



Texas Beacons of Excellence



TEXAS
WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

A Partnership Led by:



Company Characteristics, Disability Inclusion Practices, and Employment of People with Disabilities in the Post COVID-19 Job Economy: A Cross Sectional Survey Study

A Quick Look

In the post coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) recession economy, rehabilitation counselors, transition specialists, and other disability service providers must redouble their efforts to connect with employers to create employment opportunities for people with physical and mental impairments. The purpose of this study was to investigate company characteristics and effective disability inclusion practices that are related to employment of people with disabilities.

Four hundred sixty-six employers completed a demographic questionnaire and the Disability Inclusion Profiler. The study evaluated the relationships among company characteristics, disability inclusion practices, and employment rates of people with disabilities.

Key Findings

- Large and mid-sized companies, Fortune 500 companies, and Federal contractors are most likely to hire people with disabilities in their workforces.
- Disability inclusion practices can be divided into those requiring leadership/executive management commitments and efforts to drive behavioral change down and across the organization, and those that are implemented by mid-level managers, supervisors, and staff to recruit, hire, and retain people with disabilities.
- This top down approach is vitally important for changing workplace culture and climate to support the inclusion of people with disabilities in the workplace.

Putting It Into Practice

- Transition specialists, VR counselors, and other disability service providers must use innovative strategies to identify employers who have a high propensity to hire people with disabilities and redouble their efforts to connect and cooperate with employers to

identify types of workers and job positions they need to fill and provide appropriate training for their clients to fill those positions.

- A good working relationship between leaders in state vocational rehabilitation agencies and leaders in business organizations can create opportunities for rehabilitation counselors, transition specialists and other disability service providers/vendors to connect with business leaders.
- Transition specialists, rehabilitation counselors, and other disability service providers also need to increase their employer engagement efforts by developing working relationships with companies that are active in the US Business Leadership Network (USBLN), Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), ADA regional centers, and Chamber of Commerce organizations in their communities.
- Rehabilitation counselors, transition specialists and other disability service providers should focus on identifying Federal contractors who are not meeting the 7% utilization rate and offer to provide technical assistance to increase the pool of qualified workers with disabilities in these companies.

More About this Article (Where to go from here?)

Findings of the present study can be used by transition specialists, rehabilitation counselors, and other disability service providers to engage and connect with employers to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities in the post COVID-19 economy. Importantly, company characteristics (e.g., size) and disability inclusion practices are strongly related to the outcome of a fully inclusive workforce. Readers can familiarize themselves with the Disability Inclusion Profiler and consult national-level resources for hiring and accommodating workers with disabilities.

Citation: Chan, F., Tansey, T.N., Iwanaga, K. Bezyak J., Wehman P., Phillips B.N., Strauser D.R., Anderson C. Company Characteristics, Disability Inclusion Practices, and Employment of People with Disabilities in the Post COVID-19 Job Economy: A Cross Sectional Survey Study. *J Occup Rehabil* 31, 463–473 (2021).
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10926-020-09941-8>

This summary is for general information and reference purposes. The original article is owned and copyright-protected by Springer Science + Business Media, LLC.

