

## Closing the Gap: Agencies providing employment support to persons with disabilities

### 1. Introduction

Closing the Gap: Connecting Employers is a project aimed at improving the participation of persons with disabilities in the workforce. Employer perspectives are a critical part of this work.

A few days ago you received an advance letter describing the project and requesting your co-operation.

As an agency providing services to persons with disabilities your participation is vitally important to this project.

This survey is designed to assist in gaining insights into creative approaches and innovative solutions that can help to improve the participation of persons with disabilities in the workforce.

All of the information that you would provide will be kept strictly confidential by Stuart O'Hara Inc and 211. No information that could reveal you or your organization's responses will be provided to any third party.

This survey includes four sections:

- Section A: Business Case Arguments
- Section B: Working with Employers
- Section C: Challenges
- Section D: New Ideas and Approaches

NOTE: By persons with disabilities we mean persons who have a long-term or recurring physical, sensorial, mental, learning or cognitive disability.

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### 2. SECTION A BUSINESS CASE ARGUMENTS

The following statements are some of the business case arguments for the employment of persons with disabilities.

Please indicate on a scale from 1 to 5 the extent to which you think each statement is relevant to the business community in general?

	Less Relevant					More Relevant
1. Having employees with disabilities will help companies reach and service new customers, including those with disabilities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Persons with disabilities represent an important source of new employees, and can help to replace workers who are now reaching retirement age.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Employing persons with disabilities increases diversity in the workplace, which yields better-informed decisions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Persons with disabilities can bring new and different skills that contribute to a richness of ideas and can be a source of innovation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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	Less Relevant					More Relevant
5. Making the workplace accessible for persons with disabilities improves it for everyone – other employees, customers, etc.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
6. Employees with disabilities can bring knowledge that can assist corporate growth and change.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
7. Employing persons with disabilities helps to ensure that companies meet their legal obligations to achieve social justice.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
8. Re-integrating employees who become disabled lowers insurance costs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
9. Re-integrating employees who become disabled builds employee morale and trust.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
10. Employing persons with disabilities helps companies access a broader range of contracting opportunities, for example as a federal contractor.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

**11. Persons with disabilities can make a contribution to business by (Please specify any other contributions):**

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### 3. SECTION B WORKING WITH EMPLOYERS

**12. Does your organization maintain a database of employers?**

Yes      No

**13. If you answered yes to 12, what types of human resource information, if any, do you include on your employer database?**

**PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.**

Current human resource requirements

HR policies

Projected labour force shortages

None of the above

Other (please specify)

**14. What methods do you use to obtain information on employers' specific human resource requirements? PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY**

Onsite visit to employer sites

Telephone interviews with employers

None of the above

Other (please specify)

**15. Does your organization provide information to employers on any aspects of employing persons with disabilities?**

Yes

No

**16. If you answered yes to 15, what types of information do you provide to employers? PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.**

- Hiring incentives
- Information on legislative requirements,
- Information on accommodation,
- Information on workplace sensitivity
- Costs of accommodation
- Cost implications (for a specific employer) of the AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act)
- Concerns related to performance of persons with disabilities in the workplace
- None of the above
- Other (please specify)

**17. Does your organization receive requests from employers for information about employing persons with disabilities ?**

Yes

No

**18. If you answered yes to 17, what types of information are requested by employers? PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY**

- Hiring incentives
- Information on legislative requirements,
- Information on accommodation,
- Information on workplace sensitivity
- Costs of accommodation
- Cost implications (for a specific employer) of the AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act)
- Concerns related to performance of persons with disabilities in the workplace
- Other (please specify)

**19. Has your organization made any plans to assist employers to deal with the impacts of the AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act) ?**

Yes

No

**20. If you answered yes to 19, how is your organization assisting /planning to assist employers to deal with the impacts of the AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act)?**

**21. Do you provide information to employers to assist them in working with/managing persons with specific types of disabilities?**

Yes

No

**22. If you answered yes in 21, what types of disabilities?**

Visible disabilities

Invisible disabilities,

Episodic conditions

Other (please specify)

**23. Does your organization assign specific staff members to work with employers on a regular basis?**

Yes

No

**24. Do members of your staff make site visits to prospective employers?**

Yes

No

**25. Does your organization provide employers with staff training and education on disability issues?**

Yes

No

**26. When you make a placement/assist a client to obtain placement do you offer to provide support to the employer?**

Yes                  No

**27. If you answered yes to 26, for how long after the placement do you provide support to the employer? Please enter the number of weeks.**

**28. Are there services that your organization currently does not have but would like to provide to employers in order to facilitate workplace participation of persons with disabilities?**

Yes                  No

**29. If yes in 28, please specify the service and the reason for the proposed service.**

**30. How many people are employed full time at your organization?**

**31. How many people are employed part-time in your organization?**

None

Very Experienced

**32. On a scale of 1 to 5, please describe the extent of your organizations' experience in working with employers to facilitate workforce participation of persons with disabilities?**



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### 4. SECTION C CHALLENGES

The following statements are some of the challenges that have been identified by employers in relation to the employment of persons with disabilities.

Please indicate on a scale from 1 to 5 the extent to which you think each statement applies to the business community in general (1=Disagree, 5=Agree).

#### 33. It is difficult to find persons with disabilities:

Disagree

Agree

We don't know where to recruit persons with disabilities.

    

People with disabilities don't apply for our jobs.

    

We can't find people with the skills we need.

**34. It is costly to employ persons with disabilities:**

Disagree

Agree

The extra effort to recruit people with disabilities is costly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Re-integration of employees who become disabled is costly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
WSIB-related issues are costly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Flexible working arrangements are costly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Making the workplace accessible is costly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Job accommodation is costly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**35. It is too complicated to employ persons with disabilities:**

	Disagree				Agree
There is too much paperwork with insurance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is too much paperwork with doctors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are union constraints to re-integrating employees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is no public transport to us for persons with disabilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**36. It is hard to accommodate persons with disabilities.**

	Disagree				Agree
We have no experience in job accommodation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is no one to give us advice on accommodation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is no one to pay for job accommodation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is difficult to retrain an employee who has become disabled	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**37. Other employees find it difficult to work with persons with disabilities**

	Disagree				Agree
Our managers are not trained or experienced	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Employees are uncomfortable with people with disabilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Employees resent special arrangements and/or accommodations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**38. Agencies serving persons with disabilities are not equipped to work effectively with employers.**

	Disagree				Agree
Agencies don't understand employers' needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Agencies aren't able to provide the advice/help employers need	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are too many agencies and no coordination among them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**39. The challenge to employing persons with disabilities is: (Please specify any other challenges)**

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### 5. SECTION D NEW IDEAS AND APPROACHES

The following are new ideas and approaches that could increase the workforce participation of persons with disabilities.

Please indicate on a scale from 1 to 5 the extent to which you think each measure would be valued by the business community in general.

#### 40. Measures to increase employer awareness and understanding:

	Less Valued				More Valued
Information on effective employment practices	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information on effective outreach practices	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information on accommodation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Insights into the potential business benefits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public recognition of exemplary companies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

#### 41. Measures to build employer capabilities:

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## 42. Measures to better connect employers with persons with disabilities



**43. Measures to reduce the costs to employers:**

Less Valued

More Valued

Funding for accommodation measures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Free expert advice on accommodation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wage subsidies for persons with disabilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tax incentives for employment of persons with disabilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Streamlining paperwork for insurance etc.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**44. Measures to build partnerships:**

Less Valued

More Valued

Partnerships with other employers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Partnerships with service agencies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Partnerships with educational institutions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Partnerships with governments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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**45. For employers, an effective approach would be to (please specify any other measures):**

**Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey. Your input is greatly appreciated**