

Hiring People with Disabilities Makes Good Business Sense!

Bottom Line Business Benefits:

1. Reduced Turnover: Studies show that with a well-run outreach effort to hire the disabled can result in a 50% reduction in employee turnover, compared to other labor pools. Costs associated with turnover — training time, loss of productivity, loss of hours, overtime for other staff, human resource and payroll time, etc. — are decreased. Some companies estimate the cost of turnover to be approximately \$5,000 per hire. Thus the average business could save \$2,500 per hire (50%) with an outreach effort to the disability community.

2. Reduced Recruiting Costs: A well-run outreach effort coordinates and takes true advantage of the “free” recruiting services of the state, community based organizations, and schools. This helps reduce the need for recruitment ads, as well as owner and manager time. Recruiting costs can average as high as \$2,500 per hire. With a disability outreach effort, recruitment costs could fall to \$500 per hire, resulting in a savings of \$2,000 per hire.

3. Work Opportunity Tax Credits (WOTC): The WOTC provides a direct federal tax credit of \$2,400 per every individual with a disability hired.

4. Training Program Incentives: Businesses can use incentives and reimbursements, through the Department of Rehabilitation Services, to fund on the job evaluations, on the job training and short term training to upgrade a worker’s qualifications. Short term job coaching can assist in learning new tasks or mastering current duties..

5. Customer Outreach: Through a disability outreach program and a coordinated disability community marketing effort, businesses can expect an increase in patronage of 50 families per week per location.

These benefits and more also apply to businesses that hire people with Autism...

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The Facts

The power of the disability community is undeniable — it is a high potential labor and customer market.

- 1. 54 million people with disabilities — plus close family, friends, and supporters — comprise almost 1/3 of the United States population.**
- 2. 20 million of the 70 million families in the U.S. have at least one member with a disability. (1 out of 10 families raising children have at least 1 child with a disability).**
- 3. People with disabilities in the U.S. have an annual spending power of \$796 billion. This is more than any ethnic minority group (\$200 billion more than the African American community, \$300 billion more than the Hispanic community) and this does not take into account family, friends, and supporters.**

4. With the baby boom generation retiring, people with disabilities are the last untapped labor source in the country (66.7% unemployment).

5. Targeting the disability community as a customer and labor source is a successful rising trend in the American business community:

Companies like CVS, Walgreens (www.walgreensoutreach.com), Starbucks, and Bank of America have successfully initiated large scale outreach efforts to the disability community.

Hiring People with ASD* Makes Good Business Sense!

*ASD = Autism Spectrum Disorders

...More Bottom Line Business Benefits:

Benefits associated with hiring people with *disabilities* apply to businesses that hire people with *ASD*:

6. Dependable, Loyal Employees. Employees with ASD exhibit character strengths that make them highly desirable employees: focus, reliability, loyalty, honesty, and a preference for work over office politics.

7. Strong Detail and Process Skills. Supervisors praise employees with ASD for their accuracy, attention to detail, and skills with complex, repetitive tasks.

8. Increased Diversity. Integrating people on the autism spectrum into the work place generates the rewards associated with diversifying the work force: positive customer responses, more vibrant workplaces, and multiple perspectives that promote creative problem-solving.

9. Enhanced Supervisor and Co-Worker Skills. Supervisors and co-workers strengthen their own interpersonal and problem-solving skills as they help employees with ASD adapt to the work environment. Non-autistic co-workers often learn to communicate more clearly, find more efficient ways to complete work tasks, and understand social dynamics more fully.

10. Improved Work Place Efficiency. Supports that help employees with ASD adjust to the work place — such as providing clear written directions or identifying hidden codes of conduct — provide greater clarity for all employees and enhance overall efficiency and productivity. (See recommendations at www.jan.wvu.edu/media/asperger.html)

Contact $E=mc^2$ to learn more:

$E=mc^2$ Employment = momentum x community collaboration
A Program of the Autism Society of McLean County

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Autism Facts

The autism community provides a hidden pool of **high-potential employees** — as well as a growing customer market.

1. Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) affect 1 in 150 people (www.cdc.gov). With recent improvements in understanding and diagnoses, more children with ASD receive early interventions, increasing their functional abilities as adults.

2. Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) refers to group of biologically-based, developmental conditions characterized by communication and social deficits, and hyper-focused interest patterns. "Spectrum" means symptoms and cognitive abilities vary widely.

3. People with ASD become valuable employees. They work successfully in jobs as diverse as data entry, digitization, computer technology, scientific research, inventory, shipping/distribution, teaching, medical coding, and animal management.

4. Employed adults with ASD show gains in personal functioning and fulfillment — thus lowering costs to families and communities.

5. National and local efforts show that businesses can profit when people with ASD are hired. For example:

Walgreen's distribution facility staffed by employees with autism consistently meets and exceeds the highest productivity standards.

Locally, Afni, Meijer's, the McLean County Clerk's office, Illinois Wesleyan University Ames Library, Verizon, and others have successfully hired people with autism.