

Inclusion

Peak Performers

“Championing opportunities for professionals with disabilities.”



by Melissa Orsak

Finding ideal and highly qualified employees to join your company can often present significant financial and logistical challenges. On the other hand, for individuals facing physical, emotional, or mental hurdles, the search for fulfilling employment opportunities can seem insurmountable. This is where Peak Performers steps in. As a bridge between employers and qualified professionals with disabilities, the company aims to create successful outcomes for companies and those Peak Performers are helping find work. Peak Performers firmly believes that “a diverse workforce is a stronger workforce.”

Established in 1994 and headquartered in Austin, Texas, Peak Performers has made significant strides, expanding its reach across the nation. Since its inception, the company has facilitated over 32,378 jobs, resulting in more than \$250 million in wages and benefits paid.

Erich Butler, a Disability Inclusion Partner at Peak Performers shared, “We’re committed to helping you navigate the dynamic talent market. We prioritize inclusive hiring, specifically focusing on professionals with disabilities. Our services range from temporary staffing and recruitment process outsourcing to direct hiring for specialized and executive roles. We recruit temporary, contract-to-hire, direct-hire administrative, finance, information technology, and executive-level jobs.”

Peak Performers also helps reduce the expensive costs of hiring. They shared, “According to The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), the average cost per hire is around 4,700 USD.”

“AT PEAK PERFORMERS, WE BELIEVE THAT INCLUSION IS MORE THAN A GOAL—IT’S A SOCIETAL IMPERATIVE. BY CHAMPIONING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFESSIONALS WITH DISABILITIES, WE CREATE WORKPLACES THAT REFLECT THE FULL SPECTRUM OF TALENT AND POTENTIAL IN ALL PEOPLE. TOGETHER WITH ADVOCATES LIKE CODY [JOHNSON], WE ARE BUILDING A FUTURE WHERE INCLUSION IS AT THE HEART OF EVERYTHING WE DO.”

-BREE SARLATI, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF PEAK PERFORMERS

According to criteria set by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), disabilities are broadly defined. Peak Performers further explains a disability as “an impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of such an impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment. A disability may affect you physically, mentally, or emotionally.” Examples of disabilities include ADD/ADHD, Addiction, AIDS/HIV, Amputee, Anxiety Disorders, Arthritis, Asthma, Crohn’s Disease, Heart Disease, Diabetes, Back/Spinal Injury, Insomnia, Phobias, Paralysis, Sleep Apnea, Varicose Veins, and many more.

Peak Performers shares, “The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimates more than 1 in every 4 American adults has a diagnosed disability. And

yet, studies show that less than 4% disclose their disability to their employer. People with disabilities experience unemployment at a rate 2x the national figure--and this isn’t even counting those who are underemployed, settling for less out of fear of being unemployed.”

The statistics clearly show that many companies unknowingly hire employees with disabilities. However, a better understanding of an employee’s background or needs can help tremendously. Peak Performers states, “We have the expertise to connect you with qualified candidates with disabilities who can bring unique perspectives and valuable skills to your team.” While a disability does not solely define an employee, it is, in part, what makes them incredible: creating depth, understanding, character, extra skill sets, and more. It is an important foundational base every company needs to funnel into its unique superpower.



Embracing disability-inclusive hiring ensures open and honest communication, leading to the best matches for both employers and candidates. By adopting this approach, companies create an environment where employees can thrive and provide exceptional service to their clients.

Peak Performers advocates for those who have yet to realize their potential. They share, “Imagine being screened into a hiring process because of your disability--not screened out. Imagine working with a supervisor who has extensive experience with disability accommodations. Imagine having confidential conversations about your disability-related needs, without fear of anyone treating you differently. Imagine being empowered to thrive at work in ways you never thought possible.”

Butler and his dedicated team are deeply immersed in the local community, actively networking with both job seekers and employers. Their outreach efforts extend across private and state sectors, as they strive to identify and promote well-suited candidates for various employment opportunities. Furthermore, they prioritize forging impactful partnerships with businesses in search of talented individuals, with notable collaborations including UT Austin and the VA Clinic.

According to Executive Director Shannon

"WE RECOGNIZE THAT DISABILITY CAN OFTEN HAVE OVERT OR SUBTLE IMPACTS ON EMPLOYMENT. MANY PEOPLE THAT WE WORK WITH HAVE BEEN MANAGING THEIR DISABILITY FOR DECADES AND ARE TERRIFIED TO EVEN ACKNOWLEDGE IT. THAT SAID, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES EXPERIENCE AN UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DOUBLE THAT OF THE NATIONAL AVERAGE, AND IT MAY IMPACT THEIR GETTING A JOB, KEEPING A JOB, OR EVEN GETTING PROMOTED WITHIN THEIR CURRENT ROLE. PEAK PERFORMERS SEEKS TO LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD BY HELPING JOB SEEKERS WITH DISABILITIES FIND JOBS AND SIMULTANEOUSLY HELPING COMPANIES FIND GREAT TALENT."

**-MYLES WALLACE,
DISABILITY INCLUSION PARTNER**

Mantrom at Launch Pad Job Club and a Peak Performers partner, “Peak Performers has helped countless members of Launch Pad Job Club in landing either contract or permanent employment. Our members tend towards the “fine winevintage” (being mid-late-career professionals), and while most may not have visible disabilities, age and time do take their toll “blessing” us with non-visible ailments like diabetes, sleep apnea, dimmed eyesight, etc. As a job club we are,



therefore, so very grateful there is a staffing company here in Austin whose mission is to assist those who other staffing companies or Corporate America might disregard. We fully stand behind Peak Performers, just as they have stood behind Launch Pad Job Club.”

One of Butler’s particularly impactful success stories involves a candidate they encountered at a job fair. This individual, who grappled with severe PTSD, faced significant challenges in communicating with his case worker. During a moment alone with Butler, the candidate found the courage to share his experiences for the first time, ultimately resulting in his successful placement in a managerial position with the state. Years later, he continues to thrive in this role, occasionally returning to Peak Performers to say hello.

Butler has found his time at Peak Performers to be an incredible journey, allowing him to excel in work he's passionate about. At Peak Performers, exceptional benefits are offered, and the company actively seeks new talent. Butler emphasizes, “We take care of our candidates and make it as full-time as possible. As a staffing agency, we offer medical, dental, and vision and a chance to put [money] in a 403 (b). They get free access to talk to lawyers and six free counseling services throughout the year [for the employee or anyone in the household].”

Instead of shying away from disabilities, Peak Performers believes in allowing them to empower us to take bold steps forward into the workforce and leave a unique mark. Our nation will flourish as individuals and families thrive and companies benefit from diversity and inclusion. Whether



you're seeking a job opportunity or looking to hire exceptional talent, consider joining the Peak Performers community. Stay updated by following Peak Performers and Erich Butler on LinkedIn.

"AS LEADERS COMMITTED TO ADVANCING OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES, MR. [CODY] JOHNSON AND I SHARE DEEP OVERLAPPING VALUES. HIS PASSION FOR SUPPORTING SPECIAL OLYMPICS ATHLETES REMINDS US OF THE IMPORTANCE OF CREATING SPACES WHERE EVERYONE'S ABILITIES ARE CELEBRATED."

**-BREE SARLATI, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF
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