

Blog

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5 Steps to Create a More Inclusive Workplace for Employees with Disabilities

By Gabrielle Kaplan-Mayer



More than 70 percent of people with disabilities in the United States are unemployed. For a community that represents 20 percent of the entire American population, people with disabilities are far underrepresented in the workplace—a reflection of one of the biggest problems we face in today's society.

But inclusion is something everyone can contribute to. Here are five simple steps that any business can implement to increase inclusion:

Use Technology. People with disabilities may need reasonable accommodations to do their jobs. Technology offers reasonably priced accommodations for a number of disabilities, such as speech-to-text software for a visually impaired employee or captioning screens for people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Partner with a Job-Training Agency. Find the non-profit agencies in your community that are providing job coaching training for people with disabilities and partner with them to bring the supports that employees may need right to the job.

Include Disability Awareness Throughout Your Company. Inclusion happens when everyone in your company understands the value of hiring a diverse workforce. Include regular trainings focusing on disability awareness and inclusion.

Accessible Environment. Make sure that your office or facility includes restrooms, hallways and storage space that are accessible for people of all heights and mobility.

Online Accessibility. Inclusion extends to your online presence. You can make your web site more accessible with simple steps like using alt tags that translate visual images and captioning on videos.

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The Ruderman Family Foundation (<http://www.rudermanfoundation.org/>) is an internationally recognized organization that advocates for the full inclusion of people with disabilities in society. The Foundation supports effective programs, innovative partnerships, and a dynamic approach to philanthropy in advocating for and advancing the inclusion of people with disabilities throughout America.

Photo credit: U.S. Department of Labor

The Authors:

Gabrielle Kaplan-Mayer is an ambassador for the Ruderman Best in Business Award, as well as a disability advocate, educator, and writer for Newsworks Philly Parenting and The New Normal: Blogging Disability. She can be reached at gkaplaewishlearningventure.org (<mailto:gkaplan-mayer@jewishlearningventure.org>).

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