

7 INFORMATION FOR EMPLOYERS



BENEFITS FOR EMPLOYERS

There are many recognised benefits to employing a person with a disability. Research has found that employees with disability are likely to bring new skills and valuable perspectives to the business. They generally have lower absenteeism and stay longer resulting in reduced turnover, recruitment and training costs longer term. Inclusive work practices tend to decrease incidences of workplace injury, which increases productivity. Customers are more loyal to businesses that demonstrate inclusion and diversity, and when the workforce reflects the broader community. Employees with disability can help businesses understand what their customers with disability need, and this makes them more competitive.

Building an inclusive, diverse workforce benefits everyone - employees, the business and society as a whole.

RECRUITING A PERSON WITH A DISABILITY

Be aware of making assumptions about a person's ability to perform a job on the basis of a diagnosis or disability - whether that is visible or hidden. There are often different, creative ways of tackling tasks that might not be immediately obvious to you.

Some employers have little experience in employing people with disability and are concerned they might ask the wrong questions. An employer can reasonably ask questions about the impact of a person's disability if it relates to how the person would perform the 'inherent requirements' of the job and to work out if workplace adjustments or support might be needed. To identify the inherent requirements of the job, focus on the end result of the work you need done rather than how you usually do it.

SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYERS

Employing people with a disability should not cost any more than employing people without disability. Employers may be eligible for funding to cover the costs of workplace adjustments or other financial assistance. Employers may also be able to access on the job training and support to assist employees with a disability learn the job and/or maintain their job.

Visit:
www.jobaccess.gov.au/disability-adjustment

JOB MENTORS

Employees with disability sometimes use job mentors. Job mentors can assist in various ways, including coaching the person to do the job, solving day-to-day problems as they arise, and encouraging the person to do well. Mentors are chosen because they want the person with disability to succeed. They may be paid by the person with disability, or they may volunteer for a limited time. Not infrequently, another employee will offer to assist.

See **Fact Sheet 6** for more thoughts on Mentors



STORY

Delia ran a small Post Office agency in a country town. She was losing business to the new shopping centre that had recently opened. Her fortune changed when she gave Therese her first job.

At first, Delia thought this would be too much trouble, as Therese used a motorised wheelchair. Although the shop was accessible, the serving counter was not. Therese and her family said there that was funding available to make part of the counter accessible. They argued that an accessible counter would attract more customers and Therese had a lovely way with people—she always made people feel welcome.

This is exactly what happened. The word spread that the Post Office was a very comfortable and welcoming place for older people to pay their bills, buy their lottery tickets and do their banking. They could sit down to do their business and have a chat. Gradually, the Post Office became an important community gathering spot, and Delia expanded the business by selling coffee and cakes. Her business is now flourishing.