

# Business Benefits

**One in five Australians lives with disability. This includes those living with mental health conditions. It's increasingly likely that, to fill job vacancies with quality candidates, your organisation will employ people with disability.**

**Here are some key facts about employing people with disability and why it makes good business sense to do so:**

- **People with disability generally take fewer days off, take less sick leave, and stay in jobs longer than other workers.**
- **Employment costs for people with disability can be as low as 13 per cent of the employment costs for other employees\*.**
- **Workers' compensation costs for people with disability are as low as 4 per cent of the workers' compensation costs for other employees\*.**
- **Once in the right job, people with disability perform as well as other employees.**
- **People with disability build strong connections with customers.**
- **People with disability boost staff morale and enhance a sense of teamwork.**
- **Hiring people with disability enhances a business's image within the community.**

Australia's workforce is constantly changing to prepare for, and respond to, our future economic, environmental, and social goals. The population is ageing and people are staying in the workforce for longer.

Many industries are experiencing significant skill and labour shortages, especially in growth areas. Increasingly, employers need to consider accessing a diverse range of skilled and talented people and take advantage of Australia's untapped workforce to meet the needs of business.

Smart employers recruit and welcome talent with disability. In the vast majority of cases, people with disability are able to work and want to find a job. They simply need to be given the chance to show what they can do. We want to help your business thrive and give people with disability the opportunity to contribute to our economic future.

People with disability are often characterised by a high degree of dedication and commitment to their role. Employers can access valuable employees who are reliable, skilled, and have a great attitude and desire to work when they employ people with disability.

For employers, a major concern when recruiting staff is getting the right person for the job. Sometimes the right person will be someone with disability. People with disability bring a range of skills, talents and abilities to the workplace. They work in all sorts of jobs and hold a range of tertiary and trade qualifications.





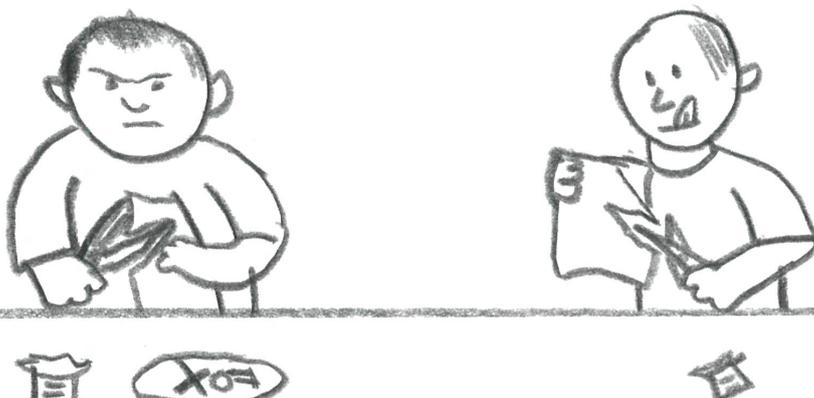
Some hold senior managerial positions, while others are employed in customer service, manual, or technical jobs. The majority of employers who have hired someone with disability can testify to the benefits of doing so. However, if you have not recruited or worked with staff with disability, you might be unsure how to go about it.

Marketers depend heavily on consumer research to implement good business & sales strategies and, not surprisingly, consumers are telling them they want social responsibility from business.

## Employing people with a disability can also ensure that your business best reflects the community in which it operates.

Ethical consumerism is buying products which were ethically produced and/or which are not harmful to the environment and society. Although not all of us consciously go out of our way to deal with ethical goods and services – consumers are more likely to look favourably upon companies that employ people with disabilities.

So, if given a choice, a consumer will almost always choose an ethical business. In the case of employing people with disabilities, this allows a consumer to feel they have contributed to keeping people with disability employed because being an ethical consumer feels good!



## Change the way you look at a person's disability and see their ABILITY.

Instead of thinking 'why hire a person with a disability when I can hire a person without one', change your thinking to, 'I can hire someone with the appropriate skills to perform a given job and if that person happens to have a disability, so be it, but their disability is not the point.'

Existing evidence suggests that once employers overcome their fear of the unknown, hiring and working with people with disabilities becomes natural. When an employee's ability outshines their disability it becomes harder for the employer to see their disability. This is when you enable – not disable, a person with a disability.

Several studies reached a similar conclusion: the more exposure employers had to employing people with disabilities the more favourable they were towards continuing this trend. Some of the most successful multinational corporations that have inclusion policies recognise the positive effects of the inclusion of people with disabilities into their workforces.

The benefits of employing people with disability are immediate and measurable. An Australian Government review of research found that workers with disability are no more likely to be injured at work than other employees.

Similarly, studies conducted in Australia and overseas have found no differences in performance and productivity and found that employees with disability actually have fewer scheduled absences as well as increased tenure. On average, employing people with disability does not cost any more than employing people without disability.

## The Business Benefits of Employing Someone with Disability

**Employing people with disability makes good business sense. There are significant business benefits when employing someone with disability, benefits beyond just filling a job.**

Australian Safety & Compensation Council report  
"Are People with disability at Risk at work?"

- **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. 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 and boost staff morale and loyalty by helping to create a diverse workforce.

Real cost savings are realised through reduced turnover, recruitment and retraining costs. Hiring people with disability contributes to the organisation's overall diversity.

It enhances the company's image among its staff, community and customers with positive benefits to the employer's brand.



# Financial Support for Employers & People with Disability.

## Employee Assistance Fund (EAF)

gives financial help to eligible people with a disability and mental health condition, as well as employers to buy work-related modifications and services.

The EAF is available to people with disability who are about to start a job or who are currently working, as well as people who need help to find and prepare for a job. It is also available to people with disability who are self-employed, and jobseekers who need Auslan assistance, or special work equipment to look for and prepare for a job.

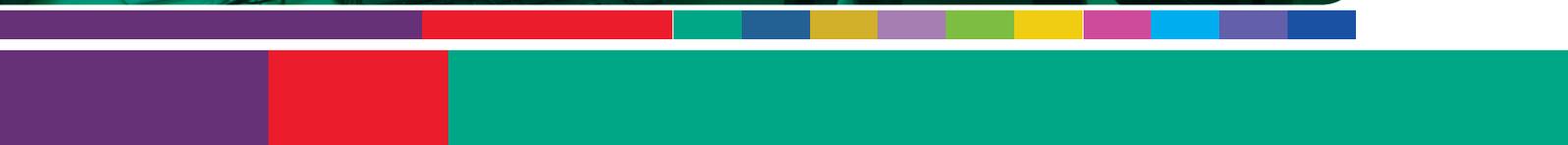
## Disability Employment Services

are a national network of organisations funded by the Australian Government to help employers recruit and retain employees with disability. Disability Employment Services help job seekers with disability, injury or health conditions in around 2200 sites across Australia.

A key distinguishing feature of Disability Employment Services is their capacity to support and manage a person's condition in the workplace, along with providing ongoing support in the workplace for as long as it is required.

**Disability Employment Services help job seekers with disability to access individually tailored employment services, with strong links to training and skills development, including in areas of skills shortages. Providers offer a range of free services to employers of people with disability, injury or health conditions, including:**

- professional recruitment advice and job matching
- help with job design for employees with disability
- on-the-job or off-site support to ensure new employees with disability settle into their job
- ongoing support for as long as it is required, for employees and employers who require support to maintain their employment
- training information and awareness activities for employers and staff
- Help for employees whose job may be in jeopardy as a result of their disability. Providers of Disability Employment Services are encouraged to work with employers to:
  - build local linkages to meet employer needs and enhance sustainable employment outcomes for people with disability
  - meet their labour needs, including working with individual employers to identify job vacancies and matching suitable candidates to those vacancies while sustaining quality outcomes for people with disability
  - Continually meet and adapt to their needs and the needs of and people with disability. Disability Employment Services can also help employers to access a range of financial support, such as workplace modifications, assistive technology, disability, deaf and mental health awareness training, Auslan interpreting and wage subsidies.



## As an employer, you can access a range of government tools and programs to help you employ people with disability. For example:

Disabled Australian Apprentice Wage Support is an incentive paid to employers who employ an eligible Australian Apprentice with disability.

Wage subsidies can help employers with paying wages and training costs in the first few months of employing a person with a disability.

## Search Grants & Assistance for more government support for your business.

## Applicable Legislation & Information

Australian Human Rights Commission gives advice about discrimination law and complaints. A Disability Action Plan is a strategy to help your organisation change business practices that could result in discrimination against people with disabilities. The Action Plan helps businesses to work out these practices and offers ways to change and showcase their commitment.

Workers with Mental Illness: A Practical Guide for Managers provides managers with information on how to support workers with mental illness. It also provides managers with information about how to develop and promote a safe and healthy work environment for all workers.

[https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/document/publication/workers\\_mental\\_illness\\_guide\\_0.pdf](https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/document/publication/workers_mental_illness_guide_0.pdf)

If you have employees with disability who are not covered by an award or agreement, they are entitled to one of the special national minimum wages.

Get the full details on Special National Minimum Wages for employees with disability on the Fair Work Commission website.

<https://www.fwc.gov.au/awards-and-agreements/minimum-wages-conditions/national-minimum-wage-orders>

