



Kit 5: **Business Benefits of Hiring** **Persons with Disabilities**

A major complaint within the business sector is finding skilled workers for the job at hand. Yet, many organizations overlook the largest minority group in Canada when recruiting talent: people with disabilities.

People with disabilities are educated, motivated, and ready to work. In fact, many studies in Canada, the US, and abroad have found that people with disabilities often surpass average numbers for employee retention, engagement, performance, safety, and attendance! Hiring people with disabilities is not only a good thing to do but also the smart thing to do for your business.

Quick Facts

- Companies with a diverse workforce are more adaptive to change, which leads to an increase in market share
- 90% of people with disabilities rated average or better on job performance (DuPont study, 2007)
- Employee engagement is often greater for employees with disabilities, with turnover that is 5x less than their non-disabled counterparts
- Businesses, such as Tim Hortons, have found that the turnover rate for employees with disabilities is 35%, compared to the industry average of 75%

AN UNEXPECTED WAY TO SAVE MONEY

We are always looking for ways to save money, whether it's in our household or our business budgets. One way that businesses can save money is through hiring people with disabilities. Now, this may come of a surprise to many people. However, employing people with disabilities is not a charity act – it's smart business decision. It is profitable.

One business owner who discovered this was Mark Wafer who owns multiple Tim Hortons franchises. When he began hiring people with disabilities, he started seeing a difference in productivity and profitability. What Wafer saw was that employees with disabilities were less likely to call in sick, managers became better people persons through working with people with disabilities, and

productivity remained constant - if not higher. This is backed up by a 2007 DuPont study that found that the job performance of people with disabilities was 90% of the time similar, or even better, compared to their co-workers who didn't have a disability.

The Martin Prosperity Institute estimated that increased workforce participation among people with disabilities will increase the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in Ontario by \$600 per annum. A Harvard study found that companies that embrace diversity are more adaptive to change, with 90% increased market valuation. With Ontario's aging, shrinking labour pool, we cannot afford to lose further productivity!

By harnessing the unique perspective that people with disabilities have, their skills, and productivity, businesses can save while finding new, innovative ways to compete in an ever-changing world. Hiring people with disabilities is the right thing to do for your community and for your business.

CHECKLIST

Here are some ways that you can attract applicants and keep employees with disabilities at your organization:

- ✓ Post jobs on accessible recruiting websites that include accessible forms
- ✓ Do not restrict the job applications process to online only
- ✓ Make applicants and employees aware that accommodations and accessible formats are available at your organization upon request
- ✓ Have a policy in place that includes developing accommodation plans for new or existing employees
- ✓ When you have a job opening, inform student disabilities centres at post-secondary institutions and disability organizations in your community.
- ✓ Integrate accessible document practices into the day-to-day operation of your business, such as the default Styles in Word.

RESOURCES

- [Rethinking DisAbility in the Private Sector](#)
- [Canadian Business SenseAbility](#): non-profit supporting the private sector
- [Releasing Constraints](#)
- [Disability Confident](#) (campaign to help organizations recruit and retain employees with disabilities)