



Business benefits of employing people with disability

Creating a more diverse workforce

With a labour shortage predicted for all major industries and occupations, employers will be looking to take advantage of Australia's untapped workforce—which includes people with disability.

In the vast majority of cases, people with disability want to find a job. Like all employees, people with disability can bring a range of skills, talents and abilities to the workplace, working in all sorts of jobs with many holding tertiary and trade qualifications.

Business benefits

Employing a person with disability is like employing a person without disability. The focus is on whether the person has the skills and aptitude to do the job.

Employees with disability are:

- **Reliable**—People with disability take fewer days off, take less sick leave and have a higher retention rate than other workers.
- **Productive**—Once in the right job, people with disability perform equally as well as other employees.
- **Affordable**—Recruitment, insurance cover and compensation costs are lower and people with disability have fewer compensation incidents and accidents at work in comparison to other employees.
- **Good for business**—People with disability build strong relationships with customers, boost staff morale and loyalty and boost team development by helping create a diverse workforce. Being a disability friendly organisation is also a good way to promote your business in a positive way.

JobAccess

JobAccess is a free comprehensive resource providing practical workplace solutions and advice, including workplace modifications and adjustments. These resources can assist you take the first steps in employing people with disability and creating a more diverse workforce.

Case Studies

Jim's Mowing, Central Sunshine Coast

Lindy Hooper, franchisee of Jim's Mowing has seen the benefits of employing people with disability. "We have seen franchisees that have employed people with disability grow over the summer to build a stronger business through the winter months," says Lindy.

"For the Jim's Mowing franchisees, it means that they take on more work and do the work in a shorter time frame."

"We believe the 'un-serviced calls' were reduced this last summer as more franchisees were able to take on extra work as a result of employing a person with disability. The employees with disability are very keen to learn and to work."





Coles Supermarkets

Greg Arnold, Store Manager of Coles Noarlunga South Australia, has also found employing people with disability benefits the workplace and the team environment. "It feels good to provide the opportunity to people who find it difficult to secure employment and who appreciate their work," says Greg.

Greg's positive approach has seen the development of practical systems and methods of management. He maintains that people with disability are highly motivated and likely to remain in their employment for a longer period of time.

Coles Edwardstown South Australia, has been actively employing people with disability for over two years. Employees with disability comprise around seven per cent of their total work force.

Vince Denichilo, Store Manger of Coles Edwardstown also found many benefits to employing people with disability. "Their outgoing personalities naturally interact with customers and other staff and create an enjoyable working environment," he said.

Being a disability friendly organisation is also a good way to positively promote your business.

The University of Western Australia, School of Population Health

In 2001, the University of Western Australia (UWA) implemented the Workforce Diversity Strategy demonstrating its strong commitment to equal opportunity and workforce diversity.

Particular emphasis is placed on the recruitment of people with disability.

Beverley Hill, Manager, Equity and Diversity, sees the implementation of the strategy as an opportunity for the UWA to demonstrate real leadership and is pleased with the outcomes achieved to date. Since 2001, 54 staff with a disability have been recruited for positions including business administration traineeships, supported teams, security officers, information technology, clerical and data entry and library officers.

Bob Farrelly, Director of Human Resources at UWA reports positive feedback for the recruitment of people with a disability. "Various faculties are telling me that people with disability add value to the workplace through offering different perspective, sharing their experience and providing inclusive services to students."

Free expert advice

For confidential expert advice on matters relating to the employment of people with disability, contact the JobAccess Advisers on **1800 464 800** or visit jobaccess.gov.au.

