



# Myths: Hiring Individuals with Disabilities

Many employers don't know the benefits of hiring youth with disabilities. Employers need information and support to understand why an inclusive workplace culture benefits everyone, including their bottom line. There are many misconceptions surrounding hiring individuals with disabilities. In this fact sheet, we debunk some of the most common myths. Share this resource with employers and members of the business community.

## Myth 1:

### **Employees with disabilities will miss a lot of work time.**

Research shows that individuals with disabilities typically do not have higher absentee rates than employees without disabilities. In fact, studies have found that employees with disabilities usually have equal or even better attendance than employees without disabilities.

#### **References:**

- Bonaccio, S., Connelly, C.E., Gellatly, I.R. et al. (2019). The participation of people with disabilities in the workplace across the employment cycle: Employer concerns and research evidence. *Journal of Business Psychology* 35, 135–158. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-018-9602-5>
- Hernandez, B., McDonald, K., Divilbiss, M., Horin, E., Velcoff, J., & Donoso, O. (2008). Reflections from employers on the disabled workforce: Focus groups with healthcare, hospitality and retail administrators. *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal*, 20, 157–164.

## Myth 2:

### **Employees with disabilities will cost my business more, through disability-related accommodations.**

The Job Accommodation Network regularly tracks accommodation costs to businesses that hire employees with disabilities. According to their 2018 update, 59% of organizations reported \$0



of accommodation costs for employees with disabilities. Additionally, the majority of businesses reported a one-time cost that was typically less than \$500. Often, employees bring their own personal accommodations, such as hearing aids, canes, wheelchairs, etc... In fact, many businesses have the opportunity for an increase in revenue. A national survey found that consumers are 87% more likely to give business to a company that hires individuals with disabilities.

### References:

- <https://askjan.org/topics/costs.cfm/>
- Siperstein, G.N., Romano, N., Mohler, A., & Parker, R. (2005). A national survey of consumer attitudes towards companies that hire individuals with disabilities. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 24, 3-9.
- Job Accommodation Network (Updated 9/30/2018). Workplace accommodations: Low cost, high impact. Retrieved 11/26/2018, from <https://askjan.org/topics/costs.cfm>
- Sabat, I. E., Lindsey, A. P., Membere, A., Anderson, A., Ahmad, A., King, E., & Bolunmez, B. (2014). Invisible disabilities: Unique strategies for workplace allies. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 7(2), 259–265.

### Myth 3:

#### **Employees with disabilities require too much training that I won't be able to do.**

Not every person with a disability will require extra training in comparison to their peers. Training methods should be evaluated on an individual basis and modified for every person. Job coaching is an alternative method of training which would provide an employee and a coach who would work with them at their job site to understand and master all of the components of a position when needed. These job coaches will fade over time, but can help offset any additional training that might be required.

### Myth 4:

#### **Employees with disabilities are more likely to suffer from work-related injuries.**

Individuals with disabilities are no more likely than their coworkers to have accidents while working. Studies have found that safety records were the same for employees with and without disabilities. Throughout the interview and hiring process employers can discuss what the employee's strengths and weaknesses are to find the most effective, enjoyable, and safest role just as they would for any other employee.



### References:

- Bonaccio, S., Connelly, C., Gellatly, I.R., Jetha, A., Martin Ginis, K.A. (2019). The participation of people with disabilities in the workplace across the employment cycle: employer concerns and research evidence. *Journal of Business Psychology* 35, 135-158. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-018-9602-5>

### Additional Resources on Myths Around Hiring Individuals with Disabilities:

- <https://www.meriahnichols.com/myths-about-hiring-people-with-disabilities/>
- <https://www.bizjournals.com/bizjournals/how-to/human-resources/2014/11/4-myths-about-hiring-employees-with-disabilities.html>
- <https://www.verywellhealth.com/reasons-to-hire-the-disabled-1094497>
- [https://www.ecvcinc.com/our-services/employment-services/Myths\\_and\\_Facts](https://www.ecvcinc.com/our-services/employment-services/Myths_and_Facts)