

Driving Diversity: Disability Employment Myths

What is Disability?

Disability: 1. : a physical, mental, cognitive, or developmental condition that impairs, interferes with, or limits a person's ability to engage in certain tasks or actions or participate in typical daily activities and interactions.

Source: "Disability." Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/disability>. Accessed 29 Oct. 2023.

The good, the bad and the ugly of workforce challenges

MYTH 1 - The cost to employ people with disability is too costly and high.

BUSTER - The cost to accommodate employees with disability is no more than that to support those without disability.

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MYTH 2

Employees with disability have a high turnover rate.

BUSTER - Employees with disability stay on the job longer (on average) than those without disability.

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MYTH 3 - Employees with disability won't fit in.

BUSTER – Staff turnover is lower by up to 30% when a well-run disability community outreach program is in place.

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MYTH 4 – Productivity for people with disability is lower.

BUSTER - In the hospitality industry, most employers reported that people with disability could be as productive as any other employee.

The good, the bad and the ugly of workforce challenges

MYTH 5 - There is a higher risk of injury for employees with disability.

BUSTER - People with disability have 34% fewer accidents than other employees.

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MYTH 6 – Disability only includes someone who has a physical or an intellectual impact.

BUSTER - Disabilities can be physical, intellectual, sensory, developmental, or mental, and can vary in severity and impact.

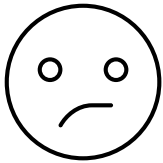
The good, the bad and the ugly of workforce challenges

Important Questions for Employers to ask themselves.

- Do you currently employ staff with a disability? If yes, what works? If no, why not?
- What is stopping, or has stopped you from employing staff?
- Do you feel that DES/NDIS or employment services are sending you the right people?
- What are the challenges you are facing in getting people into employment?
- What obstacles are you finding?
- What works and what doesn't?

Different types of disabilities

There are four main categories that define disabilities.



Behavioural or emotional. Psychiatric or otherwise known as Hidden



Sensory impaired disorders. Vision



Physical.



Developmental. – Speech, Intellectual

What are invisible disabilities?

Invisible Disability, or hidden disability, is an umbrella term that captures a whole spectrum of hidden disabilities or challenges, primarily neurological.

Invisible disabilities, or hidden disabilities, are defined as disabilities that are not immediately apparent.

Hidden Disabilities

What do they all have in common ...

- ✓ One is unable to “see” the disability
- ✓ There are no “visible” supports to indicate a disability i.e. a wheelchair
- ✓ It is a permanent disability that they cope with on a daily basis
- ✓ The person may be on medication
- ✓ The person needs to have that documented to be gaining assistance

Workforce Australia Overall

(includes Workforce Australia Services, Workforce Australia Online and Transition to Work)

National

Total Caseload – 624,655

People with a disability – 172,380



“

**Determination
has no
disability.”**

- Robert M. Hensel

How should I interact with someone with a disability?

- ✓ Simple – treat them the same as other adults !
- ✓ Be sensitive and respectful
- ✓ Converse with people in a wheelchair at their level
- ✓ Remember to use normal language
- ✓ Relax about common expressions

5 Diversity Recruiting Strategies to Implement

- Strategy #1: Re-evaluating job descriptions.
- Strategy #2: Expanding sourcing channels.
- Strategy #3: Cultivating a strong culture.
- Strategy #4: Train your Team.
- Strategy #5: Enhance the interview process.

5 reasons to employ someone with a disability



Enriching Lives

It's an enriching experience for both the individual and organisation.



Unique Perspectives

Individuals living with disabilities often bring unique perspectives and problem-solving skills to the workplace.



Boost Team Morale

It fosters a more inclusive and positive work culture, which can boost team morale and overall job satisfaction.



Loyal Workers

Studies show that employees living with disabilities tend to have higher levels of job satisfaction and loyalty.



Untapped Talent Pool

Actively recruiting individuals with disabilities allows organisations to tap into a talent pool that is often overlooked.

Employ and retain

- ✓ **Be Open to hiring people with a disability**
- ✓ **Be accommodating**
- ✓ **Provide Training**
- ✓ **Train your staff to think ‘abilities’ rather than ‘disabilities’**

What you can do NOW!

Actively work to build your disability confidence through resources:

- ✓ JobAccess – free, expert support from disability employment specialists. (<https://www.jobaccess.gov.au/>)
- ✓ IncludeAbility – online resources and information for employers. (<https://includeability.gov.au/>)
- ✓ Australian Network on Disability – builds disability confident employers through education, networks and support. (and.org.au)
- ✓ Diversity Council of Australia – expert advice, resources and programs to build diversity and inclusion in the workplace. (dca.org.au)