

WHITE PAPER



BEST PRACTICES FOR ATTRACTING TALENT WITH DISABILITIES

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Today’s talent acquisition leader faces both a tightening labor market and increasing demands to advance their organization’s diversity goals. At a time when 90% of corporate recruiters say that the labor market is candidate-driven¹, traditionally underserved segments of the workforce can provide an attractive solution to the dual challenge of a broad talent shortage and meeting diversity hiring goals.

And of all underserved populations, none is larger than Americans with disabilities.² In the United States, 56.7 million people live with a disability, nearly one out of every five Americans. This includes nearly 12% of college graduates³, and a fast-expanding segment of experienced professional who acquire disabilities as they reach the height of their careers after age 40.⁴ Many of America’s leading employers have taken note and invested heavily in their disability recruitment strategies. “Our goal is to attract the greatest number of qualified candidates” says Alex Cooper, Talent Acquisition Program Manager at Starbucks. “We want to see applications from these candidates land on a Starbucks recruiter’s desk.”⁵

ADDING URGENCY TO OPPORTUNITY

In March 2014, the Office of Federal Contractor Compliance Programs announced bold revisions to Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act. This new “Section 503” regulation directs companies with federal contracts to ensure that 7% of their employees are individuals with disabilities. “In the short term, [Section 503] has made a lot of companies nervous,” says James Emmett, a former disability program manager at Walgreens. “On the flip side, we’re also seeing companies that are very open to the argument that you have to do this anyway, so let’s turn lemons into lemonade. Let’s make this an awesome initiative where you actually make some money and get some great people,” while also meeting federal goals.”⁶

FINDING TALENTED INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Employers who are looking to develop their first disability recruitment strategy, or breathe new life into an existing initiative, should ask themselves:

- *Where do we find the best talent from the disability workforce?*
- *How should we market our brand and jobs to the disability community?*
- *How do we encourage people to self-identify as having a disability?*
- *What if we aren’t able to attract any individuals with disabilities?*
- *How will we measure success?*

MAKING IT WORK: PARTNERING WITH A DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT EXPERT

The disability community encompasses a broad array of intellectual, emotional and physical disabilities, ages, geographies and industry experience. To successfully engage this community, collaborate with a partner organization that understands your business and is capable of delivering high-caliber candidates.

Firstly, any new partner should itself be a reputable resource that candidates with disabilities trust and rely on. The partner should be part of an active dialogue with disabled applicants, not just broadcasting a one-way message of what employers are looking for. They should provide advice and support to both applicants and employers alike to fully comprehend both sides’ needs.

Contrary to popular belief, most job seekers with disabilities begin their career search in the same way other job seekers do: Online (76.7%) or through friends and relatives (68.1%). Less than 13% of job seekers with disabilities use state vocational rehabilitation agencies or local nonprofits, so you’re eliminating 87% of your candidate pool by focusing only on government-recommended relationships.⁷

Check if this partner has testimonials from candidates or case studies from employers who have made successful hires. Ask the partner to provide detailed metrics on who they are actively working with so you have a concrete picture of their reach and capabilities.

VISIBILITY WHERE IT COUNTS

Successful talent attraction requires a partner that can put your jobs in the places and spaces where individuals with disabilities live, work and search for jobs. A robust partner is one with high visibility, an established track record in the disability space, and cross-channel capabilities that include web, email, social media and in-person or virtual events with educational bodies, employment agencies, community groups, nonprofits and advocacy organizations. For example, relying too heavily on in-person events could lead you to miss out on the 50% of job seekers with disabilities who use social media to search for jobs.⁸ You should never hesitate to ask about a partner's website traffic, email and social media statistics, as well as in-person or virtual events they attend.

AND VISIBILITY ALSO MEANS ACCESSIBILITY

Most importantly, all potential partners should have a fully accessible, 508-compliant website that can be viewed by those job seekers, such as the blind and low vision, who require assistive technology. In the disability space, accessibility is a requirement, not a recommendation. A recent study found that 46% of job seekers with disabilities rated their last experience applying for a job as "difficult to impossible". And don't forget about mobile! 56% of job seekers with disabilities search for work on smart phones and tablets for accessibility reasons.⁹

GETTING THE MESSAGE RIGHT

Just like any candidate, individuals with disabilities want fair pay, comprehensive benefits, stimulating work and supportive management. But it's important to have a specific employee value proposition for individuals with disabilities. Sixty-seven percent of job seekers with disabilities consider a "disability-friendly environment" to be "very important" to their job search, higher than salary (57%), schedule flexibility (53%), or opportunities for career growth (50%). This translates into more applicants with disabilities and higher rates of self-identification.

DEPTH & BREADTH OF CANDIDATES

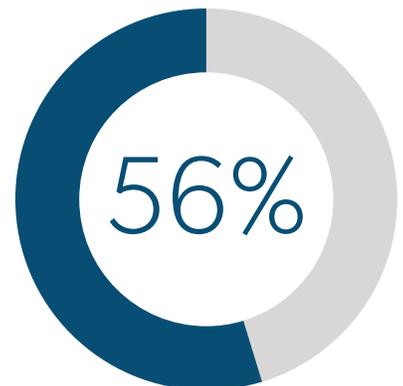
A solid partner should have meticulous metrics regarding the candidates they work with. Their statistics should include:

- *Job-related skill sets*
- *Any particular industries they specialize in recruiting for and the talent to match*
- *Geographical spread of candidates*
- *Candidates' education levels*

Partners should also understand that you have diverse talent needs. There are a variety of positions in every workplace, from receptionists to IT professionals to senior executives. Your organization might also have sophisticated talent strategies weaving together part-time, full-time, temp, temp-to-hire and freelancer/gig roles. You're looking for a partner with the scope and the connections to help you fill a variety of roles as your disability engagement efforts grow.

Ask a potential partner about the industries and types of roles they have filled in the last 12 months. If possible, request references from satisfied employers who have used the organization to fill multiple roles.

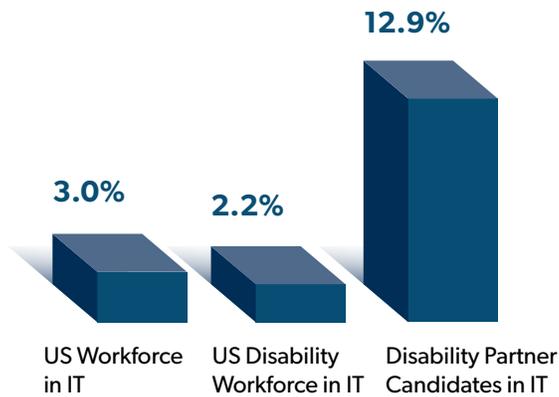
"You're eliminating 87% of your candidate pool by focusing only on government-recommended relationships."⁷



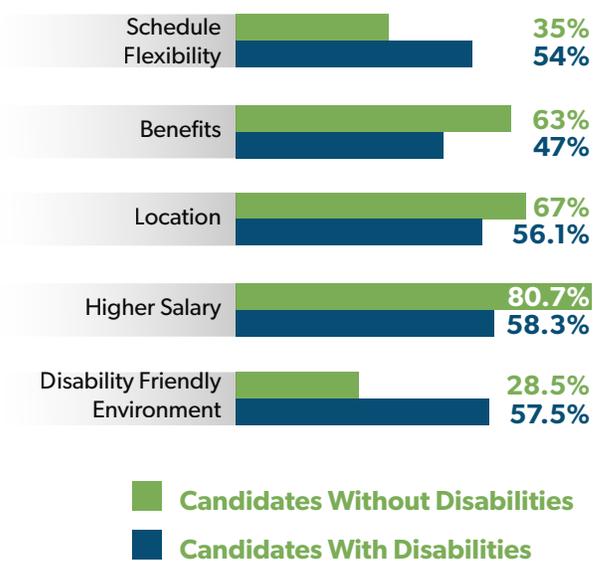
56% of job seekers with disabilities search for work on smart phones and tablets for accessibility reasons.⁹

ASK YOUR DISABILITY PARTNER TO PROVIDE DETAILED METRICS ON WHO THEY ARE ACTIVELY WORKING WITH.

(Getting Hired Data)



CANDIDATES WITH AND WITHOUT DISABILITIES THINK DIFFERENTLY: WHAT ARE THE TOP 3 REASONS YOU WOULD LOOK FOR A NEW JOB?



ENCOURAGING APPLICATIONS – IT TAKES TWO

It’s not enough to have someone excited about a role at your organization. They actually need to get down to the business of applying for it. View how the partner lists vacancies on their website and try out their search function to make sure your brand and jobs are displaying in an attractive fashion to your target audience of qualified individuals with disabilities.

But your partner should also provide strategic support in this area too. Nationwide, 58% of job seekers with disabilities are unable to complete online applications due to a lack of accessibility, and a further 22% have been unable to complete pre-employment testing for the same reason. Test the application process, not just on the partner’s website, but also on your own. Fortify your accommodation process for applicants. Ask what features your partner has in place to overcome barriers to application, and if they have the knowledge to help you optimize your own candidate experience.

STRATEGY REFINEMENT

Most importantly, a partner must “get” your business, your industry and your corporate culture. They should be able to craft tailored strategies and share tactics that have worked for other organizations of a similar size and nature. They will have proven strategies on everything from optimizing your job postings to successful onboarding techniques. If your recruitment strategy hits a bump in the road, a partner should be ready to offer solutions to overcome it.

MEASURING SUCCESS

Recruiting is about quality over quantity. Ten highly qualified applicants are priceless compared to 50 left-field ones. With that in mind, it is important your partner can track the numbers at every stage of the recruitment process while offering you the top-level talent you need to thrive.

Your partner should be able to provide information on the:

- *Number of job seekers who viewed your jobs*
- *Number of job seekers who applied to your jobs*
- *Actual resumes of each job seeker who applied (provided in real-time, if possible)*
- *Diversity of applicants (geography, seniority, talent area)*

Your workplace should track the number of:

- *Self-identifying applicants*
- *Completed interviews*
- *Hires*
- *Days from job posting to offer acceptance (time to fill)*

SUPPORT, HELP AND ADVICE AFTER THE HIRE IS MADE

Recruiting doesn't end with the hire. The next step is helping your new team member successfully settle into his or her role. Throughout this process, it is not uncommon for employers to have questions.

Your partner may be able to help you navigate responding to requests for accommodations, guidelines for creating a flex-time schedule that works around medical appointments, training staff on creating an inclusive environment and other common situations.

As questions arise, a dedicated partner will be on-hand with timely answers, preferably done one-on-one via email or phone with a dedicated account manager. Ultimately, they will be in lock step at every stage to help build your program into a sustainable success.

GET STARTED NOW

A diverse workforce is a competitive workforce. Get the best out of people from all backgrounds and abilities with an inclusive hiring strategy.

We hope the tips here will give you a starting point to begin building your program.

As a leading authority in connecting employers to individuals with disabilities, GettingHired is your ally in building a thriving, diverse workplace.

Learn more at:
www.GettingHired.com
or 1.866.352.7481

GETTING HIRED JOB SEEKERS SAY...

"GettingHired.com was fast, easy and convenient for me to find jobs, even with my disability."

"I am losing my vision due to macular degeneration. It is comforting to know your service exists, as I may need an accommodation in the future."

"I think GettingHired.com is a fantastic organization for job seekers with disabilities."

SHORT, MEDIUM & LONG-TERM NEEDS OF WORK DESIRED BY JOB-SEEKERS WITH DISABILITIES



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