

# Do you employ ability?



# Wanted. Talented staff to enhance business.

**And it's down to you to find them.**

Staff recruitment is not an easy task and you need to feel confident that you've found the best possible person for your business.

According to research by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), companies find it even more difficult to recruit and retain staff now than they did a year ago\*. But there are ways to overcome this.

Widening your recruitment process to include applicants with disabilities or long-term health conditions can give you access to a wider talent pool of skilled and talented individuals.

A third of inactive disabled people want to work, compared with just less than one quarter of inactive non-disabled people. However, for various reasons, disabled people are sometimes overlooked during recruitment drives\*\*.

According to the Disability Discrimination Act, disabilities or long-term health conditions can be anything from anxiety or sight impairment, to diabetes or HIV. This covers a lot more people than you might think, people who could have the best skills and abilities to benefit your business.

\*CIPD (2007) Recruitment, Retention and Turnover Survey 2007.

\*\*Grewal et al. (2002) Disabled for life? Attitudes towards, and experiences of, disability in Britain, NatCen for DWP.

# Making adjustments for disabled employees may be easier than you think.

Employing someone with a disability or long-term health condition is no more of a risk than employing anyone else, nor is it as costly or difficult as you may think. You can see how this has worked in practice in the case study highlighted in this leaflet.

**'Two thirds of employers who have employed a disabled person have not had to make adjustments to either the physical working environment or working patterns.'**\*

To find out more about how disabled people and those with long-term health conditions have contributed to the success of other businesses, visit:

**[dwp.gov.uk/employability](http://dwp.gov.uk/employability)**

\*Stuart et al. (March 2002) How employers and service providers are responding to the DDA 1995, In-house report 96, DWP.

# Employ ability in practice

## Employee's story:

Shirley works as a Domestic Assistant at the North Liverpool Regeneration Company (NLRCO). She has a range of disabilities which include learning difficulties and dyslexia.

Finding work hasn't always been easy. After leaving school, Shirley worked as a kitchen porter but a change of circumstances meant that she was back on the job market.

"I'd apply for jobs but would never get them. When I asked for feedback about my interviews, I was told that my dress was perfect, that my answers were great, but that I just wasn't suitable," says Shirley. "I feel I've been discriminated against and I've had a few knock backs, but I've been encouraged to keep trying."

Although she admits that it's been "a hard slog", Shirley's determination to get back to work paid off and she is now working in a job she enjoys.



**Shirley Jones**  
**Domestic Assistant,**  
**NLRCO**

## Employer's story:

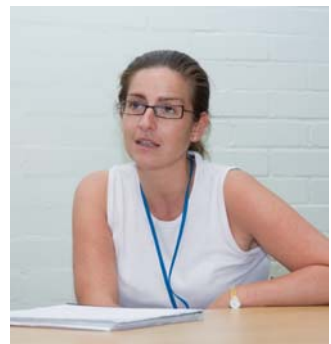
For Project Manager, Nicola Kelly, employing Shirley was neither a risk nor a problem. "We knew Shirley as a trainee and were fully aware of her support needs, so it wasn't a problem to employ her."

Nicola knew that Shirley would need extra help with paperwork and would also need a more in-depth induction than other non-disabled employees. This support has been provided without cost being an issue.

As a business that regularly provides training for groups within the community, NLRCO is committed to meeting the needs of trainees who are disabled and will provide whatever support they require to complete a course. The same principle applies to employees. Nicola said, "We're used to making changes for trainees. For example, we provide bigger keyboards for trainees who have visual impairments. To do the same for employees is really not a problem."

**"Employers should be more open-minded and think about what might need to be changed in order to support disabled people. Employers should ask themselves, why exactly can't we employ a disabled person?"**

**Nicola Kelly**  
**Project Manager, NLRCO**



# Do you employ ability?

- 1** Have you visited [dwp.gov.uk/employability](http://dwp.gov.uk/employability)? You'll find more information, case studies and contact details for further help and advice.
- 2** If you are currently recruiting, have you contacted your local Jobcentre Plus office? They will be able to give you advice on employing disabled people or people with long-term health conditions, plus support throughout the hiring process.
- 3** Are you up to date with legislation regarding the Disability Discrimination Act, and making reasonable adjustments for all applicants and employees? You can find out more by visiting [dwp.gov.uk/employers/dda](http://dwp.gov.uk/employers/dda) for further information.
- 4** Will you share this leaflet with a colleague?

## Employ ability.

An initiative from the Department for Work and Pensions

**For employment advice and information visit:  
[dwp.gov.uk/employability](http://dwp.gov.uk/employability)**