

# 5 Steps to Create an Inclusive Workplace

## 1. Understand the Business Case.

Employers who understand the business case are most successful in hiring someone with a disability. It is not about charity or doing your part for society. You hire someone with a disability because your business will benefit. If you aren't sold on the value, consider the benefits of reduced turnover, improved attendance, and access to both a growing consumer market and an underutilized talent pool. There are many ways hiring someone with a disability is beneficial to your business.

## 2. Create a Welcoming Culture.

The attitudes and behaviour of you and your staff will determine whether or not you are welcoming to people with disabilities. Do your current employees feel like they are appreciated, included, and listened to? If not then it is unlikely someone with a disability will feel welcome either. Set the tone from the top and train your staff regularly on how to be welcoming and inclusive.

## 3. Remove Barriers.

Take a fresh look at your workplace. Are there any barriers you could address before you get started? Barriers are not just physical obstacles such as steps without ramps, narrow aisles, high shelves, and poor lighting. Barriers can include things such as attitudes, policies and procedures, communications, and technology. Ask your local employment service provider to help identify and reduce as many barriers as you can.

## 4. Consider your Hiring Policies.

Do your job postings make it clear that you are inclusive and that you welcome applications from people with disabilities? Are you comfortable creating an inclusive job description, an accommodation plan, a performance management plan, or other hiring policies? Do you know where to look to find candidates with disabilities? If not, your local employment service providers are there to help at every step of the way.

To receive a copy of the inclusive practices tool kit being released in November 2020 please email MentorAbility Canada's Coordinator of National Training Initiative, Belinda Deenik: [Belinda@supportedemployment.ca](mailto:Belinda@supportedemployment.ca).

## 5. Get Started!

Not everything has to be perfect. You will make mistakes and learn as you go along, just as you do with every employee. The important thing is to model that your workplace is welcoming, accepting, and understanding. The rest will fall into place!

For more resources for employers looking to build inclusive workplaces please visit us at [www.supportedemployment.ca](http://www.supportedemployment.ca).