SG ENABLE ONLINE HRM SERIES FOR EMPLOYERS

RECRUITMENT & HIRING OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Developed by:

SG ENABLE
Inclusive society. Enabled lives.

Supported by:

wsg Workforce Singapore

TABLE OF CONTENTS

01

Definition of Disability

INTRODUCTION

In 2016, it was estimated that about 3.4% or approximately 100,000 Singaporeans have disabilities. This number will increase over time, as our population ages. Therefore, with greater access to education, advancements in technology and medical treatments, more persons with disabilities are capable of becoming work ready to enter/re-enter the workforce.

In Singapore, the current definition of disability was refined by the then Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS) in 2004 to be "those whose prospects of securing, retaining places and advancing in education and training institutions, employment and recreation as equal members of the community are substantially reduced as a result of physical, sensory, intellectual and developmental impairments".

3.4% OF SINGAPOREANS HAVE DISABILITIES

PHYSICAL   INTELLECTUAL

SENSORY   DEVELOPMENTAL

TYPES OF DISABILITIES

Disabilities come in many forms, and may be both visible or invisible. Disabilities can be categorised as: developmental, intellectual, sensory and physical. These disabilities also have varying degrees of severity, ranging from mild, moderate, severe, to profound.

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

An example of developmental disability is Autism Spectrum Disorder or ASD. It is defined by DSM-5 as a persistent deficit in social communication and social interaction across multiple contexts. People with ASD may also display restricted, repetitive patterns of behaviour, interests, or activities.

Persons with autism tend to find it challenging to interact with others in certain social situations. Some of these instances include:
- Maintaining eye contact with others.
- Being unaware of how others might feel or respond.
- Being unable to gauge the interests and intentions of the people they are talking to.
- A tendency to take things literally, difficulty in imagining things or scenarios, and resistant to accepting or adapting to changes.

INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

Intellectual disabilities are characterised by a measure of low intelligence quotient (IQ < 70), as well as limitations in skills such as language, math, reasoning and social functioning. Persons with intellectual disabilities may have difficulty with communication skills, the ability to make and retain friends, as well as practical everyday living skills like personal care, self and financial management.

For example, persons who are born with Down Syndrome may tend to have mild to moderate intellectual disability.

SENSORY DISABILITIES

There are two kinds of sensory disabilities, namely visual and hearing impairment.

Visual impairment refers to significant vision loss that cannot be corrected through the use of optical lenses, medication or surgery. Persons with visual impairment may range from low vision in which a person is unable to discern objects a short distance away, to tunnel vision where part of their peripheral vision may be affected, to complete blindness.

Hearing impairment refers to the partial or complete loss of hearing in one or both ears. Persons with hearing impairment range from those who have difficulty in detecting sounds which fall between a certain frequency range, to those who are unable to hear below a certain decibel level. Others may not be able to distinguish sounds at all.

PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

Physical impairments refer to either a total or partial loss of bodily functions, such as the ability to walk, or loss of fine motor skills, or a total or partial loss of a part of the body. Examples of such impairments could include muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy, stroke or amputation.

For more information on understanding persons with disabilities, you may refer to this guide developed by the National Council of Social Service.

02

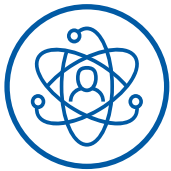Business Case for Hiring Persons
with Disabilities

2. BUSINESS CASE FOR HIRING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

THE BENEFITS

Employment provides financial independence and empowers persons with disabilities, and enables persons with disabilities to have:

Self-reliance	Personal development	Social integration	Financial planning and decision making	Contribution to society

THE BENEFITS OF EMPLOYMENT TO EMPLOYERS

Persons with disabilities have skills and abilities that they can offer to the workforce. Many of them are motivated and resilient, and are willing to learn and work hard. They form a talent pool that is able and capable.

FOCUS ON ABILITY

Some people tend to focus on the impairments of persons with disabilities. They assume that certain tasks cannot be accomplished by them. By focusing on the limitations, they fail to uncover their strengths and determine how they are able to contribute. Instead, by examining and analysing the skills they possess, we can determine how persons with disabilities can make a contribution to the organisation. It is important for us to **focus on their abilities.**

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

Supported employment is an approach to promote employment of persons with disabilities to work in an open and competitive workplace with reasonable accommodation and on-going support where they receive standard wages in an integrated work site.

As a concept, supported employment was initiated in the US during the 1970s, and was adopted by various countries as an approach to promote the employment of persons with disabilities.

The Supported Employment approach embraces the concepts of empowerment, dignity and respect for individuals and social inclusion. There are three components in the Supported Employment approach:

1. PAID EMPLOYMENT

It means that persons with disabilities working in the open labour market should receive ongoing wages, benefits, career development, progression opportunities and conditions like any other employees.

2. ONGOING SUPPORT

It refers to job support for employees with disabilities and the employers so as to achieve employment sustainability.

3. INTEGRATED WORKPLACE

Integration is important in achieving inclusivity at the workplace. Persons with disabilities should work alongside and amongst other employees without disabilities.

BENEFITS OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

- Improvements in the quality of life of persons with disabilities by enabling them to become active participants in society.
- A positive impact on families and employers who benefit from the contribution which persons with disabilities can make at work.
- Allows for the provision of varying levels of individualised support, depending on individual abilities and needs.
- Helps employers examine the company's work processes which could create new jobs or redesign existing jobs to improve productivity for all employees.

CASE STUDY:
UNITED OVERSEAS BANK SINGAPORE

PARTNERSHIP TO HIRE PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Organisations are moving towards paperless operations and United Overseas Bank (UOB) is no exception. UOB Scan Hub is the bank's nerve centre for checking, digitalisation and archiving of customer documents. Employees are required to be meticulous and be able to handle routine work. In 2013, UOB partnered Autism Resource Centre (Singapore) (ARC) to hire suitable employees, and persons with autism made up about 30% of the 50-strong team. The successful employment of persons with disabilities was largely attributed to the support of ARC's job coaches.

RIGHT JOB MATCH YIELDS GREATER PRODUCTIVITY

Although the initial training phase took time, having a right job match yielded positive results, as these trainees from ARC were well suited for the job. Eventually, they proved to be just as productive, if not more productive, than other workers.

BETTER MANAGERIAL DEVELOPMENT

This project also led to the development of the managers, as they were trained to give clear and specific instructions, allocate the work in an organised manner, and plan better schedules, thereby improving their managerial and communication skills.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ARE ABLE TO MEET BUSINESS NEEDS

This success story highlights an important point - that organisations should be hiring persons with disabilities because they have the necessary skillset and are able to meet existing business needs.

As an employer, one of the most pertinent issues in hiring is to ensure an optimal match, both between the person and the job, as well as the person and the organisation. This holds true for any employer, and if your organisation is able to effectively create an inclusive culture, it will lead to both organisational and business benefits.

Photo Credit: United Overseas Bank Limited

03

Building Inclusiveness into the Business Culture

3. BUILDING INCLUSIVENESS INTO THE BUSINESS CULTURE

THE BENEFITS

An inclusive business culture can bring many benefits such as:
- Greater morale and positive employee sentiment.
- Reinforcement of the organisation's branding and values.
- A better understanding of customers with disabilities.

GETTING BUY-IN THROUGHOUT THE ORGANISATION

In order to create an inclusive business culture, there needs to be understanding and commitment from all levels of the organisation:

- As the top management is in charge of leading and setting the direction for the organisation, they have to ensure that policies are inclusive and that both internal and external communications are consistent.
- Employees in middle management, who are largely involved in hiring decisions, would need to be aware of the impact of their decisions.

CONSISTENCY IN COMMUNICATION

Consistency in communication throughout the organisation is vital in ensuring that employees know that they are key to building an inclusive environment.

Some examples of internal communication include:
- Featuring success stories of the valuable contributions that employees with disabilities have made to the company.
- Highlighting the efforts the organisation is undertaking in supporting the recruitment, hiring and retention of persons with disabilities.

Some examples of external communication include:
- Reflecting the company's position on diversity and inclusiveness within the mission statement, annual reports, policy statements as well as external newsletters.

It is also worthwhile to look into establishing a diversity-focused employee resource group within the company. Such a group can help in advancing the recruiting, hiring, retention and promotion of individuals with disabilities.

04

Preparing Businesses for the Hiring of Persons with Disabilities

PREPARING BUSINESSES FOR THE HIRING OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

To ascertain if your business is ready to hire persons with disabilities, you may consider examining these two indicators: your people and your physical workplace. If employees within the organisation are not ready to work with persons with disabilities, or the office/worksite is inaccessible, these might suggest that the business is not ready for employees with disabilities.

INTERACTIONS WITH PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Often, employers might be apprehensive about interacting with persons with disabilities because they do not know what to do or say, or how best to go about working with them. This lack of understanding may stem from a lack of exposure. Employers can organise activities to help employees better interact with persons with disabilities. Such activities may include:

Participating in events or job fairs organised by SG Enable.

Visits to social service agencies (SSAs) and Special Education schools.

Organise CSR programmes

EDUCATE CO-WORKERS ABOUT DISABILITY ETIQUETTE

Alternatively, employers can also organise workshops to educate employees on disability etiquette, including information such as the different types of disabilities and the basic knowledge on how to interact with persons with disabilities. Equipping employees with this knowledge can help boost their confidence when interacting with persons with disabilities. To help employers achieve this, they can sign up for the SG Enable's Introduction to Disability Management Workshop. Write to capabilitydevelopment@sgenable.sg for more information.

ASCERTAINING WORKPLACE ACCESSIBILITY

Having an accessible workplace, with features such as wider aisles, ramps and automatic doors, benefit not only persons with disabilities but all employees in the company. The Building & Construction Authority of Singapore (BCA) has been advocating workplace accessibility and universal design (UD). To determine if your workplace is accessible, you can arrange for an assessment to be done by SPD who will send a consultant to the worksite to examine and evaluate various aspects, before recommending potential modifications which can be mtade. Some of these modifications can come at very low cost and employers can apply to the Open Door Programme (ODP) for funding to help defray these costs.

For more information, please write to employment@sgenable.sg, and SG Enable will provide advice on the various types of funding available.

05

Establishing Policies and Practices to Support Hiring of Persons with Disabilities

5. ESTABLISHING POLICIES AND PRACTICES TO SUPPORT HIRING OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

An important factor for employers to bear in mind is whether the policies and practices within the company are supportive of hiring persons with disabilities. Employers should review existing processes and job descriptions to determine if these practices facilitate the hiring and advancement of qualified persons with disabilities.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF AVAILABLE OPENINGS

When announcing available job openings, consider the following:

- Work with SG Enable to identify potential candidates who meet the job requirements.
- If the job opening is announced through the company's website, examine whether the website is friendly and accessible for jobseekers with disabilities, e.g. some software programmes that convert text-to-speech for the blind who are unable to discern text within image files.
- Whether the job announcement encourages applications from persons with disabilities. The announcement may include the universal access symbol, or the phrase "Persons with disabilities are welcome to apply".

CONSIDERATION POINTS

Work with SG Enable to identify potential candidates

SEARCH

Job posting is accessible to job seekers with disabilities

Job announcement may include the universal access symbol, or an inclusive statement
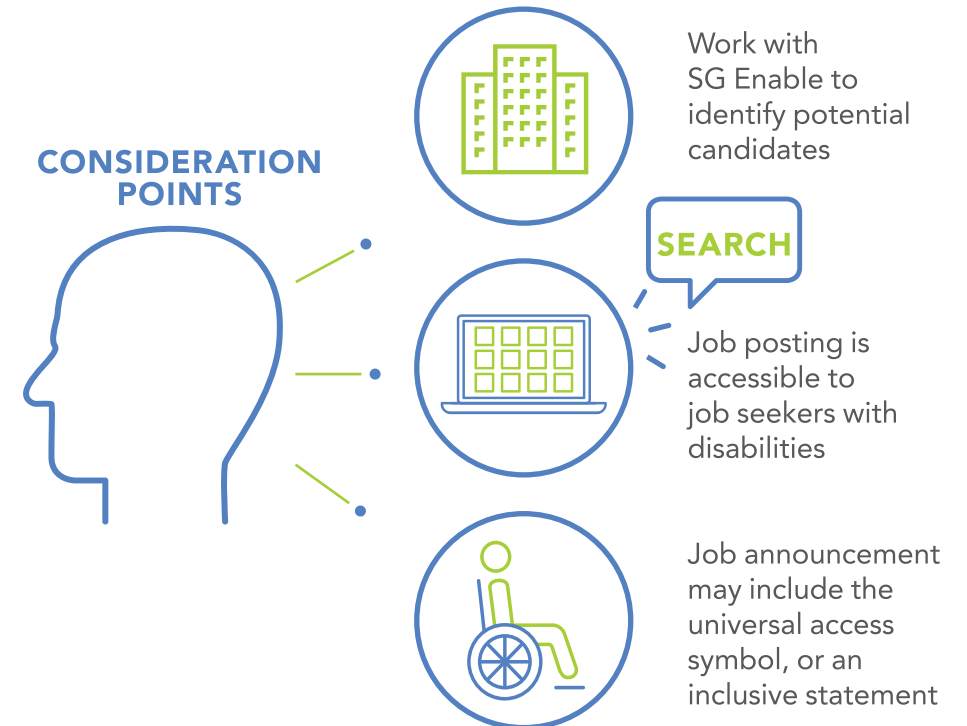
POLICIES IN SHORTLISTING CANDIDATES

When shortlisting candidates with disabilities, these are some of the factors employers may consider:

- Ensure that hiring is inclusive, and is based on education, skillset and experience i.e. based on merit and ability to perform a job role.
- In the event that the position the candidate has applied for is unavailable, examine other available positions for which they may qualify.
- If no other available positions are applicable, keep them in the pipeline and consider them for upcoming or future job vacancies.
- If unsure whether candidates with disabilities are suitable for the job, employers can look into offering internships or contracts, with the eventual goal of conversion, or providing apprenticeship programmes. These programmes may also be eligible for ODP funding.

Ensure hiring policies are inclusive

Consider them for future job vacancies

FACTORS EMPLOYERS CAN CONSIDER

Examine other available positions

Provide internship or apprenticeship programmes

CONDUCT PERIODIC REVIEWS OF POLICIES & PRACTICES

The review of the policies should not be a one-off project. Policy reviews should be carried out on a periodic basis, preferably at least once a year. This ensures that the improvements to the existing policies can be suggested and subsequently incorporated.

OBTAIN COLLECTIVE INPUT FROM RELEVANT PERSONNEL

By getting all relevant personnel to collectively examine the policies and practices, and to look at areas for improvement, employers can get the buy-in of various stakeholders, thereby getting them to reframe their mind-set to become more inclusive.

06

Job Analysis, Redesign, Carving and Sharing

6. JOB ANALYSIS, REDESIGN, CARVING AND SHARING

Employers should begin the recruitment process by conducting a job analysis. Job analysis considers all the tasks that are required to be performed by the job role and segregating into main (essential) and secondary (marginal) job functions.

As you conduct a job analysis, you need to consider several factors: workload, types of technical skills and expertise required, the need for teamwork or collaboration, and physical environment (e.g. lighting, temperature, noise).

ENABLING FACT

A sample job analysis form by TAFEP is available for use. You can download it from this handbook https://www.tal.sg/tafep/Resources/Publications/2019/Fair-Recruitment-and-Selection-Handbook

DEFINITION OF ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS AND MARGINAL FUNCTIONS

A job analysis identifies essential job functions and marginal job functions.

Essential job functions are basic job duties an employee has to perform, with or without reasonable accommodations. Marginal job functions are relatively incidental to the reason for the job's existence. The table below lists the factors to determine if a function is essential or marginal.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS	MARGINAL FUNCTIONS
• Performing the functions define the job's existence • Functions require certain expertise or specialised skills	• No major consequences if functions are not performed • Functions take up a small percentage of the total work time

IMPORTANCE IN SEGREGATING FUNCTIONS

Segregating functions allows for a better identification and matching between persons with disabilities and jobs based on the essential functions. Often, some of the functions which employers assume to be essential are either (i) passed down from predecessors, or (ii) loaded onto the job role due to cost-cutting measures, without much consideration or review. By identifying the essential job functions, employers will be able to list the skill requirements for job performance and work out a reasonable performance evaluation matrix and competitive remuneration package.

In the graphic below, the job posting of an accountant indicates the functions the new employee would have to perform.

ACCOUNTANT (1-YEAR CONTRACT, RENEWABLE)
West, Singapore

Process invoices and payments daily; staff payroll on monthly basis	Prepare monthly and quarterly closing reports e.g. Profit and Loss, bill of sale, etc.	Assist Finance Director in yearly budgeting exercise and financial statements
Prepare audit schedules and assist external auditors on financial audits	Prepare tax computation and work with tax agent on related matters	Assist to order and store office supplies
		Manage office calendar of Finance Director

After a job analysis, employers may classify the functions as either essential or marginal, as exemplified in the table below.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS	MARGINAL FUNCTIONS
• Process invoices and payments daily; staff payroll on monthly basis • Prepare monthly and quarterly closing reports e.g. Profit and Loss, bill of sale, etc • Assist Finance Director in yearly budgeting exercise and financial statements • Prepare audit schedules and assist external auditors on financial audits • Prepare tax computation and work with tax agent on related matters	• Assist to order and store office supplies • Manage office calendar of Finance Director

Typically, an accountant's role is to perform the essential financial functions such as processing payrolls and purchase orders, filing taxes, and preparing quarterly financial report for a company. These functions would require someone with background knowledge and expertise in financial accounting or similar fields.
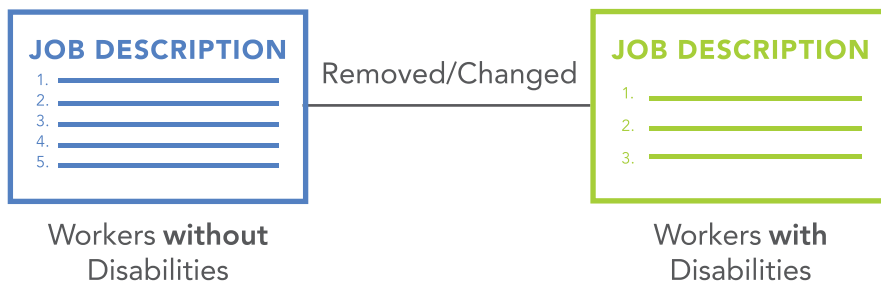
However, the ordering and storing of office supplies and scheduling of appointments for the management may not be essential functions, as these will not affect the key responsibilities of an accountant.

It has been a common trend to see one of the responsibilities listed in job postings to include 'Ad-hoc tasks as assigned'. This is not advisable as it is unclear to persons with disabilities what other tasks they will have to perform and they may later find the job to be a misfit. Therefore, try to identify what these ad-hoc tasks are, analyse if they are essential or marginal tasks and then list them as the essential functions in the job listing if they are found to be essential tasks.

JOB REDESIGN

Job redesign is the elimination or redistribution of job function(s). It is a process in which 'job responsibilities and tasks are reviewed and possibly re-allocated among staff to improve output'. Therefore, job redesign can be carried out to encourage employers to examine how job roles can be made more 'accessible' to persons with disabilities.

JOB DESCRIPTION
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Removed/Changed

JOB DESCRIPTION
1.
2.
3.

Workers **without** Disabilities

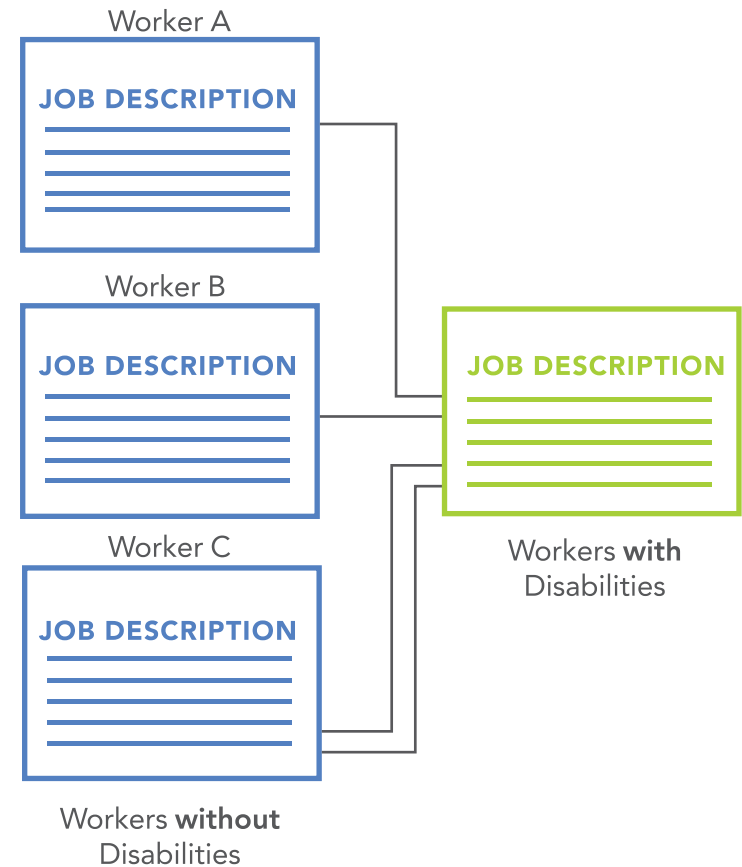Workers **with** Disabilities

BENEFITS OF JOB REDESIGN

1. Ensure right emphasis on essential functions, thereby cutting down unnecessary time spent on marginal functions.
2. Greater productivity as employees focus on what they do best.
3. Makes job position more friendly to persons with disabilities by shifting marginal functions which could be barriers.

JOB CARVING

Job carving is one of the techniques used in creating a job, whereby certain duties from one or more existing jobs are selected and combined into a new position.

Worker A

JOB DESCRIPTION

Worker B

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB DESCRIPTION

Workers **with** Disabilities

Worker C

JOB DESCRIPTION

Workers **without** Disabilities

The case study on UOB Scan Hub (refer to page 10) was an excellent example to illustrate how the function of reviewing and processing forms and documents can be isolated or job carved to form a dedicated new role. UOB was able to achieve greater productivity as the job functions leverage the capabilities of persons with ASD, who have great attention to detail, while being focused.

CASE STUDY: JOB REDESIGN AND CARVING IN CONTACT CENTRES

Contact centres are now capable of handling email and online customer enquiries, in addition to phone calls. A suitable candidate would be someone who is able to handle all the channels of communication effectively.

However, employers can carve out a new job role by having a dedicated staff handle a communication channel with high volume, such as email and online enquiries.

The newly carved job role can lead to greater productivity, focused on responding to written correspondences, while their colleagues focus on inbound and outbound calls. This new job role can be performed by persons with hearing impairments as well, thus opening up a new pool of talent.

JOB SHARING

Job sharing is an employment arrangement in which two people are retained on a part-time or reduced-time basis to perform a job which is typically done by one person working full-time.

JOB DESCRIPTION

9am-5pm Full-time worker
without Disabilities

JOB DESCRIPTION   Share Duties/   **JOB DESCRIPTION**
                            Job Scope

9am-1pm Worker A   2pm-5pm Worker B
without Disabilities   **with** Disabilities

For instance, employers may have a back-to-work female staff and a person with disability taking two different shifts of an administrative assistant's work. The female staff can perform the morning shift so that she can fulfill her family obligations in the afternoon. Similarly, the employee with disability would be able to avoid the peak-hour commuting rush in the morning and make his/her way comfortably to office and take over the work in the afternoon.

This creates a win-win situation for all parties as the employer is able to have the work completed, while both employees are able to work in the time period that matches their needs. It is also possible to consider hiring two persons with disabilities to share the same job, based on their preferences, schedules and capabilities.

BENEFITS OF JOB SHARING

1. Flexible work time arrangement to cater to the needs and commitments of the persons with disabilities.
2. Longer training pathway for persons with disabilities to build their confidence and skills.

DETERMINING ENTRY REQUIREMENTS AND REMUNERATION PACKAGE

By identifying essential job functions, employers will be able to list out the key and necessary requirements relevant to these functions. For the recruitment of a financial accountant, employers can stipulate requirements such as possessing a tertiary education certification in business accounting or a minimum number of years of experience in accounting. When the essential functions are reflected clearly on your job listing, it will also lead to more targeted and suitable applications.

In terms of the remuneration package, there is no standard way of calculation. However, the exercise of job analysis can serve as a guide. Employers will also need to take into consideration other factors such as the profile of the candidate (e.g. education, years of relevant experience), the cost of transport and medical reimbursements etc.

Employers are also encouraged to keep the salary package progressive, meaning if the employee with disability is able to learn and perform new essential functions, employers should consider increasing his/her salary accordingly. Such an arrangement would put in place a form of career and training progression for the employee with disability. In conclusion, the overall principle would be to pay according to the capabilities and performance of the employee with disability.

The job redesign grant under Open Door Programme allows employers to recruit and retain persons with disabilities by supporting up to 90% of the job redesign costs, capped at $20,000 per employee with disability, whichever is lower. The support helps defray costs for the purchase of equipment, workplace modification and redesigning of job scopes and processes.

07

Getting the Recruitment Process Right

GETTING THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS RIGHT

Now that employers have established the essential job functions clarifying objectives and outcomes that the individual has to achieve, the next step would be to look at how these job functions and objectives can be accurately represented in the job descriptions.

JOB DESCRIPTION

When preparing the job description, input should be sought from line managers and job coaches. It is important to not only include the essential job functions but also to list down other additional information which may affect the applicant's considerations.

Additional information can include:

Work location and the need to travel between locations	Commitment to spend a certain percentage of time for overseas travelling	No. of days in a work week, e.g. 5-day work week or shift work

Some of these information is essential as it would help to manage the expectations that candidates with disabilities might have. By providing more details and clarification, expectations of employers and applicants could be better aligned and managed. For example, an amputee with diabetic issues may not want to apply for night shift work due to health considerations.

JOB POSTINGS

When publishing the job postings, it is advantageous to have job posting and application mechanisms made accessible for persons with disabilities. Employers can also consider the following recommendations:

Convert hard copy company information brochure and application forms into electronic format such as PDF or Word document and make it available for download.

Enlarge the font size of words on print documents. Provide the option to enlarge font size on web postings.

Build in text-to-speech reader function on the company website or online application portal for the visually impaired.

Diversify the channels of applications e.g. such as accepting email applications, mail applications and on-site applications to cater to various special needs.

Broadcast job postings through SG Enable to reach out to applicants with disabilities more effectively.
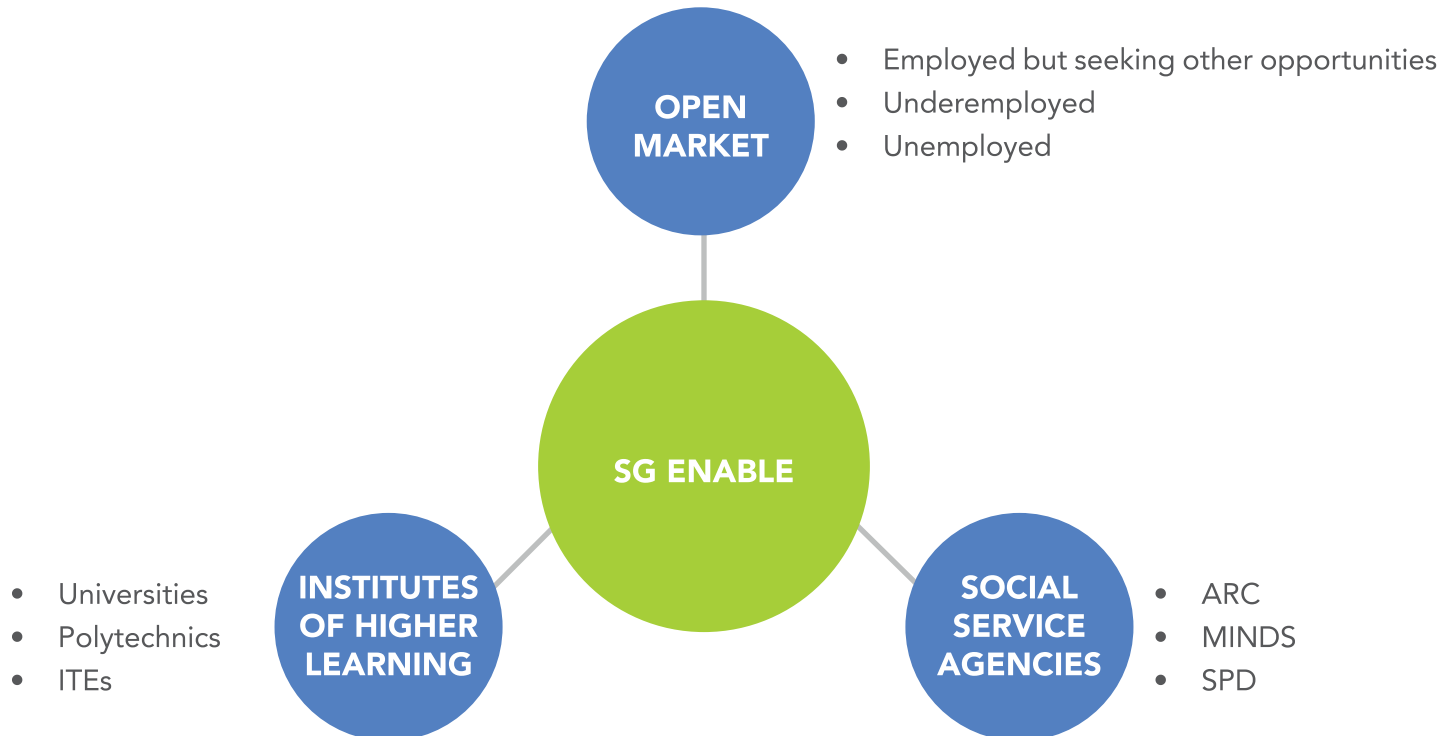
RECRUITMENT AVENUES

After establishing the job postings, there are a few recruitment avenues that the employers can consider:

- Providing internship opportunities to tertiary students with disabilities and possibly converting them to full time staff upon graduation. The internship serves as a gauge to determine the capabilities of the students. Employers can work with SG Enable on the internship programme.

- Working with SG Enable and/or Social Service Agencies (SSAs) that provide employment services, namely Autism Resource Centre (ARC), Movement for the Intellectually Disabled of Singapore (MINDS) and SPD, to source for potential employees with disabilities.

- Participating in SG Enable's virtual and/or on-site career fairs organised for persons with disabilities.

The Open Door Job Portal is a platform dedicated to persons with disabilities and employers. Employers can post job vacancies and search for candidates in this portal at no cost.

For employers, once you have registered an account successfully, you will be entitled to benefit from the Open Door Programme funding to help offset the cost of hiring persons with disabilities. Please visit https://employment.sgenable.sg/ for more details.

OPEN MARKET
- Employed but seeking other opportunities
- Underemployed
- Unemployed

SG ENABLE

INSTITUTES OF HIGHER LEARNING
- Universities
- Polytechnics
- ITEs

SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES
- ARC
- MINDS
- SPD

CHECKLIST ON RECRUITMENT PROCEDURE

When you are examining the recruitment procedure, you may use the checklist below to ascertain the organisation's readiness in the recruitment of persons with disabilities.

S/N	ITEMS	PLEASE TICK	
1.	Top management is supportive of inclusive hiring practices.	YES	NO
2.	Line manager and supervisors are supportive of inclusive hiring practices.	YES	NO
3.	Co-workers are supportive of inclusive hiring practices.	YES	NO
4.	Conduct disability awareness/etiquette workshop for line managers and co-workers to equip them with the knowledge of how to work with persons with disabilities.	YES	NO
5.	Examine existing/potential job vacancies, work with both line managers & HR to determine the positions to be filled.	YES	NO
6.	Identify the essential functions, job requirements and review the job description with inputs from the line manager.	YES	NO
7.	Publish job posting on various job portals and company website, with consideration that the sites or portals are accessible to persons with disabilities.	YES	NO
8.	Work together with coordinating agencies such as SG Enable and SSAs to identify potential candidates.	YES	NO

CHECKLIST ON RECRUITMENT PROCEDURE

S/N	ITEMS	PLEASE TICK	
9.	If referrals are made through coordinating agencies such as SG Enable or SSAs, work with the job coaches to review the job requirements, to determine if there is a need for job redesign and accommodation.	YES	NO
10.	Did the employers conduct the selection process with potential candidates through: • Job interview or • Observation at SSAs/Special Education schools when persons with disabilities are performing job tasks or • Observation at employers' worksite during job trial?	YES	NO
11.	Check with candidates with disabilities on possible accommodations that they may require for them to perform their jobs effectively.	YES	NO
12.	Make necessary arrangements for employees with disabilities and brief colleagues and line managers on the reasonable accommodations made.	YES	NO
13.	Assign a buddy/mentor to the employee with disability to help them integrate into the workplace.	YES	NO
14.	Prepare for on-boarding of the employee with disability by asking him/her to introduce himself/herself through a one page profile write-up. The one-page profile can include their interests, strengths and also tips in interacting with him/her at work. This self-introduction may be uploaded on the company intranet for co-workers to read and understand the individual person with disability.	YES	NO
	Total number of 'YES':		

SUGGESTED RECRUITMENT PROCESS

RECRUITMENT PLAN

01. Establish recruitment policy and procedure

02. Secure management & staff support for employment of persons with disabilities

03. Jointly identify with line managers the vacancies to be filled

04. Identify job requirements and develop job descriptions

LEVERAGE RECRUITMENT CHANNELS

05a. Recruit through platforms such as Job ads, Job portals and SG Enable Employment Portal

05b. Participate in SG Enable's virtual and/or on-site career fairs

05c. Work with coordinating agencies such as SG Enable or SSAs to identify potential candidates

SCREENING AND SELECTION

06. Review job requirements with job coaches from coordinating agencies to ascertain job redesign and job accommodation

07. Review resumes of persons with disabilities referred by coordinating agencies

08. Select potential candidates

ON-BOARDING & ACCOMMODATION

13. Arrange for on-boarding

14. Review accommodation and implement them

15. Conduct orientation and induction

16. Regular review of workplace health & safety and risk assessment

ASSESSMENT AND INTERVIEW

09a. Job Interview

09b. Observe persons with disabilities at the SSAs/ Special Education schools during job tasks

09c. Observe persons with disabilities at employers' worksites during job trials

10. Persons with disabilities find job environment acceptable

11. Determine terms of offer

12. Make job offer

08

Preparing for the Interview

8. PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

A job interview is crucial in the recruitment process as it allows the employers and persons with disabilities to find out more about each other and assess the level of job fit, to ensure job satisfaction and retention. We have listed some tips for employers to consider and implement.

GENERAL TIPS FOR CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS WITH PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

- Inform the interviewers about the candidates' disabilities and accommodation needs, and provide them with some disability etiquette tips beforehand.

- Inform the candidates with disabilities about the interview process. If there is any need for them to take any test to demonstrate their ability, you should inform them beforehand and check with them if there is any assistance or accommodations that they require. For example, a candidate who is visually impaired may want to bring his/her own laptop, installed with text-to-speech reader, for a typing test. A candidate who is hearing impaired may need a sign language interpreter for the interview.

- Use the same interviewing techniques and manner as you would usually do, and treat the candidate with disability with the same respect as you would extend to any other candidate.

- If you had offered some assistance to the candidate, wait till the offer is accepted before offering more. Listen or ask for guidance on how you can best help.

- Do not assume that candidates with disabilities are unable to accomplish certain tasks because of their disabilities. Pose scenario/competency based questions to understand how they will go about resolving certain problems/tasks at work. For e.g. if

- if you are interviewing a wheelchair user and the job requires him or her to travel between locations, you may want to ask, "How do you usually travel between places?"

- Focus on the job requirements and why the candidates have applied for the job instead of discussing their disabilities.

- Examine what persons with disabilities can bring to the organisation, in terms of skills, experiences and interests, objectively assessing the ability and competency of the candidates.

INTERVIEWING TIPS FOR CANDIDATES WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

- Describe the various steps of the interview process to candidates, e.g. the procedure of the interview, number of interviewers, layout of the room, the seating arrangement, and if water is provided for them, describe or guide them where the cup/bottle is placed on table.

- Identify yourself and the other people who are with you. When conversing in a group, remember to identify the person whom you are speaking with. Also, inform the candidate if you decide to switch seats, or take a different seat after re-entering the room.

- Give verbal cues such as "Shall we shake hands?", when offering the candidates a handshake, so that the candidates are aware that the other parties have extended their hands for a handshake.

- Lead the candidates to the chair and guide their hand to the back of the chair so they will be able to gauge the height and location of the chair. Also point out if the chair has any armrests.

- Inform the candidates when the conversation/interview has come to an end and ask if they require any assistance to leave the interview location.

INTERVIEWING TIPS FOR CANDIDATES WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT

- Look directly at the candidates and speak slowly and clearly. If possible, make use of facial expressions, gestures and body movements to help them understand you better.

- Position the interviewers appropriately and ensure that their mouths are not covered when speaking, so that the candidates can see clearly.

- Wait to speak until the candidates are looking at you.

- Raise your hand to speak so that the candidates know who is going to speak next.

- Arrange for sign language interpretation service or allow the candidates to bring their interpreters. Speak directly to the candidates instead of the interpreters.

- Vary the interview technique by using computer or paper and pen to communicate. List out a few key questions beforehand on these tools.

INTERVIEWING TIPS FOR CANDIDATES WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITY

- Ensure that the interview site is accessible with the following features:
  - » Wheelchair-accessible parking lots for persons with disabilities, if they are driving to the interview facility.
  - » Entrances to have ramps and automated doors, and are free of steps.
  - » Accessible lifts.
  - » Wheelchair-accessible toilets in the facility on the floor which the candidates will be having the interview.
  - » Corridors along the route, as well as the doorway of the interviewing room are not blocked or obstructed.

- Offer to shake hands with the candidates even if they are using prosthetic limbs and you are unsure if they would like to shake hands with you.

INTERVIEWING TIPS FOR CANDIDATES WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

- Consider the complexity of the information that you are trying to convey or the questions that you are trying to ask the candidates. Break the information down if it is too complex, and make use of simple and concise English.

- Allow more time for the candidates to think through the questions and respond.

- Speak directly to the candidates instead of speaking to the caregivers or job coaches. The candidates are the ones who are being interviewed, not the caregivers or job coaches.

- Allow the candidates to use pictures and drawings to communicate their strengths or past work experience.

- Ask the candidates to perform a part of the job for employers to assess their competencies.

INTERVIEWING TIPS FOR CANDIDATES WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY: AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

- Ask closed-ended questions such as 'Yes or No', rather than open-ended questions to candidates who may not be responsive verbally.

- Be patient and wait for the person to finish speaking rather than correct them or speak for them. If you have difficulty understanding them, you may choose to rephrase what you have heard and allow the candidates to respond.

- Explain the daily tasks and routines to them in a methodical and systematic manner.

- Be clear, concise and direct, keep sentences short and simple.
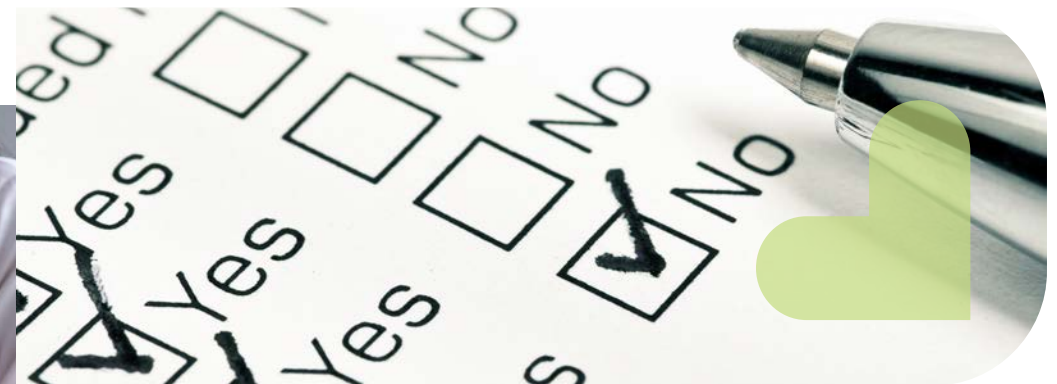
ENABLING FACT

For some examples of non-discriminatory interview questions, you may refer to this comprehensive list developed by TAFEP at https://www.tal.sg/tafep/Resources/Tools-and-templates/2019/Examples-of-Non-Discriminatory-Interview-Questions

09

Reasonable Accommodation

9. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

For persons with disabilities to be able to maximise their potential in employment, it is necessary for employers to provide a reasonable amount of accommodation. An accommodation is defined as any change in the work environment or processes to allow employees with disabilities to enjoy equitable employment opportunities.

DEFINITION

Reasonable accommodation is about ensuring that all your employees have what they need to perform effectively, be productive and stay on the job, without incurring extravagant costs and cause undue difficulty to the employers.

TYPES OF ACCOMMODATION

When employers examine accommodation, we can group them mainly into two different types - job accommodation and workplace accommodation.

Job Accommodation

Job accommodation can be done not only for persons with disabilities but also for other employees. In determining whether to provide accommodation, employers would need to consider the required job tasks, the functional limitations of the person doing the job, the ease in providing accommodation by the employer, etc.

An example of an accommodation is allowing employees to work from home or telecommute in the event of unhealthy pollution levels due to haze.

The following are some examples of job accommodation:

- **Job Trial** – Allow employees with disabilities to work for a short duration or trial period, so that both the employers and the employees can assess the suitability of the job.

- **Flexible Working Hours** – Allow employees with disabilities to report at staggered working hours if they have difficulty taking public transport during peak hours, or face other forms of challenges such as family commitment.

- **Part Time Employment** – Allow employees with disabilities to work less than 35 hours a week, with flexible working hours and paying an hourly wage. This option enables employees with disabilities to build their competencies and confidence over time before performing a full-time job.

- **Contract Employment** – If the employers would like to have a longer assessment period for employees with disabilities, they may also choose to offer contract positions which would allow them to monitor performance over a longer duration.

- **Job Carving** – To scope out tasks which can be done by persons with disabilities to accommodate to their needs, e.g. routine tasks. This can increase the productivity and output of the other workers, as there is someone who is specialised in completing these tasks for them.

- **Job Sharing** – To have two employees sharing duties either with different working days of the week, or time of the day. The details can be determined by the employers, when considering the tasks involved.

- **Telecommuting** – For employees with disabilities who face difficulty in travelling to work due to mobility issues, employers can consider allowing them to work from their place of residence or any location at their convenience.

Workplace Accommodation

What would happen if a wheelchair user turned up at employers' facility to find that there is only a flight of steps leading to the main door? Or what if there are no accessible toilets within the compound? These are considerations with regard to the physical accessibility of the interview and work location. Other forms of accommodation would include the use of assistive technologies to enhance the productivity of persons with disabilities. Some of these technologies can even be mainstream technologies that we are using on a daily basis. Some examples include:

| Text-to-speech software | Screen magnifying software | Tables with adjustable heights | Instant messengers | Paper and Pen |

Employers should always check with persons with disabilities on the types of accommodation they would require and assess whether these can be easily provided or if alternatives can be found.

RESOURCES NEEDED FOR REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

Employers might perceive that providing accommodation involves large-scale modifications or financial resources. The truth is that it need not be very costly and it could just be simple modifications.

For example, it may take a person on a wheelchair some time to move to the office printer some distance away. A reasonable accommodation could be to buy a single portable printer and put it next to his/her desk so that he/she does not have to waste time moving from one place to another.

BENEFITS OF REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

While there are some costs involved in reasonable accommodation, there are numerous positive benefits that such accommodation brings to employers. These benefits, both direct and indirect, include:
- Increased productivity.
- Increased staff satisfaction.
- Better employee attendance and retention, which translates to reduced costs in recruiting and training new employees.
- Increased diversity within the company.

Therefore, instead of perceiving reasonable accommodation as a cost to the company, employers should see it as a form of investment in staff well-being and employee retention.

PERIODIC REVIEW OF ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation should not be a one-off effort. After identifying the need for accommodation, employers may need to examine and review if the accommodation is working well, or whether slight adjustments would need to be made due to the change in nature of the work; or if the persons' disabilities have changed over time. This way, employers would be able to determine how best to support and allow employees with disabilities to maximise their potential. It is also imperative for employees to see that accommodation is not made as a form of special or preferential treatment, but rather, it is the organisational strategy to be more inclusive and ensure that all employees are fully engaged.

10

Natural Support

10. NATURAL SUPPORT

There are many definitions of natural support, and the one postulated by Hagner, Butterworth and Keith states that "natural sources of support include an individual's network of family and friends, and an employee's employers and co-workers on the job. Such natural supports may occur spontaneously or through human service facilitation or consultations."

Just like every one of us, persons with disabilities would also require co-workers who are able to befriend, assist and provide feedback to them at the workplace. Having co-workers whom we can have social interactions and work well with are contributing factors that will help sustain us in the job. This would also apply to employees with disabilities, and the importance of natural support cannot be overstated. More importantly, providing natural support for employees with disabilities not only helps them to perform at work and integrate them into the workplace, it also helps them in other aspects of their lives.

Employers can best integrate persons with disabilities into the company by:

- Assigning a buddy to employees with disabilities to help them familiarise with the organisation. Employees with disabilities can also turn to the buddy for help when they have any queries about the organisations or when they meet with any uncertainties and challenges.

- Assigning a mentor to employees with disabilities to provide guidance on career progression or advancement.

- Include employees with disabilities in the company's events and activities and ensure that they are able to participate in these activities. For example, to an employee with a physical disability, team bonding activities such as outdoor rock-climbing or kayaking activities may not be the most inclusive. Instead the company can choose to look at indoor activities such as karaoke or movie screenings so that the employees with disabilities would not feel left out.

11

Workplace Health & Safety

11. WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY

The workplace health and safety policies should be inclusive, giving equal consideration and protection for employees, including persons with disabilities. Employers can refer to the policies in the Workplace Safety and Health Act for more information.

Employers' responsibilities can be briefly summarised as follows:

- Conduct risk assessments to remove or control risks to workers at the workplace.

- Maintain safe work facilities and arrangements for workers at work.

- Ensure safety procedure/handling are in place for equipment, plant, articles, substances and work processes at the workplace.

- Develop and put into practice control measures for dealing with emergencies.

- Provide workers with adequate instruction, information, training and supervision.

Ensure that health and safety policies are inclusive, by taking into account the following factors:

- Risk Assessments.

- Control measures to address identified risks.

- Consultation with employees with disabilities and with sources of relevant expert advice.

ENABLING FACT

A workplace that is accessible and safe for persons with disabilities is also safer and accessible for all colleagues, clients and visitors.

12
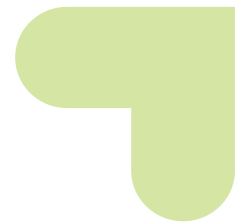
Emergency Preparedness

12. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

An emergency refers to an unforeseen occurrence or combination of circumstances that calls for immediate action. The situation may affect a large number of people and cause significant property damage. As such, external emergency assistance and sustained recovery efforts may be required.

Emergency preparedness and knowing how to respond during an emergency is of paramount importance. In the workplace, the procedure for emergency preparedness includes:

Raising the alarm	Evacuation & Rescue	Rescue & First Aid	Communications

TYPES OF WORKPLACE EMERGENCIES

Some types of workplace emergencies that could happen include:

Fire & explosion	Collapse of structure or equipment	Workplace accidents
Hazardous chemical leaks or spills	Unconscious person	Infectious disease outbreak

PLANNING FOR EMERGENCY EVACUATION

In planning for an emergency, employers would need to know the evacuation routes to take and the corresponding procedures to follow, such as the evacuation and accounting process for employees, clients and visitors to the premise. A key area of concern for the employers is how they can better prepare for contingencies for the persons with disabilities in their organisations.

Employers should be mindful of the risks for employees with different types of disabilities or health conditions, such as:

- Restricted mobility and limited dexterity, which affects the range or speed of movement.
- Sensory impairment, which affects the ability to gather information through the senses such as sight or hearing.
- Cognitive or mental health impairment which affects the capacity to process information and react appropriately.
- Other hidden disabilities or health issues such as heart problems, asthma and epilepsy.

Some considerations for various emergency response are shown below:

For persons with restricted mobility and/or limited dexterity
- What would the evacuation process be like?
- Are their buddies helping them to evacuate from the building, and if their buddies are not around, is there anyone else who would provide assistance to them?

For persons with visual impairment
- Are they assigned buddies who will assist them in the evacuation process?
- Are they familiar with the route from which they are going to evacuate from?
- Are they able to hear the fire/emergency alarms from their workplace/ the toilet/any other location which the employees frequent?
- Are there any items that might get in their way when they are traveling along the route to the evacuation point?
- Are there braille signs in the staircase landings so they know which floor they are on?
- Are there tactile markings on the floor of the escape routes?

For persons with hearing impairment
- Are there any visual fire alarms situated at the work desks of persons with disabilities, or in places where persons with disabilities frequent, such as the pantry or washroom?
- Are there any visible signages that indicate the emergency exit routes?

For persons with limited understanding
- Are they aware of the nearest evacuation exits and what they should do in an emergency?
- Is a buddy assigned to help the persons with disabilities evacuate in the event of an emergency?
- Are there colour coding or pictorial instructions along the escape routes to help persons with intellectual disabilities understand the route to take?

For other health problems
- Are there first aid boxes readily available, and do staff know where to locate them in an emergency?

Different disabilities require different accommodation. When employers are going through the training on workplace safety and emergency evacuation procedures, do also check with persons with disabilities on the areas of concern to them to identify potential areas for improvement. Alternatively, employers can also consult workplace safety and health experts for advice to determine if any improvements need to be made to the existing infrastructure or processes.

13

Internal and External Communication

13. INTERNAL & EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Once a company has embarked on building a more inclusive business culture and becoming more ready to hire persons with disabilities, this message has to be effectively conveyed both internally and externally. By communicating the company's commitment to employ persons with disabilities, the company's position and commitment to inclusive practices are strengthened, while allowing prospective jobseekers to look to the company as an employer of choice. This affects not just the people within the organisation but also other stakeholders including subcontractors, agencies, vendors and customers.

In the communication with external stakeholders, employers can consider the following suggestions:

- Include persons with disabilities in marketing materials where employees are featured in consumer, promotional and/or recruitment advertisement.
- Highlight on the company's website the company's policies regarding inclusion and reasonable accommodation, inclusive hiring initiatives, job mentoring and shadowing programmes.
- Convey information about relevant inclusive company policies to agencies, subcontractors, vendors and suppliers to seek their support in these areas and encourage them to be inclusive and diverse in their approach too.
- Work with organisations such as SG Enable or SSAs about upcoming recruiting/placement cycles and career fairs.

Support from the management and staff within the organisation is also key to ensure awareness and acceptance of these inclusiveness policies within the organisation. Employers may choose to:

- Highlight the company's commitment in internal publications, such as internal mailers or newsletters.
- Examine whether the company has an inclusive corporate culture and working environment.
- Communicate to everyone in the organisation that they share the responsibility for ensuring the success of the company's inclusive policies.
- Include information on disability awareness and etiquette, as well as the company's disability inclusive policies in the employee handbook.
- Establish a disability inclusion committee that looks into the company's inclusive and diversity practices, to review and improve the existing situation and other processes. The committee may comprise existing employees with disabilities, or people who have prior experience of interacting with persons with disabilities.
- Inform co-worker on the accommodation made or might be required for the newly-hired employees with disabilities. Explain why these forms of accommodation are important to prevent any misunderstanding that there is any special/preferential treatment accorded.
- Have newly-hired employees with disabilities fill in a one-page profile that can be shared with others within the organisation. This one-page profile should include their interests, strengths and the type of support they require. It provides a framework for employees to better understand one another.

The above mentioned points are not exhaustive. There are many ways employers can better communicate their support to employees with disabilities, both internally and externally, and the key is to demonstrate commitment and inclusion.

14

Conclusion

Recruitment and hiring of persons with disabilities is the first step to being inclusive. Persons with disabilities have skills and abilities that they can offer to the workforce, if given the opportunity.

A common tendency among many people is that we tend to focus on the impairments of persons with disabilities, assuming that certain tasks cannot be accomplished by them. By focusing on the limitations, it prevents us from uncovering their strengths and determining how they are able to contribute. However, if we were to identify their skills, we can help determine how persons with disabilities can make a contribution to the organisation. It is important for us to focus on their abilities instead of their disabilities.

For more in depth information, you may wish to attend SG Enable High Impact Retention & Employment (HIRE) Workshop series.

Recruitment & Hiring of Persons with Disabilities	Career Advancement & Retention of Persons with Disabilities	Job Accommodation & Workplace Accessibility	Enhancing Employment through Assistive Technology & e-Accessibility
Introduction to Disability Management			

Please refer to
http://employment.sgenable.sg/training/training-programmes/
for the training courses for different stakeholders and
https://employment.sgenable.sg/employers/get-trained/
for more information on employers training.

REFERENCES

Building & Construction Authority. (2020). Accessibility in the Build Environment. Retrieved May 2020 from https://friendlybuildings.bca.gov.sg/index.html

Cimera, R.E. (2012). The economics of supported employment: What new data tell us. Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 37, 109–117.

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. (2008). The ADA: Your Responsibilities as an Employer. Retrieved 17 December, 2015, from http://www.eeoc.gov/facts/ada17.html

Griffin, C., Hammis, D., & Geary, T. (Eds.). (2007). The job developer's handbook: Practical tactics for customized employment. Brookes Pub.

Hagner, D., Butterworth, J. & Keith, G. (1995). Strategies and barriers in facilitating natural supports for employment of adults with severe disabilities. Journal of The Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, 20, 110-120.

Javitch, D.,G. (2006). The Pros and Cons of Job Sharing. Retrieved from http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/170244#ixzz0JPCmZEYt&C

Jordán de Urríes FdB. 2010. Supported Employment. In: JH Stone, M Blouin, editors. International Encyclopaedia of Rehabilitation. Retrieved from http://cirrie.buffalo.edu/encyclopedia/en/article/241/

Enabling Masterplan retrieved May 2020 from https://www.ncss.gov.sg/NCSS/media/NCSS-Documents-and-Forms/EM3-Final_Report_20161219.pdf

Nisbet, J., Hagner, D. (1988). Natural supports in the workplace: A reexamination of supported employment. Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, Vol 13(4), 1988, 260-267.

Nonprofit Risk Management Center. (n.d.) Emergency Preparedness. Retrieved May 2020 from https://nonprofitrisk.org/?s=workplace+safety%2C+Emergency+Preparedness

Priscillia, G. (2014, April 19). More firms in Singapore hiring people with disabilities. The Straits Times. Retrieved May 2020 from http://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/more-firms-in-singapore-hiring-people-with-disabilities

TAFEP (2012). Creating an Inclusive Workplace – A Start-Up Kit retrieved May 2020 from https://www.tal.sg/tafep/Resources/Publications/2019/CreatinganInclusiveWorkplace

The National Council of Social Service. (n.d.). Understanding Persons with Disabilities. Retrieved May 2020 from https://www.ncss.gov.sg/Press-Room/Publications/Detail-Page?id=Understanding-Persons-with-Disabilities

United States Department of Labor. (2012) Business Strategies that Work: A Framework for Disability Inclusion retrieved May 2020 from https://www.dol.gov/odep/pdf/FAEStrategies.pdf

United States Department of Labor. (n.d.) Focus on Ability: Interviewing Applicants with Disabilities. Retrieved 4 December 2015 from http://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/fact/focus.htm

Job Redesign: Definition, Theory & Approaches. Retrieved May 2020, from https://study.com/academy/lesson/job-redesign-definition-theory-approaches.html

World Association for Supported Employment. (n.d.). Handbook on Supported Employment. Retrieved May 2020 from https://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1337&context=gladnetcollect

World Health Organization. (n.d.). Disabilities and rehabilitation. Retrieved 1 December 2015 from http://www.who.int/disabilities/en/

SG ENABLE

Inclusive society. Enabled lives.

SG Enable Ltd
20 Lengkok Bahru
#01-01
Singapore 159053
www.sgenable.sg

Infoline: 1800-8585 885 (Monday to Friday 8.30am to 6.00pm;
Saturday 8.30am to 12.30pm; closed on Sunday and Public Holidays)

For enquiries or feedback: contactus@sgenable.sg