

## **The Business Case for Hiring Individuals with Disabilities**

### **Untapped, Talented Workforce**

"A 2013 blueprint by Delaware governor Jack Markell, 2012-13 chair of the National Governors Association, which suggests that governors can respond to skilled workforce concerns by introducing businesses "to an often-ignored talent pool": people with disabilities. The blueprint goes on to say that "individuals with disabilities are a valuable asset for business," with businesses reporting such "positive outcomes" as productivity increases and "a workforce that reflects their consumer base." The blueprint notes the particular success of Walgreens, for which distribution center employees with disabilities represent between one-third and more than 50 percent of its workforce. Studies of the Walgreens experience demonstrate "a 120 percent productivity increase," declines in absenteeism, less turnover, and improved safety."

### **Science of Inclusion**

"Other employers, such as Google, refers to workplace diversity as a "science of inclusion" that "makes [them] a better company" with better products for all of their consumers. A workplace inclusive of people with disabilities better positions business not only to represent and respond to consumer preferences, but also to leverage new, untapped skills and talents and gain an edge on the competition."

### **Improve Workplace Culture**

"Hiring people with disabilities doesn't just improve the talent pool at the office – it also improves the office culture. A recent study by the Institute for Corporate Productivity (i4cp), which surveys and analyzes the practices of high-performing businesses, found that one of the reasons employers proactively hire people with disabilities is that it supports their corporate culture. As the report states, this positive impact "is brought about in two ways: [it] adds highly motivated people to the workforce (which can lead to increased productivity) and it promotes an inclusive culture that appeals to the talent pool organizations want to attract." That's a win-win!"

### **Diversity and Inclusion Impact Your Bottom Line**

"When i4cp conducted their recent survey, they targeted high-performing businesses, or businesses with impressive market share, revenue growth, profitability and customer satisfaction. Part of the data they looked at was how diversity and inclusion (D&I) practices impacted the bottom line. What they found isn't surprising to those of us that think about D&I on a regular basis: high-performing businesses are twice as likely as low-performing ones to emphasize D&I as a matter of policy, and more than twice as likely to specifically include people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in those goals. Forty-three percent of respondents found that hiring people with disabilities "produce[d] measurable or observable business benefits."

### **Times Have Changed**

"New technologies and new ways of doing business means that people with disabilities can be a vital part of today's workforce with no-cost or low-cost accommodations. Text-to-speech technology, such as Dragon and Siri for iPhones and iPads, are commonplace and relatively inexpensive. The same is true for teleworking: often used to accommodate work-life balance, it also accommodates people with issues related to transportation."



### **Credit and Incentives**

Individuals with disabilities fall under a particular target group with the US Department of Labor which means your organization could receive a tax credit up to \$2,400 for hiring an individual with disabilities.

*\*Content developed by Mark Perriello, President and CEO of the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD). Learn more about AAPD at [www.aapd.com](http://www.aapd.com).*