

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

AT-A-GLANCE

POPULATION

56.7 million

Number of people living in the United States had one or more disabilities as of 2010.



INCOME

28.4%

Percentage of non-institutionalized persons aged 21 to 64 years with a disability in the United States who were living below the poverty line in 2012, compared to 12.4 percent for people with no disabilities.

\$40,000

The highest annual earnings among people with disabilities, which belongs to people with a "Hearing Disability," compared to the lowest earnings, \$30,000, for people with a "Cognitive Disability."

48%

Percentage of people with disabilities who report a personal income of \$15,000 or less. Only 7 % say they have a personal income over \$50,000.

\$37,300

The median income of households that included any working-age people with disabilities in the United States compared to \$60,000 for households that did not include any working-age people with disabilities.

LABOR FORCE

19.3%

The labor force participation rate of people with disabilities, compared to 68.4 percent of people without disabilities in 2015. .

15%

Percentage of workers with a disability who work in production, transportation, and material moving occupations, compared to 12 percent for workers without disabilities.

31%

Percentage of workers with disabilities who work in management, professional, and related occupations, compared to 37 percent of workers without disabilities.

BUYING POWER

87%

Percentage of consumers who indicate they would prefer to do business with companies that hire people with disabilities.

EDUCATION



12.4%

Percentage of people with disabilities who have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 31.7% of the general population

34.4%

Percentage of people with disabilities who have a high school diploma, compared to 25.5% of the general population.

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OVERVIEW

People with disabilities are finding ways to become more engaged with their communities and to seize new opportunities. In fact, enabling people with disabilities to live fuller lives with adequate resources has become a global priority summoning the resources of the United Nations' World Health Organization (WHO), the World Bank, and the world's nations, organizations, and businesses. However, many people still shun people with disabilities and treat them as "outsiders." In testimony before a U.S. Senate subcommittee, Yvonne Jones, Director of the Strategic Issues for General Accounting Offices, identified "attitude" as "the most significant barrier keeping people with disabilities from the workplace ..." It is not surprising, then, that statistics reveal that people with disabilities still face serious challenges.

The unemployment rate of people with disabilities is double the rate of people without disabilities. If they get a job, people with disabilities are more likely to work part time than the general public. Thirty-four percent of workers with a disability are employed part time, compared with 19 percent of those with no disability. Their incomes, on average, are lower than those of the general population. At the same time, savvy corporations see people with disabilities as a source of excellent workers. When compared to the general workforce, people with disabilities tend to be more dependable, less likely to be injured, and have comparable or higher productivity and retention rates. And employers are addressing the needs and utilizing the insights of disabled employees through employee resource groups. For example, Ernst and Young has four employee resource groups focused around providing people with disabilities with environment, tools, resources, information and opportunities and raising awareness of abilities-related issues among the general workforce.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

You can use the following questions to help you discover greater opportunities to impact your business through diversity and inclusion:

1

What cultural, physical and workplace environment differences do employers need to take into account in the hiring process for people with disabilities?

2

What role does a company being "disability friendly" (i.e., equipped with accessible office space and physical accommodations, progressive policies that support disable workers, honoring different ways of communicating and understanding etc.) play in attracting and retaining people with disabilities to a company?

3

Explain the importance to disabled high-potentials that there are other people with disabilities in high-profile roles throughout the company (and that they have access to them).

4

How important is it that external leaders in the disabled community be involved with a corporation's ERG for people with disabilities as sponsors?

5

In what ways can an ERG for people with disabilities better influence corporate growth and business by giving its members a voice?

6

What strategic impact can an ERG for people with disabilities have on the recruitment, engagement, and workplace culture that honors the needs, concerns, and challenges of this group in the workplace?

7

How can abilities awareness programs help to encourage disabled workers' desire for advancement, validation, and equality?

8

How can companies leverage recruitment, retention, and diversity best practices to help close the still-significant salary gap between workers with disabilities and those without?

9

Eighty-seven percent of consumers would prefer to do business with companies that hire people with disabilities. What can companies do to raise consumers' awareness of their willingness to hire people with disabilities and raise the profile of disabled workers as ambassadors for the company?