

READY **PRÊTS**
WILLING **DISPONIBLES**
& ABLE **& CAPABLES**

INCLUSIVE HIRING WORKS



THE BUSINESS BENEFITS OF HIRING PEOPLE WITH AN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY OR ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM

How it works

The RWA model has successfully connected thousands of businesses with skilled employees and can help your company build:

- Insights on the business benefits of inclusive hiring and the return on investment experienced by Canadian businesses that hire people with an intellectual disability or on the autism spectrum;
- Disability awareness training;
- Individualized support to help you develop and implement inclusive recruitment and selection strategies;
- Coordinated access to a broad talent pool of persons with an intellectual disability or on the autism spectrum;
- Direct partnership with local employment agencies that help provide the supports to candidates and employees they and you need to succeed

Building an Inclusive Labour Force

Your business's success or failure depends on the talent pool and diversity of skills you can access. While there is talk of labour and skills shortages, across Canada there are close to 500,000 working-aged adults with an intellectual disability or on the autism spectrum who are looking for work. Tapping into the significant potential of this workforce is already helping thousands of businesses. Inclusive hiring can:

- Help your business address its skills shortages;
- Build more productive, innovative, and profitable workplaces;
- Improve the diversity of skills and perspectives which every business needs to thrive

Ready, Willing and Able (RWA) is here to help you reach your inclusive hiring goals. Active in every province and territory across the country, RWA is a **free** program that has helped thousands of Canadian businesses become more inclusive. And we look forward to working with you.

Almost every organization cites diversity as a priority. But people with disabilities are often overlooked as part of this diversity. Very few companies include initiatives for hiring people with disabilities. Ninety percent of companies say that diversity is a priority in their hiring and work. But only 4 percent of companies make hiring people with disabilities part of that work.

As a result, businesses are missing out on a larger pool of candidates, a great source of talent to boost productivity and creativity, and a diversified workplace that reflects the wider customer community.

It's time to move past outdated and false perceptions and to hire for a prospective worker's 'ability.' It's not just the right thing to do, it's the smart thing to do.



It's All About Fit

Since 2014, RWA has worked with thousands of Canadian businesses, helping them diversify their workforce by tapping into the talents of employees on the autism spectrum or with an intellectual disability. Collaborating with businesses of all sizes and across all industries, RWA supports the full employment trajectory, from recruitment to career advancement, to ensure companies and candidates are finding the best fit.

Through RWA, candidates find opportunities that align with their strengths, and businesses gain access to talented and productive employees who enhance their bottom line and build stronger, more adaptable teams and business.

THE BUSINESS CASE FOR INCLUSIVE HIRING AND WORKPLACES

Most businesses already understand the broad benefits of a more diverse workforce. But when it comes to disability, and specifically people with intellectual disabilities or on the autism spectrum, businesses may have concerns about productivity, retention, innovation and other aspects of their operations. But the evidence and RWA's results since 2014 show just how impactful and beneficial inclusive hiring can be for your business and bottom line.

PRODUCTIVITY & PERFORMANCE

Individuals hired through RWA and its partners, on average, outperform their peers in productivity and performance:

89% of businesses rated employees hired through RWA as well as or better than average on **CONTRIBUTING TO THE FIRM'S PROFIT MARGIN** (CIC, 2018)

76% of businesses rated employees hired through RWA as well as or better than average on **PRODUCTIVITY** (CIC, 2018)

Businesses that focus on strengths, hire for fit, and support employees with disabilities in their workforce, outperform their peers in overall profits, net income, and revenues (Accenture, 2018).

RETENTION

Inclusive hiring also contributes to a stronger, more stable workforce. Recruiting new staff, training, orientation, and covering missed shifts take valuable time and resources. Simply put, retention can save your company money. Retaining and building your staff's skills and experience increases productivity.

97% of businesses rated employees hired through RWA as well as or better than average on **TURNOVER** (CIC, 2018)

Inclusive hiring also helps organizations and firms build stronger strategies and practices (such as Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives, benefits plans, accommodation practices) that improve overall employee retention. Recent research shows that inclusive workplaces experience increased engagement and higher levels of loyalty and enthusiasm from all employees (ILO, 2016).

What is Inclusive Hiring?

Inclusive hiring is the process of intentionally hiring people from all backgrounds and abilities to meet the labour or skills needs of a firm. Inclusive hiring is built on Inclusive Workplaces that offer employees with disabilities equal opportunity to succeed, learn, be compensated fairly, and advance as their peers. Inclusive hiring creates inclusive workplaces which in turn create more successful, productive and adaptive businesses.



INNOVATION

Employers who are working to become more inclusive of disability are driving the future of work through more innovative practices, customer service, and products. Evidence shows that inclusive employment of persons with disabilities:

- Makes companies rethink critical structures, processes, management styles, and their corporate culture, by introducing new information and communication technology (Migliaccio, 2016);
- Increases creativity, improves decision-making processes, and problem solving in companies (Lindsay et al., 2018; Miethlich, 2020);
- Introduces perspectives that bring new innovative and creative thinking to working with customers (Bennett, 2011);
- Positively impacts service quality and efficiency (Lindsay et al., 2018).

People with disabilities offer diverse skill sets and unique insights that can help shape industry's design and development, resulting in products and services that appeal to a broader market share (Yin et al., 2018). Innovation now depends on organizations creating Diversity, Equity and Inclusion benchmarks that allow for self-identification of current employees, and explicit engagement that taps into persons with disabilities (Accenture, 2018).

“OUR PRODUCTIVITY HAS INCREASED AND I THINK IT’S ALL RELATED TO THE CULTURE.”



— Brad Gibson, Operations Supervisor
Metro Logistics, ON

“A DIVERSE WORKFORCE AND THE INCLUSION OF TALENT FROM DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS MAKES OUR ORGANIZATION STRONGER AND WE APPRECIATE THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THOSE WITH DIFFERENT ABILITIES.”



— Richard Taylor, President
Niagara Casinos, Niagara Falls, ON

IMPROVED COMPANY CULTURE

Research is clear that inclusive hiring is positively associated with stronger and more productive teams, environments, and workplace cultures. One study of 643 employers across a variety of industries shows that seventy percent of employers rated the impact on their companies culture of employees with self-identified disabilities as significantly better (Lindsay et al., 2018).

In fact, communicating information about disability inclusive practices to internal and external stakeholders conveys core values about an organization's culture. These can reinforce perceptions of positive climates within organizations, building connectedness, enriching leadership and management skills among senior level staff, and even increasing morale. At the same time, it promotes a positive organizational image to external observers, such as customers, investors, and future employees (Bonnacio et al., 2020).



IMPACT ON CONSUMERS

There is strong evidence that customers want businesses to reflect their communities and values.

92% of individuals regarded companies who hired people with a disability **MORE FAVOURABLY THAN THEIR COMPETITORS** (Siperstein et al., 2006)

73% of businesses that hired through RWA reported receiving positive feedback from customers/clients regarding their **COMMITMENT TO INCLUSION** (CIC, 2018)

78% of consumers are more likely to purchase goods and services from a business that takes steps to ensure access for individuals with disabilities at their locations (National Business and Disability Council, 2017).

Like potential recruits, consumers expect inclusivity, and want to see it in the companies they do business with.

WONDERING WHERE TO START? RWA IS HERE TO HELP

- 1 Speak with your local Labour Market Facilitator who can connect you to a labour pool of candidates working with our national network of agency partners. Visit www.readywillingable.ca to take the next steps in your inclusive employment journey
- 2 Identify where your business has specific labour and skills needs
- 3 Looking for more information or to connect with more resources? Visit The Inclusive Workplace at www.theinclusiveworkplace.ca



“CLIENTS APPRECIATE THAT WE HIRE EMPLOYEES WITH AN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY OR ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM — DIVERSITY GIVES US A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE.”



— Sarah Hunter, Co-owner
Coop Coco & Calendula, Montreal QCN

THE BUSINESS CASE FOR ACCOMMODATION

One of the most common concerns from employers exploring how to hire persons with disabilities is the possible cost and the types of accommodations that an individual may need.

Research in several countries, including Canada, has consistently shown that a firm's costs for accommodations are minimal. In fact, companies that develop good practices for accommodating actually add value through recruitment, retention, and skills development—increasing firm productivity and profits.

- Fifty-nine percent of job accommodations cost nothing (JAN, 2019).
- Those that do have a cost average around \$500 or less (Bonnacio, 2019).
- Accommodations are frequently requested by and granted to workers without disabilities, and these cost the same as those for employees with disabilities (Bonnacio, 2019).

Accommodations build a healthier workforce and workplace. They demonstrate a commitment to supporting staff, which can increase job satisfaction, employee morale, and decrease turnover. This, in turn, can help create a culture where managers and co-workers understand and support accommodations as part of doing business (Schur et al., 2014; JAN 2018; Bonnacio et al., 2019).

The Evidence and Business Case are clear: companies that embrace best practices for employing and supporting more persons with disabilities in their workforce have outperformed their peers in profits, net income, and revenues (Accenture, Getting to Equal, 2018). And RWA can help. Working with our agency partners, we can provide financial assistance with the costs of accommodations.

RWA: We Mean Business

As a free service with local and national reach, and experience working across sectors and companies of all kinds, RWA is uniquely equipped to help you build a more inclusive workplace through inclusive hiring.