

7 TIPS for Advancing the Disability Inclusion Conversation with Businesses

The initial conversation with a business is the first of many conversations in their disability-inclusion journey. Here are some tips for moving the dialogue about disability inclusion, forward.



1 Have research resources and tools readily available

Business leaders use data to help them make decisions. Statistics, facts, and findings from surveys and studies



can help support your conversation points. We've curated numerous [research studies and reports](#) that can help you guide and advance the conversation.

2 Ask Business Champions to join you when you're talking to a business

Shared insights and information from peers resonate with business owners and leaders. Cultivate champions of disability inclusion in businesses you've developed relationships with. When the time is right, facilitate introductions; get your champions involved in conversations you're having with other businesses.



3 Be ready to overcome resistance by presenting facts and addressing concerns

Myths, misconceptions, and lack of awareness and confidence exist about disability. They can lead to businesses having concerns and being hesitant about disability-inclusive hiring.

Presenting facts and research findings that help dispel myths and misconceptions, and address concerns, can positively change the tone of the conversation and advance it. Make an emotional connection between the information you're presenting and the work environment.



72% of employers surveyed believe **hiring people who have a disability projects a positive company image** to prospective employees.

Source: Survey of Employer Policies on the Employment of People With Disabilities Final Report, June 2020 — Westat Report for the U.S. Office of Disability Employment Policy



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Host business engagement events in your community

The planning, time, effort and resources you put in to hosting business engagement events will be worth it in the long run. Everyone in the community benefits when businesses become more inclusive.



What Business Engagement Events Can Do

- Raise your profile with local businesses
- Create brand recognition for your agency
- Help you make new connections and engage in conversation
- Educate and inform about the business benefits of disability inclusion
- Motivate attendees who want to learn more

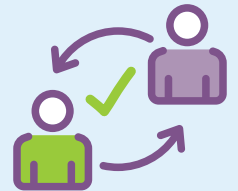
TIP

- Take the time to learn about the business
- Know and understand their labour/skill needs
- Be a consultant who can provide expert advice and support throughout the business's disability-inclusion journey

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Position yourself as an extension of a business's Human Resources Department

You can be thought of as a vendor or a trusted provider. Consider yourself a valued external partner and advisor that's an integral part of the business's talent recruitment team. That's how you'll be viewed.



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Have a strategy for how to develop successful relationships and provide training to your team

Relationship-building with local businesses is the cornerstone of creating employment success stories. Specific courses on building business relationships can help your team learn skills and techniques to create the rapport needed.



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Keep the initial conversation going and build the relationship

The initial conversation should be the first of many. Whether a business is hiring or not, keep in touch. Schedule check-ins; share information you think would be of interest. This way, **you'll be top of mind** when the business is looking for talent.



Connect with us for more information or if you have questions on how to advance the disability inclusion conversation.

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