



## **NATIONAL COALITION *for* HOMELESS VETERANS**

*Business Strategies that Work: A Framework for Disability Inclusion*

U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy

[Full Report](#)

### Overview:

- The United States has a disabled cohort numbering 54 million people.
- Organizations that make active attempts to draw from this group for hiring can earn positive reputations within their communities and the added bonus of improving their business outlooks.
- Important themes a business can follow when assuming this disability-friendly identity are as follows: communicating extensively with all necessary players, creating situations where disabled people can engage with the business, ensuring disabled employees have a voice in the organization, and strategizing ways to maintain an inclusive mindset for the future.

### Moving Businesses Forward:

This publication details the major components that enable a business to position itself for gathering, training, and sustaining a powerful workforce involving disabled people. Its recommendations are broken down as follows:

#### 1. *"Lead the Way"*

The effectiveness of a business's attempt to instill disability inclusion will be realized when the message is explicitly promoted and made aware to each layer of personnel in the organizational hierarchy. A business needs to explain the incentives associated with having disabled employees into its professional community and to also keep the disabled population in the loop about job-related activities.

#### 2. *"Hire (and Keep) the Best"*

Through development of new structures, a business can incorporate disabled people into the mix like never before. *How* an organization ushers employees into its workplace remains as important as *who* an organization decides to hire. Carefully considering job announcement language, mindfully matching current and future roles to disabled employees, and frequently focusing on young, disabled people as potential employees are just a few ways a business can realize his goal.

#### 3. *"Ensure Productivity"*

The workplace environment must be a receptive one to all disabled employees. Legal obligations mandate it, and a strong business model relies on it. A business must spell out its steps toward achieving these reasonable accommodations and also determine one or more people who will actively manage this aspect of the organization.



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### 4. *"Build the Pipeline"*

By avoiding isolation and maintaining an expansive professional circle of connected groups, a business can garner top-notch applicant pools. A business may not initially know where to search for disabled job applicants, but other groups throughout the community who regularly interact with these individuals can shepherd them toward an eager, receptive business. To bring disabled people into the fold, employers must first be able to connect with them. Seeing what works and does not work while doing this is worth examining, too.

### 5. *"Communicate"*

Projecting company values goes a long way in successfully branding organizational ideas and motivations. This same idea applies to communication within an organization itself, and a business should make disabled employees a known presence both functionally and symbolically.

### 6. *"Be Tech Savvy"*

Business cultures thrive on technology. The structure and outcomes of company activities suffer when not all people are on equal footing both before and after being hired, especially when it comes to technology proficiency.

### 7. *"Grow Success"*

The work of drawing disabled people into a business workforce does not end after the above suggestions have been discussed and realized. Examining and possibly altering business activities from the inside are also key factors. A business must obtain a clear sense of what it wants to accomplish, positioning key players to make positive change happen.

Source: Business Strategies that Work: A Framework for Disability Inclusion. (2012). U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy. Washington, DC. From <http://www.dol.gov/odep/pdf/BusinessStrategiesThatWork.pdf>.