

The Competitive Advantage of Hiring Persons with Disabilities

An Employer's Guide to
Disability Inclusion
at the Workplace



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Preface

Persons with disabilities make up one tenth of our population and can contribute in a significant way to the GDP of the country if their right to decent work is promoted and protected. Fortunately, the Government of Bangladesh has shown strong commitment towards the inclusion of persons with disabilities. Bangladesh ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2007, making it pledge bound to ensure the rights of persons with disabilities in the country. To support this commitment, the government has made the inclusion of persons with disabilities in skills training and employment a key priority and set a 5% admission quota for students with disabilities in all technical vocational training institutes. Other measures such as hostels, transport and stipends have also been articulated. Bangladesh has a powerful civil society voice supporting the rights of persons with disabilities with over 400 Disabled Person's Organizations active today. These organizations have played an active role in bringing the nation to the stage it's at now.

Businesses have been slow in taking up this cause, however recently a shift is taking place. Employers are starting to recognize the benefits of disability inclusion in the workplace. Those businesses with employees with disabilities say they tend to be more productive, more focused on work and more loyal to the organization. Thus employing persons with disabilities is seen as a wise business choice rather than charity or 'CSR.'

The International Labor Organization, Bangladesh – Skills for Employment and Productivity (B-SEP) project, funded by the Government of Canada, has partnered with the Bangladesh Employers Federation (BEF) to facilitate the development of a Bangladesh Business and Disability Network which aims to promote disability inclusion and diversity in the workplace. BEF has been actively advocating to its members and other employers to hire persons with disabilities. BEF and ILO developed this guideline to provide clear direction and steps to the employer for promoting disability inclusion. BEF in collaboration with ILO prepared this guideline. Its production has also been supported by the ILO's Improving Working Conditions in the Ready Made Garment sector funded by Canada, the Netherlands and United Kingdom, as well as the Centre for Excellence project for the Bangladesh apparel industry supported by Sweden and H&M.

The booklet is designed for CEOs and human resource professionals, of government offices, NGOs and especially private companies, who are responsible for human resource development. Here one may learn basic concepts of disability inclusion to help you create a more inclusive, accepting and productive workplace based on the experiences of employers in Bangladesh and around the world. We wish you all the best as you lead your organization to become disability inclusive.

Yours,



Salahuddin Kasim Khan

President

Bangladesh Employer's Federation



Srinivas Reddy

Country Director

ILO Bangladesh



Why hire persons with disabilities?

1

Talent, ability, skills, perseverance, retention and loyalty ---- these are among the many traits you want in your employees. But they are not things you see at first glance when you meet a job candidate. You hope to find indications of them in the recruitment and job interview process, but only really know for sure if a candidate has these traits after you hire them --- after you give them a chance to prove themselves.

Persons with disabilities deserve that same chance to prove themselves but, too often, only their disability is seen at first glance. If you are reading this booklet, you have already decided to go beyond that first glance. You want to give persons with disabilities a chance and you have made a good decision. A compelling business case exists for hiring and retaining persons with disabilities and many employers like FCI (BD) Ltd, Keya Group, Interfab Shirt Manufacturing Ltd and many others in Bangladesh are realizing the benefits.

GSK's Project Engineer



Anil Jumar Bhowmick is currently the Director of the Technical Sector at Kendra and serves on its Board of Directors. He is also a wheelchair user because of paralysis from the waist down from a diving accident in 1983. It was his final year of studies at Rajshahi Engineering Institute and he never thought he would make it back to school. But, after a lengthy physical and psychological rehabilitation, he was ready and able to finish his studies. He made it. Then he faced another challenge --- finding a job. It seemed that people only saw his wheelchair and not his talent. He applied for many jobs but was never hired, until Goonoshasthaya Kendra decided to give him a chance and appointed him to the post of Project Engineer. He has been working at Kendra ever since, showing what he can do and advancing to higher levels of responsibility.



The business case

The business case for hiring and retaining persons with disabilities recognizes that persons with disabilities can have a positive impact on a company's bottom line because persons with disabilities

- Make good, dependable employees, who have often been found to perform on par with non-disabled co-workers
- Represent an untapped source of employees who have many skills and traits employers desire
- Have comparable or better safety records than their non-disabled peers
- Have better retention rates reducing costs related to recruitment and retraining of replacements
- Have comparable to better attendance records as compared to person without disabilities
- Represent an overlooked market segment. Persons with disabilities and their families and friends buy products and need services and their value as customers is often overlooked. The food, travel and entertainment industries in particular, have much to gain because people often

Other business benefits to hiring persons with disabilities include

- Workplace morale and productivity of all employees often increases.
- Company image is perceived more positively. According to research in the United States consumers view companies that hire persons with disabilities positively and a majority might even change brands to support such companies.
- Realization of corporate social responsibility goals. Many companies see hiring persons with disability as a response to community needs and as a corporate responsibility.
- Compliance with buyer or national policies and legislation. If you are in the supply chain of a global company, your buyers may have specific requirements about non-discrimination and goals about hiring persons with disabilities and require that you abide by national labor laws.



What jobs can persons with disabilities do?

2

This is one of the first questions that employers often ask about hiring persons with disabilities. They expect a list of jobs that persons with certain kinds of disabilities do. If you understand disability, you know that persons with disabilities work in all types of jobs. Persons with disabilities can work in all sectors of the economy, at all levels and in all sectors of the economy.

What they can do depends on their abilities, experiences, training and the opportunities they are able to access. For some, it can also depend on the willingness of employers to make adjustments to the job or workplace so they can work. Such adjustments are referred to as reasonable accommodations.

Too often persons with disabilities end up in stereotypical jobs. In many parts of Asia, for example, being a masseuse or telephone operator are the main jobs open to people with visual impairments. Such boxed thinking can be discriminatory and even dangerous. For example, often



The human rights case

Hiring persons with disabilities is also the right thing to do. Persons with disabilities have certain human rights enshrined in various international conventions and the Bangladesh legal system.

- The United Nations adopted the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) in 2006 and it was ratified by the Government of Bangladesh in 2007.
- More than 160 countries have ratified the UNCRPD, making it the accepted global standard for human rights for persons with disabilities.
- The UNCRPD includes employment rights provisions, including: 'the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others...(in) work that is freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities.' (Article 27)
- In the spirit of its ratification, the Government of Bangladesh is developing its policy framework to protect the rights of persons with disabilities, including rights related to training and employment.

The national policy framework in Bangladesh includes

- The Bangladesh Constitution, which states that: "There shall be equality of opportunity for all citizens in respect of employment or office in the service of the republic."
- Article 10 of the Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act 2013 calls for non-discrimination and reasonable accommodation in the workplace, a quota, and for tax exemptions for private companies that hire.
- The National Skills Development Policy 2012 which requires that a minimum 5 per cent enrollment of persons with disabilities in TVET institutions.

In today's global environment, many companies view disability as part of an overall corporate diversity initiative. Consider the words from Beximco Fashions

"We have never considered disability a barrier to working capability. They work here due to their own qualification, not because of special recruitment. To us, disability is part of diversity; inclusion is not a CSR or buyer obligation."

persons with hearing impairments are considered ideal employees for noisy work environments, yet loud noises of a certain vibration can further harm their auditory systems.

All jobs should be open to persons with disabilities, and they should be judged based on their abilities, not their disabilities --- just like non-disabled people.

Examples of jobs done by persons with disabilities in Bangladesh

- Keya Group, producers of cosmetics, toiletries and manufacturers of knit garments, employs more than 900 hearing impaired and 100 physically and visually impaired persons in jobs ranging from factory worker to supervisor.
- Renata's CSR program to employ persons with disabilities includes people with physical and intellectual disabilities working in the packaging line for animal husbandry projects.
- A Ministry of Planning architectural draftsman, using CAD, is completely deaf.
- AB Bank's assistant Vice President is a female wheelchair user.
- A man without legs is a CNG driver using an adapted vehicle.
- Vintage Denim has 45 hearing impaired workers on its factory line.



Understand disability

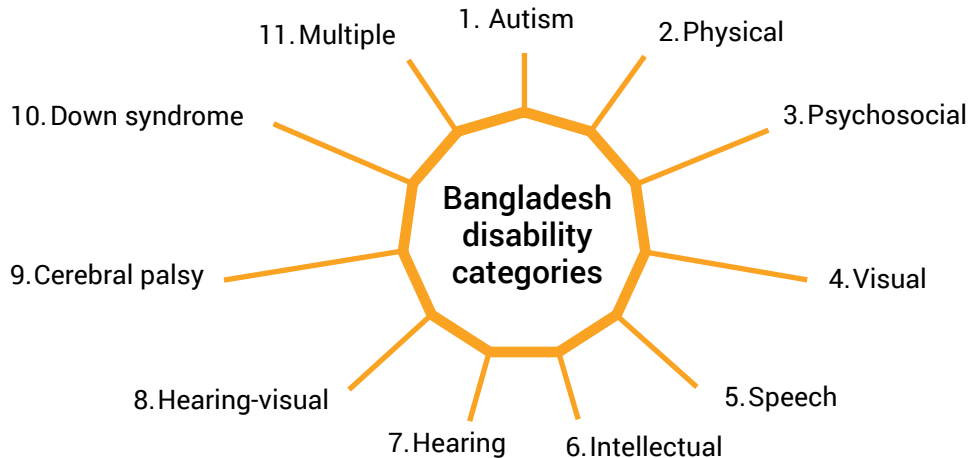
Disability is based on a person's impairment to some basic life function (such as walking, seeing, remembering, etc.) and the interaction of that impairment with the environment. If the environment has many barriers and obstacles, the person will be more disabled, more disadvantaged and less about to participate in society and perform on the job. If the environment is barrier-free, the impact of the impairment is minimal or non-existent.

This way of looking at disability is referred to as the social model of disability. It recognizes that persons with disabilities have rights, are not objects of charity and are limited by barriers that need to be removed. This social model forms the basis of legal definitions of disability.

Disability Definitions	
UNCRPD	Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act 2013
Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.	'Disability' means a person with a permanent or long term physical or mental or intellectual or developmental or sensory impairment that, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder his/her full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

Remove barriers increase options

Persons with disabilities experience many types of barriers, depending on the nature of their impairment and the environment. By reviewing the Bangladesh official categories of disability, you can see how the barriers to working in your company might be different depending on the type of impairment the person has, and the workplace environment and climate.



Barriers that people face that might be present in your workplace

- Policy and practices--- Do you have a policy on disability inclusion and plan for implementing it? Are your human resource practices based on non-discrimination, including provisions for making reasonable accommodations?
- Physical and other types of accessibility--- Is your workplace accessible to persons with all types of disabilities?
- Institutional --- Does your leadership, managers and staff understand disability and have positive attitudes?
- Communication --- Can persons with disabilities access hiring and work information about your organization? Is your website accessible?

Some barriers can be easily removed. For example, allowing workers to stand at a job where people usually sit, or sit at a job where people usually stand, may remove many barriers for persons with certain types of disabilities. However, many barriers are systemic or more challenging to remove.

One of the most significant barriers that a person with disabilities face, which underlies many of the others types of barriers, is negative attitudes. Such attitudes are often reflected in beliefs that persons with disabilities cannot do the job, or statements such as "Why worry about persons with disabilities, when 'normal people' cannot find jobs." Women and girls with disabilities are particularly disadvantaged by negative attitudes related to gender and disability.

Employers can counteract these attitudes and other misunderstandings about disability by

- Educating yourself and your staff about disability
- Identifying champions within the workplace to help change attitudes
- Capitalizing on the role that line managers and supervisors play in creating a climate of inclusion
- Creating an employee resource group on disability- a group of employees who are interested in disability, or have a disability and who want to promote positive attitudes and foster inclusion
- Working with NGO and DPO partners to help change attitudes through special disability related events and especially disability awareness training



If you remove barriers to employment, you increase the types of jobs that persons with disabilities can do. Addressing negative attitudes and lack of knowledge about disability is one of the most significant barriers that need removing.



What are the first steps of disability inclusion?

3

Disability inclusion is a process that refers to promoting and ensuring the participation of persons with disabilities in society on an equal basis with others. In the workplace, it includes providing the necessary supports and accommodations so that they can be fully productive, to the extent possible. To succeed in disability inclusion it is important to create a climate of inclusion, based on commitment, disability awareness, and policies and practices. If your business involves marketing to the general public, you should ensure that your distribution channels, venues, products and services are also usable by all.

Make the commitment and move forward



For many businesses and employers, the first step to becoming more disability inclusive is to make the commitment. This may be in the form of a written policy, a decision by the CEO, or the result of a partnership with a disability organization. It is important to communicate your

company's commitment to all your key stakeholders and then plan for making the commitment a reality. Research shows that the most effective commitments are those that come from top leadership, but that mid-level managers and supervisors are critically important to implementation.

Once the commitment is made, there are a variety of first steps that can be taken. It is important to

- Assess your current situation --- what are the barriers you need to address?
- Find out if you have persons with disabilities on staff and about their experiences.
- Establish a plan with specific priorities, targets, activities, people responsible, budgets, etc.
- Implement needed steps to move forward to make the workplace more disability inclusive.
- Start to recruit and hire persons with disabilities.

Assess disability inclusion in your company

Many tools, checklists and resources are available to audit your organization (see Annex). The following are some important elements to assess and consider as you move your company towards becoming more disability inclusive:

- The current situation: disabled employees on staff, policies and practices
- Accessibility and the physical environment
- Staff attitudes and knowledge
- Communications

The current situation

- Try to find out how many employees with disabilities are on your staff. Many persons with disabilities do not wish to self-disclose if they have a disability and may be concerned that they will be fired or discriminated against in the workplace. How you present an attempt to get this information will determine if the individuals with disabilities on your staff are willing to self-disclose. Assure confidentiality.
- What policies and practices do you have in place to ensure fairness? Do they address non-discrimination or disability inclusion? Do you have any policies related to bullying? What about reasonable accommodation or return to work?
- What hiring and retention practices do you have in place? Do you reach out to candidates with disabilities? Do you work with employees with disabilities to make reasonable accommodations if needed? Do you have a practical system in place to help injured and disabled workers return to work?

Accessibility

- Review your physical environment and determine if there are barriers to entering and moving about your facility for different disability groups.
- Review your hiring, recruitment and employment practices for accessibility as well.
- If you need help conducting a disability audit, bring in a NGO or DPO to conduct a thorough, objective accessibility audit.

Staff Attitudes and Knowledge

- Do your staff and managers understand disability? Do they have positive attitudes about hiring?
- Do your management and supervisory training sessions or guidance materials address disability in the workplace?
- Does your HR department or those involved in hiring understand the legal and practical aspects of including persons with disabilities in the workplace?

Communications

- What are your current communication channels for staff (e.g. training sessions, meetings, newsletters, special work events, etc.)? Can all people access them? Do they cover disability?
- With regard to your external communication channels (e.g. newsletters, websites, annual reports, outreach to the media, etc.), do you ever address any issues related to disability?
- Are your communication channels accessible to all (e.g. alternative formats, like large print; accessible websites, etc.)

Develop your plan

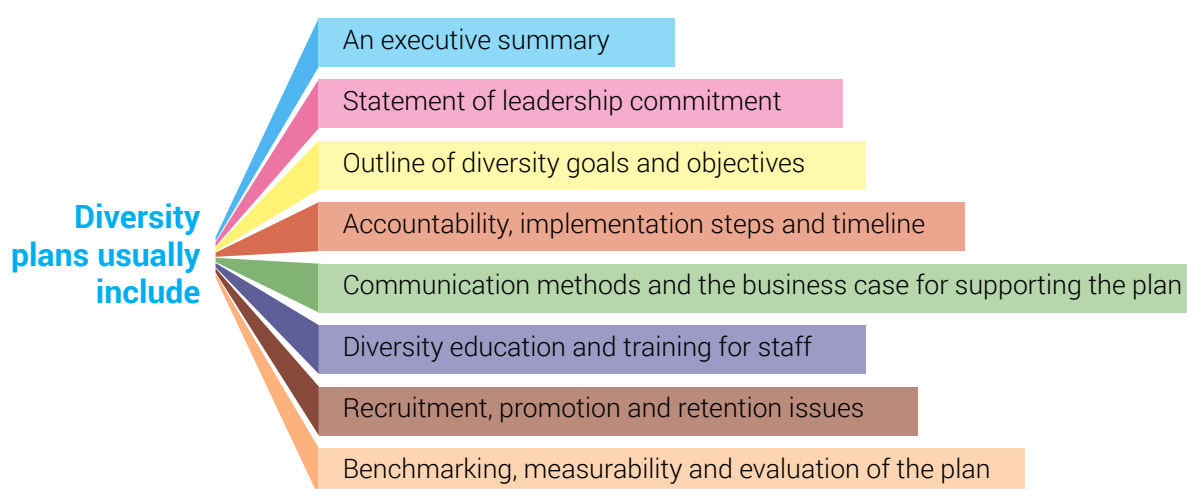


Once you have identified the key barriers, prioritize those that are most important or relevant to your company and overall goals. Most companies are skilled in planning but here are some tips to apply your planning “know-how” to disability

- Establish a planning committee, employee resource group, or identify the human resource department as being responsible for a disability inclusion initiative. The important thing is to have some interested group or person taking the lead.

- Include line managers, direct supervisors and disabled employees and/or trade union representatives in the group.
- Secure and communicate a clear and positive message from leadership, preferably from the CEO, supporting and encouraging the initiative.
- Write up the plan, even if it is a modest start so that it can be shared, assessed, and communicated.

Some companies include disability as part of its overall diversity plan. If your company does not have such a plan, a commitment to include persons with disabilities in your workforce might be a good time to look at developing an overall diversity plan.



Adapted from Incorporating Disability into Diversity Plans, AskEARN Reference Desk.
<http://askearn/refdesk>

This same outline could be used for your disability inclusion plan.

Some companies, like the Westpac Group, develop comprehensive plans that deal with their employees and their customers.



<http://www.westpac.com.au/about-westpac/westpac-group/corporate-governance/Accessibility/accessibility-action-plan>

Your goals will depend on your company and where you are in the process of disability inclusion. If you are beginning and have not actively recruited persons with disabilities, your goals and objectives might be more modest or preparatory, such as

- Conduct an employee survey on disability to get information
- Make the facility accessible to persons with mobility impairments
- Identify an external partner to assist with becoming more disability confident
- Put policies in place related to disability inclusion
- Train managers on disability awareness

If you are further along on disability inclusion, your goals and objectives may relate to

- Increasing the number of disabled employees
 - Hiring workers with intellectual disabilities
 - Developing return to work policies and practices for workers who become injured on the job
- Improving line managers disability knowledge and ability to develop reasonable accommodations

Communicate what you are doing

From the start, keep management and staff informed through corporate or organizational communication methods about what is being done. If you are part of an international chain or are in the supply chain of a multinational company, inform your buyers and customers. They may have experience that can assist you with your internal efforts and will likely support what you are trying to achieve.

Besides your internal communication, share what you are learning and doing externally. If you have an NGO or international organization as a partner, keep them informed about your progress, need for technical assistance and obstacles you may face. Submit stories to local business publications, present at business and disability seminars, invite newspapers, especially journalists from the business section, to cover your company as your plan is being implemented. You will be an inspiration to others.



How do we make the workplace accessible?

4

Accessibility refers to the usability of buildings, information and services and products, including transport and the online environment. Although accessibility is usually related to disability, an accessible environment benefits everyone. For example, a ramp installed for a wheelchair user also allows people with bicycles, baby carriages, push carts or wheeled luggage to move about with greater efficiency and safety.

Workplace accessibility goes beyond the physical space to include manuals, workplace instruction and electronic or online information, for example. It also spans all aspects of the employment cycle --- recruitment and application, testing, selection, on boarding, training, promotion opportunities, social activities and benefits information, to name a few.

Accessibility and the Law

The UNCRPD lays out the government responsibilities and the international standard that the private sector should adopt as well. It states that (Governments) shall take appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities (have) access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and rural areas.

The Bangladesh Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities 2013 has similarly followed suit calling for the rights of persons with disabilities to an accessible environment: All persons with disabilities have the right on an equal basis with others to the physical environment, transportation, communications and information and other facilities.

Accessible workplaces mean that companies will have greater access to a wider pool of talent and safer facilities. And do not forget about customers. Accessible retail outlets, hotels, restaurants and entertainment venues also means greater access to customer base of persons with disabilities, and often their families and friends who accompany them.

Accessibility and universal design

Universal design simply means constructing buildings and creating products and services that everyone can use, without special adaptations. Incorporating universal design principles at the design and development stage is less expensive than making adaptations later. In other words, adapting your workplace to be accessible after it has been constructed costs more than if the original construction was built with accessibility features.

Few buildings or factories in Bangladesh are fully accessible; however for many companies committed to diversity, the investment required to have an accessible workplace, is worthwhile. Even if it is not possible to immediately become fully accessible, you can start by making some improvements. If you currently have on staff, or are planning to hire someone with a particular disability who might have certain accessibility requirements, you could start there. For example, colored paint, tactile surfaces or Braille labels may guide people who are blind or have visual impairments. People who are deaf may need to have signage particularly clear or have visual alerting devices to ensure that they are aware of an emergency situation. Another tip for where to start in making accessibility measures is to begin with the 'easy fixes' that can be done immediately and at the least cost.

Universal Design means the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. Universal design shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where needed.
UNCRPD

Easy Fixes and Long-term Plans

Some accessibility fixes are relatively easy, such as: improving lighting and signage; clearing and marking pathways; installing ramps and handrails; moving a building entrance to a less obstructed location or revising safety procedures. More difficult renovations may require long-term planning such as installing or renovating accessible toilets or adding an elevator to a building.



The physical workplace

People with mobility impairments are most likely to experience barriers related to your company's facility and how it is laid out. However, those with visual, intellectual and hearing impairments must also be considered when building or reviewing workplaces and facilities. Good lighting is particularly important for those with intellectual and hearing impairments; and lighting for those with visual impairments. Good ventilation and air quality is important for the health of all employees but if someone has respiratory problems, it could be critical.

You may want to bring in an expert to conduct an accessibility audit. Here are some things to consider

- Approach to the facility: Is there sufficient lighting? Close in parking with adequate space for those who have disabilities and are driving? Are routes into the building unobstructed?
- Entry into the facility: Is the building entrance identified and is lighting sufficient? Can everyone, including those in wheelchairs or with carts, enter the building? Are doors easy to open?

- Within facilities: Is signage directing movement around the facility evident? Are aisles and doorways wide enough? Are floor levels or marked clearly if there are changes? Can people get from floor to floor using elevators? Do stairs have handrails? Are there accessible toilets?
- Safety measures: Are visual or vibrating alarm devices provided to supplement other types, if needed? Are methods in place to assure swift evacuation of employees with disabilities? Are safety equipment and first aid kits accessible to all?

Getting Help

The Bangladesh National Building Code (BNBC) outlines the accessibility requirements for new structures. In the case of older buildings, modifications will likely be needed to make the building fully or even partially accessible and the Code provides guidance.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/1s5pljagt942vr9/BNBC%20CODE%202014.pdf?dl=0>.

NGOs and DPOs are other sources to assist with an accessibility audit of your premises. You might also want to consult design and architectural experts if you undertake major renovations. And, if you have a facilities manager, consider accessibility training for them.

In Bangladesh, the Beximco Group, which employs nearly 60 persons with disabilities, has many accessibility features integrated into its factory, including ramps, separate and accessible toilets and equipment modifications.




Make communication and training accessible

Many persons with disabilities, especially those with hearing, visual, intellectual or learning disabilities often face barriers in accessing information. Methods of communication must be considered throughout the employment process and especially during training or when delivering important information, such as safety and promotion information, to your employees.

Since many disabilities, such as low vision, hearing impairments, learning disabilities and mild intellectual disabilities often go unnoticed, a supervisor or trainer may not understand why an employee does not seem to 'get it'. Some of the following general practices may help

- Ensure that any training venue have good lighting, acoustics, ventilation and accessibility.
- Use different forms of communication, like writing, speaking and demonstrating.
- Check for understanding.
- Consult with the employee about most effective communication approaches.
- Ensure accessibility of your online communication and training.

Select Communication and Training Considerations for Specific Disability Groups

Type of Disability and Variables	Accessibility Measures
Hearing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do they have any hearing capacity Do they read lips Do they have hearing devices Are they literate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good signage and visuals Devices that augment hearing or that allow for easy written communication (e.g., text messaging) Close and unobstructed access to speakers if the person can read lips Sign language instructors
Visual <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do they have any visual capacity Do they read Braille Have they had mobility training to make it easier for them to move around independently Are they computer literate and do they know how to use a screen reader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proper lighting Close, obstructed view and within earshot of trainers or supervisors Website and electronic information that persons with disabilities can use Alternative information formats such as large print, Braille, tape or accessible electronic information Screen readers
Intellectual <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is their intellectual capacity Are they literate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good signage and visuals Simple language that avoids abstractions and jargon Use of concrete examples Use of multiple presentation or communication styles, such as photographs, symbols or color coding

Communicate on Line: Make it Accessible

Companies often forget about making their websites and online communication accessible. This is particularly important for companies that use online methods of recruitment or employee communication. Many companies also communicate with their customers through their websites. For example, hotels and tourist sites and services may take reservations or advertise their services on their websites. There are specific international guidelines to guide you called the Web Content Accessibility. These can be found at: <http://www.w3.org/WAI>.



How do we make reasonable accommodations?

5

Even if your workplace is completely accessible, there may be times when a candidate or employee with a disability will need a reasonable accommodation or adjustment to participate in some aspect of the employment process or to perform their job effectively. Employers should provide reasonable accommodations throughout the employment cycle, if they are needed. Failure to do so is considered discriminatory and results in an employee who is not optimally productive.

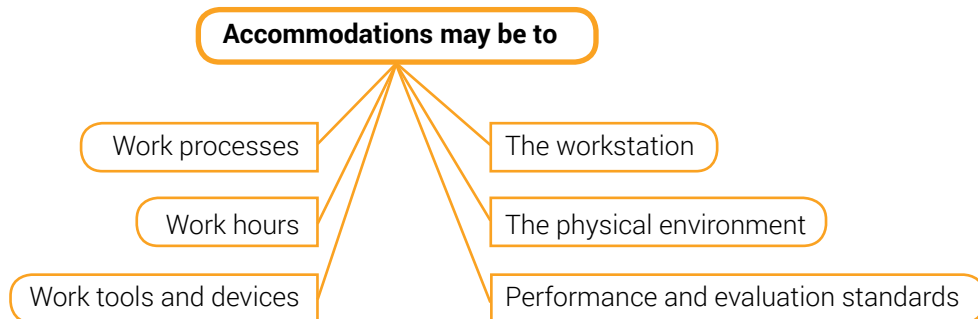
Official Definition of Reasonable Accommodation

Means the necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. Article 2 of the UNCRPD

The same definition has been adopted by the Rights and Protection Act of Persons with Disabilities 2013.

Types and examples of accommodations

Reasonable accommodations are about individuals and their jobs. Therefore, there are many different types and examples, depending on what is needed in a particular case. The accommodation will depend on many factors, such as the person's limitation, the job requirements, the work environment and demands and the ability of the company to provide the accommodation without undue hardship.



Some examples of reasonable accommodations in the workplace include

- Extra training time for someone with an intellectual disability
- A quieter, isolated workspace for someone with a specific psycho-social disability
- Speech software for someone who is blind
- A supervisor who learns sign language to communicate with a deaf employee
- A raised table for someone using a wheelchair
- Adjusting work hours for someone with a medical condition that requires medical visits.

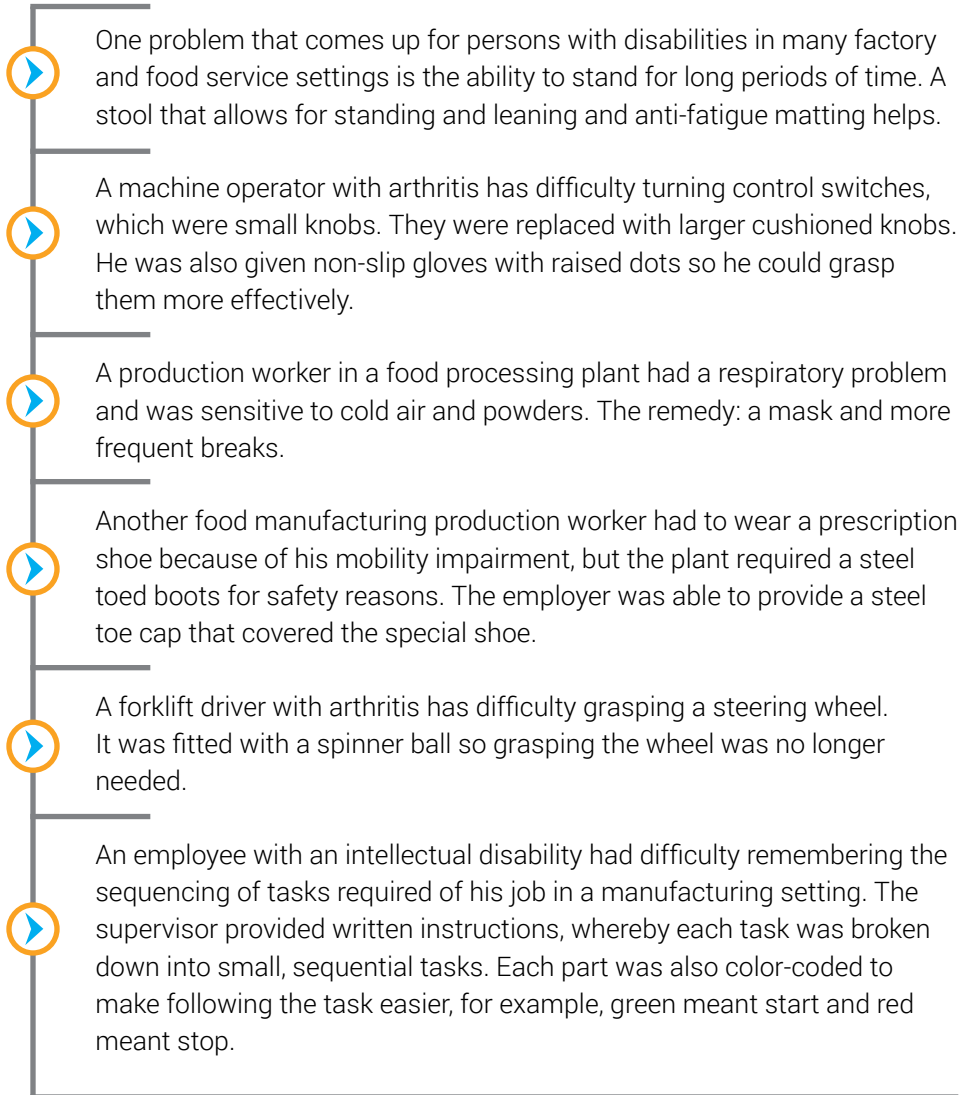
Reasonable accommodation policies, procedures and costs

The following are some tips about how to go about making sure your company is able to provide reasonable accommodations

- Have written procedures for the process of making the accommodation (e.g., such procedures might include requiring disability verification; that the accommodation relates to an essential job task, etc.).
- Identify one person who is responsible for accommodations and who has training in disability. They can work with line managers, supervisors, and employees with disabilities.
- Consider having a centralized reasonable accommodations fund so that no department or work unit has to use resources from their budgets for accommodations. The latter could be a disincentive to hiring or accommodating a persons with a disability.
- Always include the disabled person in the process of identifying the accommodation. He or she knows what they need most.

Sometimes creativity or trying different options are needed to see what works. Here are some examples from the Job Accommodation Network files (www.askjan.org).

Be creative



Cost of Reasonable Accommodation from US Data

- Most persons with disabilities do not require any accommodations to do their jobs.
- In 56 per cent of the cases, there is no financial cost to making an accommodation. (For example, changing work hours, so an employee with a disability can access less crowded transport),
- When a cost is involved, the average cost of an accommodation is US\$600.
- Many employers consider accommodation costs as an investment or tool so employees can be more productive.



How should we treat persons with disabilities?

6

Most persons with disabilities want to be treated like everyone else --- with respect and fairness. The words you and others use in the workplace and your behaviors create or negate a disability inclusive culture. As leaders and champions of disability inclusion, it is important to know and model the appropriate behavior towards persons with disabilities and refer to them appropriately.

Disability etiquette

Etiquette refers to manners and manners are often culturally determined, but since most workplaces have some global reach, you should know what is expected internationally. Politeness and manners are signs of respect everywhere.





Do's 	Don't 
Treat persons with disabilities as the adults they are, with respect and dignity.	Patronize or talk down to them, or talk through a companion, aid or interpreter that may be present.
Use appropriate language and apologize if you become aware that you used an inappropriate term.	Don't be embarrassed by saying things like 'see you later' to a visually impaired person or "let's walk over here" to a wheelchair user.
Offer help if you feel it is needed.	Be offended if your offer is declined. Many people are able to manage things that look difficult to you.
Give people enough time to answer questions.	Do not be impatient, cut them off or fill in your words
Ask someone to repeat themselves or say something in a different way if you do not understand what they said, even if the person has speech impairment.	Pretend you understand when you do not.
Offer to shake hands with someone who has a prosthetic hand or arm.	Shy away from someone who has an artificial limb or hand or refrain from typical greetings.

Allow a person who is blind or needs assistance to take your arm.	Grab someone by the arm to offer help. For a blind person or someone with mobility impairment, you could throw them off balance.
Identify yourself to people who are blind to let them know you are in the room or are entering a conversation; introduce or acknowledge others who are with you.	Ignore the blind person or assume they know who you are by your voice.
Orient your body to someone with hearing impairment, face the light and do not put your hands or other obstacles near your mouth.	Turn away from the person or speak in an exaggerated or loud manner.
Try to speak with those who are hard-of-hearing in places where there is minimal background noise.	Speak in a louder tone, unless asked to.
Speak in a simple straightforward manner with persons who have intellectual disabilities. Check for understanding, if needed.	Speak loudly unless asked to or assume the person understands what you have said.
Try to sit or lean down when speaking to someone in a wheelchair so that conversation is easier and more equal.	Stand above a wheelchair user and talk down to them for long periods of time.
Respect a person's wheelchair which is considered part of their person space.	Use it to lean on or as piece of furniture.
Let persons with disabilities speak for themselves and refer to them respectfully.	Answer for them or speak about them in the third person to others in their presence.

Language

Words matter. The words used to describe persons with disabilities have a lot to do with how they are perceived and treated and how they perceive themselves. Many countries have adopted what is called 'people-first' language and this is also the language of the UNCRPD. For example, the terms persons with a disability, persons with disabilities, people who have visual impairments are used rather than saying the disabled, a disabled person or blind person. When writing about or discussing disability, use the correct terms or those that are the most respectful in English, Bangla or any language you are using.

The following is a list of selected terms to avoid and preferred terms to use instead.

Avoid  	Preferred  
Birth defect, deformity	Person born with a disability or person having a disability from birth
The blind, the visually impaired	Persons who are blind, person is visually impaired
The brain damaged	Person who has a brain injury
Confined to a wheelchair, wheelchair-bound	Wheelchair user, person who uses a wheelchair
Crazy, insane, mad, maniac, lunatic, psychotic, and other derogatory terms	Person with a psycho-social disability Someone with a mental health impairment
Cripple/crippled, lame	Person with a mobility impairment, person who walks with crutches or a walker
Deaf-mute, deaf and dumb	Person who is deaf
Defective, defect	Person with a disability
The disabled	Disabled person, person with a disability
Dwarf, midget	Person of short stature, small person
An epileptic	Person who has a seizure disorder or person who has epilepsy
The handicapped, invalids, physically challenged	Persons with disabilities
Mentally retarded, idiot, retard, slow, and other derogatory terms	Person with an intellectual disability
Mongoloid	Person with Down Syndrome
Normal	Non-disabled person or person with a disability
Spastic	Person who has muscle spasms
Stutterer	Person with a speech impairment
Victim of, suffers from or stricken with (e.g., multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, arthritis or some other disease or condition)	Person who has cerebral palsy, arthritis, etc.

Adapted from Together We Rock! http://www.togetherwerock.com/sites/default/files/Draper_SuggGuidLang_Nov14.pdf,
Suggested Guidelines for Language to Promote Positive Images of Persons with Disabilities



How can we select good candidates with disabilities?

7

Finding qualified candidates with disabilities can be a challenge for employers for many reasons. Most persons with disabilities in Bangladesh have not had access to the same social, educational and vocational training experiences that many non-disabled people have access to. Many persons with disabilities are disproportionately poor, have other disadvantages, or are discouraged from multiple rejections making job seeking difficult. The employer who seeks a diverse workforce may need to take some specific measures to recruit and select candidates with disabilities, beginning with reviewing personnel policies and processes.

Review job descriptions



Before you begin to recruit persons with disabilities, take a look at your job descriptions and requirements

- Are they realistic? Is it really necessary that someone complete secondary school to do a particular job? Are job qualifications screening out people who might otherwise make good employees? Requiring unnecessary credentials may result in the failure of many candidates to qualify.
- Examine job functions. Which are essential and which ones are not necessary? For example, a packer in a factory may also have to clean up a particular workspace at the end of the week. However, the packing job may be something that a blind person could readily do, whereas the cleaning job might not. Since it is not essential to the job, the cleaning task could be assigned to someone else so that the blind person could assume the main job function --- packing goods. You may be screening out candidates with disabilities for minor reasons that have nothing to do with the main job tasks.

Recruit candidates



Many companies start their recruitment process by posting a job announcement in local papers, online, by using other media or word of mouth. Here are some tips to making sure disabled candidates are aware of your interest in hiring them:

- Make a statement right in the job ad that persons with disabilities are encouraged to apply, that you are an equal opportunity employer and/or that you are willing to make reasonable accommodations.
- Prepare and disseminate your ad through many channels and in alternate formats --- in print, on the radio, by letting current employees know, and through your professional network.
- Contact local organizations of and for persons with disabilities for their help and referrals.
- Contact TVET training institutions and special schools or rehabilitation.
- Place ads in newspapers or newsletters that are for persons with disabilities.
- Work with government programs and social service agencies in your district or community that provide services for persons with disabilities, for example, the Protibandhi Sajajjo o Seba Kendro offices which operate at the Upazilla level.
- Specify how to apply, noting specific accommodations that may be available. (E.g., those with disabilities can call the HR department if they are unable to apply through the website.)
- Participate in job fairs for persons with disabilities.
- Examine your application and make sure it is free of intrusive or inappropriate questions about disability and that it is available in alternative formats (e.g., large print).

Wonder Boy Overcomes Challenges

The challenges Shopon faced in getting an education and training seemed insurmountable since he was born with a physical and intellectual disability. However, thanks to his own perseverance and an opportunity from the Bangladesh Skills for Employment and Productivity Project and its partnership with UCEP Technical Schools, Shopon was able to enter into and complete a cooking course in December 2015. And thanks to the Golden Harvest Agro Processing company aligning its desire to hire persons with disabilities with the UCEP Technical School, Shopon now earns BDT 12,000/ per month as a cook. He's a gold medal hockey winner in the Special Olympics and Golden Harvest is a winner in getting this talented and dedicated employee, thanks to its specific outreach with local TVET schools



The job interview --- Do's and Don'ts

The main purpose of any job interview is to find out if the candidate has the skills and abilities to do the main or essential functions of the job. Therefore, the manner of interviewing a person with a disability should be similar to that of any job candidate, with some exceptions.

Do ask candidates if they require accommodations prior to the interview, even if they do not have a known or visible disability. During the interview you may ask if they need any adjustments to complete the interview or selection process (e.g. in a testing situation) or to do the job.

Do ask questions that focus the person's experience and ability to do the job rather than asking about their disabilities such as about how the candidate acquired the disability or manages his or her life.

Some persons with disabilities who have participated in training or job-finding programs may have been coached on effective interviewing. Others may have little experience and be quite nervous. Do put them at ease and allow candidates, especially those with cognitive or psycho-social disabilities, to have a support person or aid with them. Do make sure the person understands the job requirements and what will be expected of them and ask the person to explain themselves or repeat something if you do not understand what they say. Do accompany them on a workplace visit so they understand the job better and can identify any barriers.



Reasonable Accommodation example during the interview process

AMC is an entertainment leader in the US with more than 350 movie theatres. It's FOCUS (Furthering Opportunities Cultivating Untapped Strengths) program has hired hundreds of young persons with disabilities at all its locations. It started in 2010 targeting youth with autism, many who were vulnerable to sensory stimulation. Among its many flexible and innovative recruiting and work approaches to inclusion is the "FOCUS travelling interview", a hand-on, interactive interview that allows candidates to get a feel of the job during the interview process, so that they have a better understanding of the theatre environment and expectations on the job. The traveling interview involves walking around and experiencing the surroundings so job candidates can fully understand the job and the work environment. Started for its candidates with disabilities, the traveling interview has been incorporated in to its hiring process for all candidates.

From: ILO, Inclusion of Youth with Disabilities, the Business Case, 2014

Select candidates



Here are some points to consider when you are making a selection

- Be aware of your own biases and stereotypes. Do not assume the person cannot do the job. Give the person a chance to prove themselves if they think they can do the job. Consider a job-try out if you have strong concerns about their capabilities.
- Adopt a hiring and promotion policy that includes disability as a positive selection factor or gives persons with disabilities some priority, especially woman and girls with disabilities who face multiple barriers to employment.
- If the person is not hired for the position they applied for, consider them for any other posts for which they qualify.
- If testing is part of your selection process, consider the need for reasonable accommodation. For some people, offering additional practice sessions, breaks or additional coaching or more detailed instructions may make the testing process more fair for them. Remember, the purpose of testing is to find out if the person can do the job, not if they are skilled test-takers.

Other recruitment methods

Many employers have found success with other recruitment approaches. Here are some to consider:

- Offer to provide practice interviews, help with resume development or mentoring persons with disabilities served by NGOs. This can be a good way to find candidates for current or future job vacancies or to help HR staff become more sensitized to disability issues.
- Participate in apprenticeship and internship, on-the-job training, or job try-outs programs sponsored by TVET institutions or NGOs.

- Participate in job fairs and mentorship or hiring programs for students and recent graduates of training programs, institutions or colleges and make your interest in those with disabilities and women with disabilities known to organizers.
- Offer your facility as a venue for exposure visits for schools and training programs and provide briefings about your company, its hiring practices and interest in hiring persons with disabilities.

How can we ensure success?

8

Once you have selected your job candidate, you want to make sure that the selection is a success and that they make a good employee. The rule of thumb is to treat persons with disabilities with the same respect and dignity you would treat others, while recognizing that some employees may need accommodation or support. Follow your regular procedures, while considering the following disability-specific guidelines.

Onboarding and orientation

The process of starting someone, called onboarding or orientation, can be critically important to their success of the job match. In some work settings, mentors or buddies are identified to support the persons with a disability through the initial stages of getting settled. Such buddies are usually co-workers or trade union representatives who express an interest in this role. Not all persons with disabilities want a mentor or friend as it makes them stand out. Remember to honor the confidentiality of the disabled worker and their wishes about such support. Advise all employees of their workplace rights, grievance procedures, and safety issues. Ideally, this orientation should include rights related to disability.

Some companies invite family members to visit the workplace and even provide them with an initial orientation. Many family members express concerns about having their loved one go to work and may be over-protective. This is particularly true for woman and girls with disabilities. An exposure visit for family members or guardians can dispel their fears.

Set clear expectations

As with any employee, let the persons with a disability know what is expected of them and what to do if they have problems related to their work or performance or with bullying or any other workplace issue. Provide regular and honest feedback, in a respectful manner.

If problems with performance arise, address them as you would with other employees, being sure to determine if a reasonable accommodation is needed. If the worker was referred by a partnering organization, you can seek their assistance in addressing problems that arise. At no time are you expected to keep an employee who is unable to do the job, but if for some reason an otherwise good employee is unable to perform in the job for which they were hired, even with reasonable accommodation, consider other types of jobs for which they are interested and show potential.



How do we retain workers with disabilities?

9

Many factors go into retaining good employees, including those with disabilities, such as having a safe and secure workplace, providing adequate pay, good benefits, living accommodations, transport and other benefits, as well as good management and supervision. Persons with disabilities typically have better retention rates than their non-disabled peers. Yet, there are things you can do to increase their retention and reap the benefits of a stable workforce.

Fair and equitable treatment

The Bangladesh Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act 2013, the UNCRP and ILO workplace conventions prohibit discrimination in all aspects of hiring and throughout the work cycle, including when training is offered, benefits provided, with regard to pay, advancement, etc. This means:

- Equal pay for equal work

- Inclusion of persons with disabilities in training and career development activities
- Considering qualified employees with disabilities for raises and promotions
- Providing health and safety supports and protection
- Providing reasonable accommodations when needed so that employees with disabilities can participate in extra-curricular activities, at staff meeting or benefit from transport and housing.

Performance assessment, reviews and feedback

Performance reviews should be a regular part of supervising your staff. Managers and HR professionals want the best performance from their employees and understand the value of regular constructive assessments and reviews. Such reviews are held at the end of a probationary period and then annually.

Some tips to consider at review time for employees with disabilities include

- Ensure that your performance review process is barrier-free. Do you need to hold the review in an accessible location? Have a sign-language instructor present? Allow for more time? Are forms or reports in accessible formats and in plain and easy to understand language?
- Ask all employees if they need anything to continue their good performance or to be more productive. This opens the door for employees with disabilities, whether they have disclosed their disability or not, to ask for an accommodation.
- Give honest but encouraging feedback.
- Allow for an aid or support person to be present if needed to facilitate communication.

Handling performance issues: Two Examples

An employee's performance has deteriorated and they are also irritable and short-tempered. After an assessment and discussion about the situation, it was found that her chair and work station was causing her back pain. A new chair and adjustments to the work station cleared up the situation.

An employee started to come to work late. After discussion about this behavior, it was learned that he started a new medication and woke groggy. Some solutions were for the employee to discuss this with his doctor or to adjust work hours so that he could start his full day's work later in the day. It turned out the latter solution was selected since it was preferred by the employee and benefitted the company to have his administrative workday overlap two production cycles in the factory.

Adapted from: *Manager's Guide: Disability in the Workplace*, The Australian Network on Disability



If an employee's performance deteriorates or if they are not meeting requirements, consider that they may have an undisclosed disability. Disabled or not, ask if they realize their behavior has deteriorated, discuss possible reasons and solutions.

If there are problems with performance that cannot be resolved, consider an alternative placement within the workplace or seek the advice of a partnering or referral organization. Be sure that information on disciplinary or grievance procedures is available in alternative formats that are accessible by all employees. Assess for needed accommodations at grievance or disciplinary meetings ensuring accessible venues, interpreters or support aide.

Health and safety on the job

The collapse of the Rana Plaza building and the fire at the Tazreen Factory are two tragic and high-profile accidents which brought attention to the need for better health and safety standards and for a greater role for the voice of employees in the workplace in Bangladesh. Health and safety on the job is a concern for management and workers. Safety and evacuation procedures must consider unique situations for persons with disabilities. Efforts to fulfill the National Action Plan on Fire and Building Safety include training and education, awareness campaigns and involvement of workers and employers in improving overall safety in Bangladesh. Employers should advocate that disability be considered in any training or awareness materials are accessible to and inclusive of persons with disabilities.



When it comes to the health and safety of persons with disabilities make sure that they

- Are included in safety committees
- Have access to all the safety information and tools available to everyone
- Are equipped with alternative alerting devices or some system is in place that they are readily notified of an emergency
- Are aware of evacuation plans designed to prevent their injury and quick removal from dangerous situations.

On-the-job injuries, accidents and acquired disabilities

The Rana Plaza accident exposed the deficiencies in the safety system to deal with workplace injuries, death, and compensation in Bangladesh. The severe impact of trauma --physical and emotional, and how such trauma can affect return-to-work became clearly evident. As a result, Government of Bangladesh is working with the ILO and donors to develop a comprehensive Employment Injury Insurance (EII) program. It will include rehabilitation and return-to-work provisions. Employers will benefit to introduce such measure with specific focus on persons with disabilities.

Regardless of the best safety standards and systems, employers need to be ready to handle on-the-job injuries and accidents. Employers have a crucial role to play and a vested interest in retaining their injured employees and seeing that they return to work. Besides injury, many employees may acquire a disability in the course of their employment. Many companies design return-to-work programs to assist these employees and to retain their valued workers.

Return-to-work strategies

- Early intervention and referral to appropriate services
- Gradual return to work options, such as part time work with increasing hours
- Alternative job options until they are able to return to their original job
- Retraining for a new job
- Use of support agencies and reasonable accommodation to expand options

Adapted from: *Managing Disability in the Workplace: The ILO Code of Practice*

Many NGOs offer assessment and rehabilitation services for those who become injured or sick and find returning to work difficult. Through these professional services many individuals may be able to return to work. As the government develops its program and systems, more options should be available to employers who want to retain their qualified employees.

Measure success

If you put a plan or targets in place from the start of your disability inclusion initiative, review it annually to determine how you have progressed. Your indicators of success will depend on the goals and objectives you set during your planning phase. You may use indicators, such as: Communications about disability initiated, policies developed, accessibility measures taken, staff training completed, partnerships developed, etc. This will help you review the progress you have made and the changes in policies and measures that are required to improve disability inclusive climate

You should also look at outcome indicators, such as: number of employees with disabilities hired, types of disabilities and gender of those employees, number of promotions among the group, number of reasonable accommodations made, performance and attendance data, managers and supervisor ratings and opinions, changes in attitudes of staff, number of people who feel comfortable disclosing their disabilities, and other indicators of success.

Take this information and use it to revise your disability plan for the next planning cycle and to communicate your success so that other companies will want to hire persons with disabilities.

Summary and Learning More

This booklet contained some basic information about disability and the business case. It stressed the importance of planning and the need to create a climate of inclusion through positive attitudes, practical changes and reaching out for help and partnership when needed. It outlined and provided practical guidance and examples for some of the most important inclusion concepts: Accepting disability as a diversity issue; removing barriers; providing accessible, accommodating and safe workplaces; promoting and communicating positive attitudes; treating persons with disabilities equitably and fairly; and providing return-to-work opportunities for those who acquire disabilities as a result of injury, accident or illness.

Disability inclusion is a process and so is learning about disability. To continue to develop your disability confidence and expertise, it is highly recommended that you seek the advice of others and that you share what you have learned.

Some of the resources and people you could consult include:

- Current employees who have disabilities
- Other employers who have hired persons with disabilities
- NGOs, DPOs and IOs working in disability
- The Bangladesh Employers Federation and the Bangladesh Business and Disability Network
- International websites and organizations which address the issue of disability and employment.

Many resources are listed in the Annex so you can continue to learn and share your experiences.

ANNEX 1: Resources

Non-governmental, Disabled Persons' and International Organizations

Access Bangladesh

www.accessbangladesh.org

Action Aid

www.actionaid.org

Bangladesh Protibandhi Kallyan Somity (BPKS)

www.cdd.org.bd

Center for Disability and Development (CDD)

www.cdd.org.bd

Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed

www.crp-bangladesh.org

Center for Services and Information on Disability (CSID)

www.csud-bd.com

GIZ (German donor program)

www.giz.de/Bangladesh

International Labour Office

www.ilo/dhaka

National Grassroots Disability Organization (NGDO)

www.ngdobd.org

National Forum on Organizations Working with the Disabled

www.facebook/pages/NFOWD-Bangladesh/330804366933972

Training Organizations

Brac

www.brac.net

UCEP Bangladesh

www.ucepbd.org

Government

Department of Social Services, Ministry of Social Welfare

<http://www.dss.gov.bd/>

Employers Organizations

Bangladesh Employers Federation and the Bangladesh Business and Disability Network

www.bef.org.bd

ILO Global Business and Disability Network

www.businessanddisability.org

Office of Disability Employment (United States)

www.odep.gov<http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/>

Job Accommodations

Job Accommodation Network (United States)

www.askjan.org

Job Access (Australia)

<http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/>

Self-Assessment

ILO Global Business and Disability Network

Self-Assessment Tool <http://www.businessanddisability.org/satools/>

ANNEX 2: Key references and online documents

15 CEOs with a learning disability, accessed January 7, 2016: <http://www.businessinsider.com/ceo-learning-disabilities-2011-5>

Australian Network on Disability, Manager's Guide: Disability in the Workplace, The Australian Network on Disability, <http://www.and.org.au/pages/managers-guide-disability-in-the-workplace.html> (Cost)

Employee Assistance Resource Network, The Business Case for Hiring Persons with Disabilities <http://askearn.org/docs/brochures/pdf/BusinessCase-ACC.pdf>

Employer Assistance Resource Network, A Toolkit for Establishing and Mainstreaming Successful Employee Resource Groups, http://askearn.org/docs/erg_toolkit.pdf

Erickson, W.A. S. Schrader, S. Bruyere, and S. VanLooy, S., 2013, The Employment Environment: Employer Perceptions, Policies, and Practices Regarding the Employment of Persons with Disabilities. Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin, Vol. 57 (4), 195-208. For the Research Brief go to: <http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1328&context=edicollect>

German Cooperation, GIZ and CDD, Breaking Barriers to Disability Inclusion, Dhaka, Bangladesh

ILO Code of Practice for Managing Disability in the Workplace (2002) http://www.businessanddisability.org/images/pdf/code_practice.pdf

ILO Convention No. 159 (1983): Convention concerning Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) , http://www.businessanddisability.org/images/pdf/ilo_c159.pdf

ILO, Inclusion of Youth with Disabilities, 2014: The Business Case http://www.businessanddisability.org/images/pdf/pubs/ILO_YouthDisabilities.pdf

ILO, Making ILO offices accessible to persons with disabilities: Access Handbook, 2005, Geneva http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---ifp_skills/documents/publication/wcms_107945.pdf

Job Accommodation Network, Accommodating Foodservice Workers with Motor Impairment(s), <https://askjan.org/soar/Industry/foodservice.html>

Job Accommodation Network, Accommodating Employees in Manufacturing Settings <https://askjan.org/media/JANManufacturing.doc>

European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, FACTS #53, Ensuring the health and safety for workers with disabilities, <https://osha.europa.eu/en/tools-and-publications/publications/factsheets/53>

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Parmenter, TR, 2011. "Promoting training and employ opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities: International experience,". Skills and Employability Department, Employment Working Paper No. 103, International Labour Office, Geneva

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Siperstein, Gary, N. Romano, A. Mohler and R. Parker, 2006, A national survey of consumer attitudes towards companies that hire persons with disabilities. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 24 (2006), 3-9

US Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Programs, *Building an Inclusive Workforce: A Four-Step Reference Guide to Recruiting, Hiring and Retaining Employees with Disabilities* <http://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/20100727.pdf>

US Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Programs *FACT SHEET*, Sept 2014, *Stay-at-Work/Return-to-Work: Supporting Employees Who Experience Illness or Disability*, September 2014 <http://www.dol.gov/odep/pdf/20140917StayAtWork.pdf>

Westpac Bank, *Prosper and Grow: Accessibility Action Plan*, 2013, http://www.westpac.com.au/docs/pdf/aw/2013_AAP_WEB_FINAL.pdf

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Kingdom of the Netherlands

