**WHY ARE DISABILITIES AND EMPLOYMENT AN IMPORTANT WORKPLACE ISSUE?**

“Workplaces, large or small, are likely to be exposed to disabilities everyday because many employees have hidden disabilities or will face the onset of a disability during employment. Many industries can show remarkable productivity value in employing those with disabilities. Finally, people with disabilities - or those who care for them - are your customers or constituents. So, hiring and supporting disabled employees will foster productivity and goodwill that translates into organizational value.” Ann Andreosatos, Procter & Gamble, NA People with Disabilities Initiatives Leader.

---

### HOW IS EMPLOYMENT DISABILITY DEFINED?

A person with a physical, mental, or emotional condition lasting 6 months or more, who has difficulty in doing any of the activities that are typically completed while working at a job or business (Erickson & Lee, 2008).

**Want more related DEFINITIONS?**
http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic_extended.php?id=47&type=6&area=All

### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF HIRING EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION?

Research has found that employees with disabilities:

- Demonstrate higher-than-average retention rates
- Exhibit stronger company loyalty
- Have lower compensation costs due to quicker returns to work and shorter duration of absences

Hiring employees with disabilities:

- Provides access to skilled employees
- Contributes to workforce diversity and organizational effectiveness
- Offers tax benefits from federal incentives

**% DID YOU KNOW?**

- “In 2007, the overall percentage of working-age people with a disability ages 21 to 64 in the US was 12.8 percent” (Erickson & Lee, 2008, p. 12).
- “In 2007, the employment rate of working-age people (ages 21 to 64) with disabilities in the US was 36.9 percent. In 2007, the employment rate of working-age people without disabilities in the US was 79.7 percent” (Erickson & Lee, 2008, p. 24).
- The most frequently mentioned direct benefits of job accommodations were: (1) the accommodation allowed the company to retain a qualified employee (88%), (2) the accommodation increased the worker’s productivity (72%), and (3) the accommodation eliminated the costs of training a new employee (59%)” (Job Accommodation Network, 2009, p. 3).
- The U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s Center for Workforce Preparation found that people with disabilities were average or above average in performance, attendance, and safety.
- Ninety-two percent of consumers felt more favorable toward companies that hire individuals with disabilities and 87% said they would prefer to give their business to such companies (Siperstein, Romano, Mohler, & Parker, 2006).

**Want more STATISTICS or the full references for above statistics?**
http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic_extended.php?id=47&type=7&linktype=overview

---

### HOW CAN WORKPLACES SUPPORT EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES?

- Provide access to equipment, tools, information, and other resources to enable employees to accomplish their assigned tasks.
- Take an inclusive approach involving employees with disabilities as stakeholders, team members, and key contributors.
- Advocate on behalf of employees with disabilities to ensure that their specific needs are met.
- Train workers with disabilities and facilitate staff training on disability to increase awareness and education.

**REPORTS WITH MORE INFORMATION**


**Want more OVERVIEWS AND BRIEFS or the full references for the above reports?**
http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic_extended.php?id=47&type=7&linktype=overview

---

### SUGGESTED READINGS


**Want more READINGS?**
http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic_extended.php?id=47&type=2&linktype=suggested&area=All

---

The Effective Workplace Series provides a summary of the Disabilities and Employment Topic Page. To visit the Disabilities and Employment Topic Page, go to http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic.php?id=47

---

**A Network Supporting Research and Teaching, Promoting Best Practices at the Workplace, and Informing State Policy**