



RRTC on Employer
Practices for
Individuals with
Disabilities

Research Summary

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Employers' Perspective of Including Young People with Disabilities in the Workforce, Disability Disclosure, and Providing Accommodations

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Lindsay, S.; Cagliostro, E.; Leck, J.; Shen, W.; & Stinson, J. (2019). Employers' perspectives of including young people with disabilities in the workforce, disability disclosure and providing accommodations. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 50 (2), 141-156.

A quick look: ■

It should be no secret that one of the most untapped populations for the workforce is people with disabilities.

People with disabilities have a higher unemployment rate than people without disabilities and some of the factors that play into that are lack of disability inclusion training with employers and a lack of providing proper accommodations for employees with disabilities. To better understand how companies create inclusive environments and employer accommodation practices, particularly with youth with disabilities, the authors conducted in-depth interviews with 18 employers who hire young people with disabilities.

Key Findings: ■

The authors first explored some of the issues with disability disclosure, accommodations, and inclusion. Here are some of the key findings:

- ▶ Less than one in five people with a disability receive accommodations in the workplace.
- ▶ Many people with disabilities are unprepared to disclose their disability or negotiate accommodations.
- ▶ Employers tend to be more accommodating to people with physical or visible disabilities than to people with psychological disorders.
- ▶ A few factors that make employers more likely to provide accommodations are:
 - If they are knowledgeable or informed about disability legislation.
 - They have experience working with people with disabilities.
 - If they hold positive attitudes about hiring people with disabilities.

Putting It into Practice: ■

It is important for employers to build trust and rapport with employees and to have open communication and to create an inclusive work environment. Based on the authors' findings during the interviews, some suggestions for employers are:

- ▶ Provide adequate and accessible information about the job's requirements.
- ▶ Create a safe environment for people to discuss their disability.
- ▶ Partner with disability organizations and vocational rehabilitation agencies to assist in enhancing the disability disclosure process and requests for accommodations process.
- ▶ Provide employees with diversity training, specifically disability awareness training.
- ▶ Address stigmas and discrimination that may exist and be an advocate for hiring people with disabilities.

More about this Article (Where to go from here?) ■

- ▶ When talking about providing accommodations for employees, one employer stated: "It should be part of the process so that people are comfortable knowing that they have the opportunity to revisit if they don't disclose from the start...a good employer is going to facilitate that conversation."
- ▶ One employer discussed the need for having an adapted interview process: "Whether it's a room with bright or low lights, or an interview with one person or a panel; whether they have a mobility device or require a sign language interpreter; if they require a verbal assessment opposed to written; anything that is required so they can be their most successful self at the interview."
- ▶ Another employer talked about their experience with providing disability inclusion training for other employees: "We want to create an environment that people can be successful [by] informing and training others who they are going to be working with about what they are like."

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