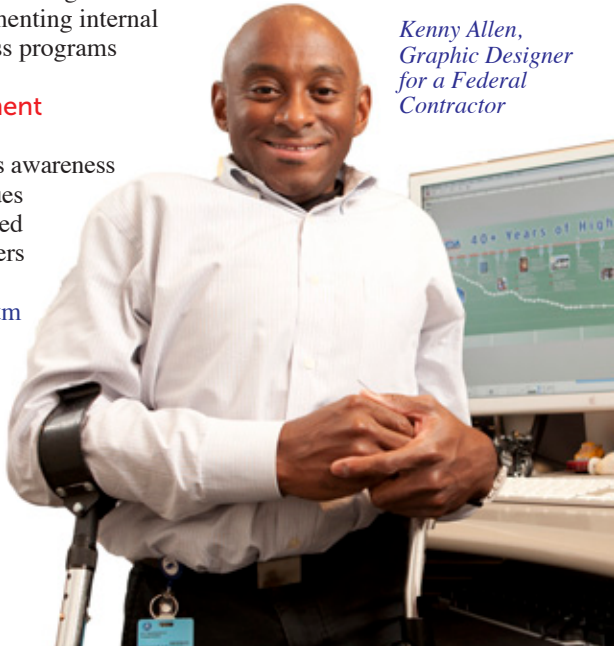
Annual outreach effort that raises awareness about disability employment issues and celebrates the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities  
[dol.gov/odep/topics/NDEAM.htm](http://dol.gov/odep/topics/NDEAM.htm)

- **Add Us In**

Program designed to identify and develop strategies to increase employment opportunities within the small business community for individuals with disabilities  
[dol.gov/odep/addusin](http://dol.gov/odep/addusin)

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*Kenny Allen,  
Graphic Designer  
for a Federal  
Contractor*



# Creating an Inclusive Culture

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- **A Toolkit for Establishing and Maintaining Successful Employee Resource Groups**

Guidance for employers interested in developing or enhancing an Employee Resource Group (ERG) focused on disability

[AskEARN.org/docs/ERG\\_Toolkit.pdf](https://www.askearn.org/docs/ERG_Toolkit.pdf)

- **Disability Etiquette Resources**

Information about disability etiquette in various workplace settings, including speaking engagements and customer service environments

[AskJAN.org/topics/disetiqt.htm](https://www.askjan.org/topics/disetiqt.htm)

- **Disability Nondiscrimination Law Advisor**

Guidance for employers on determining which federal disability nondiscrimination laws apply to their business or organization and how to ensure compliance with them

[dol.gov/elaws/odep.htm](https://www.dol.gov/elaws/odep.htm)

For additional resources related to creating an inclusive culture, visit ODEP's Diversity and Inclusion webpage at:

[dol.gov/odep/topics/diversityandinclusion.htm](https://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/diversityandinclusion.htm)

and Changing Attitudes

webpage at:

[dol.gov/odep/topics/changingattitudes.htm](https://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/changingattitudes.htm)



*R.J. Martin,  
Circulation Clerk  
at a County  
Library*

# Recruiting and Hiring

The goal of the recruitment and hiring process is to attract and identify individuals who have the best mix of skills and attributes for the job available. Ensuring that all qualified individuals—including those with disabilities—can participate in the process is critical to achieving this goal. The resources below can assist in understanding how to be disability inclusive in recruiting and hiring.

- **Employer Assistance and Resource Network (EARN)**

Free consultation and technical assistance for employers seeking to recruit and hire qualified individuals with disabilities

[AskEARN.org](http://AskEARN.org); 1-855-AskEARN (275-3276) (Voice/TTY)

- **Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP)**

Program that connects employers with pre-screened, highly motivated college students and recent graduates with disabilities seeking internships or permanent employment

[AskEARN.org/g-wrp.cfm](http://AskEARN.org/g-wrp.cfm)

- **Job Accommodation Network (JAN)**

Free, expert and confidential guidance on how to ensure recruitment and interviewing processes, including online application systems, are accessible to people with disabilities

[AskJAN.org](http://AskJAN.org); 1-800-526-7234 (Voice);

1-877-781-9403 (TTY)

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*Munir Bashir,  
Team Leader at an  
Electronics Store*



# Recruiting and Hiring

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- **Veterans Hiring Toolkit**

Step-by-step guidance on how to proactively include transitioning veterans, including wounded warriors, in recruitment and hiring initiatives  
[americasheroesatwork.gov/foremployers/hiringtoolkit](http://americasheroesatwork.gov/foremployers/hiringtoolkit)

- **National Resource Directory**

Resources to assist employers in finding qualified veterans, including wounded warriors, and supporting them in the workplace  
[nationalresourcedirectory.gov/employment](http://nationalresourcedirectory.gov/employment)

- **One-Stop Career Centers**

Nationwide network of centers that can help businesses find qualified workers, including workers with disabilities  
[servicelocator.org](http://servicelocator.org); 1-877-USA-JOBS

- **Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies**

State agencies that link employers to job candidates with disabilities in their local areas

[AskJAN.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?902](http://AskJAN.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?902)

For additional resources related to the recruitment and hiring of people with disabilities, visit ODEP's Recruitment and Retention webpage at

[dol.gov/odep/topics/recruitmentandretention.htm](http://dol.gov/odep/topics/recruitmentandretention.htm)

and Accommodations webpage at

[dol.gov/odep/topics/accommodations.htm](http://dol.gov/odep/topics/accommodations.htm).



*Meg Krause,  
Public Relations  
Professional  
and Veteran*



# Retaining and Advancing Valued Employees

Employers and employees both benefit from a work environment that facilitates the retention of all skilled, qualified workers through effective job accommodations for employees with disabilities. The resources below can assist in understanding how to effectively retain the talents of qualified employees with disabilities and help them advance and achieve workplace success.

- **Job Accommodation Network (JAN)**

Free, expert and confidential guidance on workplace accommodations for employees with disabilities

[AskJAN.org](http://AskJAN.org); 1-800-526-7234 (Voice); 1-877-781-9403 (TTY)

- **Employer Assistance and Resource Network (EARN)**

Free consultation and technical assistance for employers seeking to retain and advance employees with disabilities

[AskEARN.org](http://AskEARN.org); 1-855-AskEARN (275-3276) (Voice/TTY)

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*Rob Guttenberg,  
Family Counselor and Parent Educator*

# Retaining and Advancing Valued Employees

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- **Return-to-Work Toolkit**

Information about the return-to-work process and resources to assist in getting employees back on the job quickly and smoothly after illness or injury

[dol.gov/odep/return-to-work](http://dol.gov/odep/return-to-work)

- **Customized Employment/Flexible Work Arrangements**

Information about customized employment, a flexible work arrangement that can assist employers in retaining valued employees, including those with disabilities

[dol.gov/odep/topics/customizedemployment.htm](http://dol.gov/odep/topics/customizedemployment.htm)

- **America's Heroes at Work**

Resources to assist in understanding how to support veterans and other employees who have traumatic brain injury (TBI) and/or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

[americasheroesatwork.gov](http://americasheroesatwork.gov)

For additional resources related to retaining and advancing people with disabilities, visit ODEP's Recruitment and Retention webpage at

[dol.gov/odep/topics/recruitmentandretention.htm](http://dol.gov/odep/topics/recruitmentandretention.htm)

and Accommodations webpage at

[dol.gov/odep/topics/accommodations.htm](http://dol.gov/odep/topics/accommodations.htm).

*Kathy Peery,  
Legislative Affairs  
Specialist for a  
Federal Agency*



# Resources and Links for Federal Agencies

As the nation's largest employer, the federal government must model effective policies and practices that advance America's ideal of equal opportunity for all. In 2010, President Obama issued Executive Order 13548, which called on federal departments and agencies to increase the recruitment, retention and advancement of people with disabilities.

*The resources on the next two pages can assist in fulfilling this directive.*

- **Toolkit for Federal Agencies on Implementing Executive Order 13548**

Outline of five-step process and related resources to assist federal agencies in their efforts to increase the employment of people with disabilities  
[dol.gov/odep/federal-hire](http://dol.gov/odep/federal-hire)

- **eFedLink**

Online community of practice designed to help federal disability employment professionals advance federal employment for persons with disabilities  
[eFedLink.org](http://eFedLink.org)

- **Workforce Recruitment Program**

Program that connects federal employers with pre-screened, highly motivated college students and recent graduates with disabilities seeking internships or permanent employment  
[wrp.gov](http://wrp.gov)

- **Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program (CAP)**

Centrally funded accommodation program that provides assistive technology and services free of charge to federal agencies  
[cap.mil](http://cap.mil)

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# Resources and Links for Federal Agencies

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- **Federal Workplace Mentoring Primer**

Overview of basic practices, strategies and available tools and resources for establishing formal mentoring relationships and programs within federal workplaces

[AskEARN.org/fed-fwm.cfm](http://AskEARN.org/fed-fwm.cfm)

- **Veterans Preference Advisor**

Guidance on preferences that veterans, including wounded warriors, may be entitled to with regard to federal employment

[dol.gov/elaws/vetspref.htm](http://dol.gov/elaws/vetspref.htm)

- **Federal Disability Hiring Programs**

An overview of initiatives and flexibilities in hiring processes intended to increase the employment of people with disabilities in the federal government

[opm.gov/disability](http://opm.gov/disability)

For additional resources for federal employers, visit ODEP's Federal Employment webpage at

[dol.gov/odep/topics/federalemloyment.htm](http://dol.gov/odep/topics/federalemloyment.htm).



2012

## CD-ROM



U.S. Department of Labor  
Office of Disability Employment Policy  
[dol.gov/odep](http://dol.gov/odep)



# REAL PEOPLE REAL IMPACT



U.S. Department of Labor  
Office of Disability Employment Policy  
[dol.gov/odep](http://dol.gov/odep)

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*To order additional copies of  
Building an Inclusive Workforce, go to:  
[promotions.usa.gov/odep.html](http://promotions.usa.gov/odep.html)*

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