

*Key Factors that Assist Employers to Recruit,  
Interview, Hire and Retain People with Disabilities*

**Prepared For: The Able Trust**

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# **Key Factors that Assist Employers to Recruit, Interview, Hire and Retain People with Disabilities**

## **1. Introduction**

Employment of people with disabilities has been a concern for quite some time. For a variety of reasons that have been explored in many different settings, the number of persons with disabilities who are willing and able to enter and contribute in the work force consistently exceeds the opportunities for which these people are given serious consideration. Existing research suggests, for example, that lack of information, preconceived biases, and a perception of increased risk, are all associated with employers' disinterest in recruiting and hiring people with disabilities (PWDs).

The objectives of this research project are (1) to identify the key factors that drive employer behavior related to recruiting, interviewing, hiring and retaining people with disabilities, and (2) to identify successful approaches by which The Able Trust could assist employers in these activities to further assist Floridians with disabilities in achieving employment.

The report proceeds as follows. In the next section, we discuss the outcome of our pre-survey interview process, in which we discussed main concerns with regard to the hiring of PWDs. In Section 3, we describe our data collection process and provide a univariate analysis of the responses to some key survey questions. In Section 4, we present the results of our analysis along three main themes: perceived barriers, effective interventions, and company activities, including both the intent and actual efforts to hire PWDs. Specifically, we focus on individual and firm characteristics that might explain variation in responses in these areas. In Section 5 we distinguish perceptions and activities as they pertain to the particular stages of employment: recruiting, interviewing, hiring and retaining PWDs. Section 6 concludes with a brief summary of the results and recommendations.

## **2. Pre-Survey Interviews**

In order to focus on the most urgent concerns of Florida employers with respect to hiring PWDs, we conducted six telephone interviews with state Business Leadership Network (BLN) representatives and one additional telephone interview with a representative from a large employer based in Florida. The purpose of these interviews was to gather information regarding the structure and focus of BLNs, as well as the various

activities that these organizations engaged in to address PWD employment-related issues. These interviews helped us gain a deeper understanding of the BLN operations and provided insights regarding the concerns or barriers to PWD employment, and helped identify the types of efforts and activities that were noted as being especially successful within these groups.

One important part of our discussion with the BLN leaders involved the challenge of recruiting PWDs. While a true application of “equal opportunity” suggests that employers consider all applicants for a position irrespective of disability, the respondents indicated that there are real barriers in the process of receiving applications from PWDs who might fit the requirements for a particular position. To resolve this, many respondents indicated that establishing a liaison relationship with a local vocational rehabilitation organization was very helpful for recruitment. The representatives also agreed that companies must have educated recruiters and educated interviewers – people up front in the hiring process - with the right mindset.

Several representatives described successful recruiting events and noted that the Internet is becoming a more valuable tool in recruitment. Several BLNs also have held fundraising and charity events that have drawn in new BLN members and in some cases, increased potential internships and full time placements opportunities. It is interesting to note here that the activities and events varied across these BLNs and we expect that would likely be the case for the other BLNs as well. More importantly, it was clear in our conversations that a specific type of fundraising activity or event was less important than the effort itself as each successful fundraiser or event was a source of pride for the BLNs and helped the BLNs focus on their mission of serving PWDs.

Upon hiring a PWD, the BLN representatives indicated a strong need to have someone within the company who has the ability and experience to understand the PWD population, and a place within the company with resources so PWDs (employees) can get information and ask for accommodations if needed. It also was noted that companies need more participation from upper management (i.e., executives, CEOs) not just the staff in human resources. All agreed that support for the effort to hire PWDs has to come from the top.

Several representatives noted the success of their PWD internship placement programs. According to the BLN respondents, these arrangements appear to work because it provides employers with the

opportunity to evaluate the PWD-intern before committing to hiring him or her on a full-time basis. While these programs appear to be successful, representatives agreed that a lack of funding limits their expansion. One representative suggested that these internships should provide more on-the-job skills training to increase the likelihood that the part time intern is considered for full time placement.

The top challenges noted in our interviews related to PWDs finding and retaining employment all stem from the current uncertain economic conditions. The employment market is very competitive, but the unemployment rate is higher than ever. The economic downturn has negatively impacted on the resources that businesses have for hiring and training new employees and this is likely to have had an even greater adverse impact on the resources available to hire and train PWDs. Charitable organizations, including BLNs, which dedicate volunteer time to the issue, have less time to commit to the cause. The representatives agreed that more coordination and cooperation across these organizations for sharing ideas and efforts, including the planning of events and maintaining a website, might alleviate some of these costs. Several representatives indicated that they could use help in establishing relationships with local charitable groups and vocational rehabilitation organizations, because their BLN does not have the resources necessary.

Most striking in our interviews was the general sentiment that opportunities to bring PWDs into the work place, through an internship or mentorship-type program, was very useful to breaking down misperceptions of employees and employers with regard to the potential contributions of PWDs in the workforce. For this reason, one area of emphasis in our survey is on whether and how a company's efforts with respect to employing PWDs impacts on an employee's perceptions towards PWDs in the workplace.

### **3. Survey Data Overview**

Our consideration of survey questions began in conjunction with our telephone interviews in the fall of 2010 and resulted in a 78-question survey instrument [See Appendix A]. The survey was field-tested in January, 2011 and was administered through Qualtrics beginning on February 23, 2011. Qualtrics sent the survey out to clients in Florida who are decision makers in Florida companies (ex. Chairman, Owner, Partner, CEO, CFO, CIO, SVP, VP, GM, Director, Manager, etc). As of early March, we received 191 responses, 141 of which are complete.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The sample meets statistical requirements for our analysis. See Appendix B for survey power calculations.

The survey instrument was divided into several parts to address specific areas of interest and concern. Here we provide some basic summary statistics of the data we received for the questions in each area. Table 1 provides a summary of the open ended responses where the respondents are asked for circumstances that would make them more or less likely to hire PWDs. We find many of the factors that affect the hiring of PWDs to be consistent with issues raised in the interviews that we held with BLN leaders and other interested parties.

<b>Table 1. Factors Affecting the Hiring of PWDs</b>	
Circumstances that would make respondent <b>MORE</b> likely to hire a PWD:	Circumstances that would make respondent <b>LESS</b> likely to hire a PWD:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Job duties safe and appropriate for PWD</b></li> <li>• <b>Business improves or expands</b></li> <li>• <b>Owner more receptive to the idea</b></li> <li>• <b>Applicant is qualified for the position</b></li> <li>• <b>Good references</b></li> <li>• <b>Availability of a tax break</b></li> <li>• Good personality</li> <li>• Hiring PWD would not add costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cost of insurance and accommodations too high</b></li> <li>• <b>Applicant is not qualified for the position</b></li> <li>• <b>Duties are not appropriate; PWD not productive</b></li> <li>• <b>Bad attitude, inability to work with customers</b></li> <li>• <b>Company downsizing or business slowing</b></li> <li>• <b>Job is too risky, PWD is a liability</b></li> <li>• PWD has too many doctor's appointments</li> <li>• Company can't provide accommodations</li> <li>• Poor references</li> </ul>
<p>Note: Factors that are in bold indicate multiple responses</p>	

A breakdown of the demographic information for the respondents is provided in Table 2. The majority of the respondents were male (58 percent) and between the ages of 41 and 60 (just over 56 percent). Not surprisingly, the group is well-educated with over 48 percent of the respondents indicating that they have a undergraduate degree or have either completed graduate courses or have earned a graduate degree. As the box that accompanies Table 2 indicates, the majority of the respondents were either company owners or directors/managers. Additionally, the respondents have substantial work experience with over half the respondents indicating that they have over 20 years of work experience.

<b>Table 2. Summary Information on Respondents</b>				
Age and Gender				
Age Range	Male	Female	Total	Percent
18-30	11	7	18	10.78
31-40	9	18	27	16.17
41-50	26	22	48	28.74
51-60	31	16	47	28.14
61+	19	8	27	16.17
Total	96	71	167	
Percent	57.49	42.51		100.00
Education Level				
Highest Level Attained	Frequency	Percent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over 40 percent of respondents are owners of their company, 5 percent are CEO, and 31 percent are directors or managers.</li> <li>• More than half of the respondents reported having over 20 years of work</li> </ul>	
High School	20	11.98		
Some College	67	40.12		
Bachelors Degree	48	28.74		
Post-graduate Courses	12	7.19		
Post-graduate Degree	20	11.98		
Total	167	100.00		

Table 3A provides information on the distribution of respondents by geographic location and by firm size. Table 3A also provides information on the type of firms that are represented in the sample. As noted in Table 3A, the majority of the respondents are from firms located in Southeast Florida (43.3 percent) or Southwest Florida (20.6 percent).

<b>Table 3A. Summary Information on Organizations (By Location and Number of Employees)</b>					
Employment	North	Central	Southwest	Southeast	Total
1-10	10	19	13	25	67
11-20	0	2	3	3	8
21-50	1	2	2	6	11
51-100	0	3	2	4	9
101-200	1	5	0	7	13
201-500	1	3	4	5	13
501-1000	0	0	3	2	5
1000+	2	2	2	9	15
Total	15	36	29	61	141

Table 3B provides additional information on the type of firms represented in the sample. Setting aside the “other” category, the top service area in the same was Business Services with over 27 percent of the respondents selecting this as the organization category. This was followed by Consumer Services (18.4 percent) and Manufacturing (14.9 percent). Healthcare and Hospitality/Food are the next largest categories, each representing over 6 percent of the sample. Real Estate, Agriculture, Education, and Tourism follow

close behind. Given the number of responses across these broad categories, there appears to be sufficient data across a variety of employers.

<b>Table 3B. Summary Information on Organizations (Employer Type)</b>		
<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
Business Services	39	27.66
Consumer Services	26	18.44
Manufacturing	21	14.89
Healthcare	9	6.38
Hospitality/Food	9	6.38
Real Estate	5	3.55
Agriculture	4	2.84
Education	4	2.84
Tourism	3	2.13
Local Government	1	0.71
Other*	20	14.18

\* Responses indicating "other" include fitness, trucking, construction, and legal.

Respondents were asked several questions about relationships with local community groups, a Business Leadership Network (BLN), Chamber of Commerce, or some other business group. In summary,

- Forty percent of the respondents indicated that their organization has access to local community groups focused on aiding people with disabilities.
- Eighteen percent of the respondents indicated that their organization is served by a BLN.
- Respondents reported relationships with 13 different local Chamber of Commerce groups.
- Few respondents (less than 10 percent) reported affiliations with local, state, or national business groups.
- A majority of respondents indicated that their Chamber of Commerce group encourages the recruitment and hiring of people with disabilities and/or provides resources and referrals that aid in the recruitment and hiring of people with disabilities.

<b>Table 3C. Summary of Hiring Activities</b>					
# PWDs Hired Past 2 Years	Number of Responses	Percent of Total	Probability of hiring intern	Number of Responses	Percent of Total
0	79	56.03%	0-20%	16	36.36%
1-2	33	23.40%	21-40%	11	25.00%
3-5	14	9.93%	41-60%	9	20.45%
6-10	3	2.13%	61-80%	4	9.09%
11 or more	12	8.51%	81-100%	4	9.09%

The results in Table 3C highlight the general PWD hiring activities of the respondents' firms and the likelihood of hiring an intern on a fulltime basis.<sup>2</sup> The number of PWDs hired in the past two years is low, with 56 percent of the respondents indicating that they have not hired any PWDs and just over 23 percent indicating that their firm has hired 1 to 2 PWDs over the past two years. As noted later in the paper, the respondents indicate that a PWD internship program is an effective strategy for reducing the barrier to employment. Based on the firms that have an internship program, PWDs are not seeing the type of success that one would expect to see based on the responses to perceptions regarding employment barriers. It is possible that the disconnect between support for the internship program and actual hiring is short term in nature and reflects the current economic downturn. On the other hand, this result may reflect the difference between perception and reality.

Respondents were asked several questions to solicit their impression of current activities in their organizations and these results (sorted from high to low mean score) are provided in the following table. For each of these questions, we provide the average "score" given to these activities, where "1" indicates never and 5 indicates "very often." For the responding firms, more were likely to operate under a flexible work hours arrangement and the majority of respondents indicated that they were familiar with programs dedicated to PWDs. Respondents indicated that on average, their firms occasionally participated in community outreach, offered a work-from-home program or provided employee access to an Employee Assistance Program.

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<sup>2</sup> Two-thirds of the respondents indicated that less than 2 percent of the organization's employees have a disability.

<b>Table 4. Organization Activities</b>	
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Mean Score</b>
Offers employees flexible work hours	3.447
Familiar with programs dedicated to supporting people with disabilities	3.447
Consistent participation in community initiatives and/or charity events	2.780
Offers employees work-from-home programs	2.738
Offers employees access to an Employee Assistance Program	2.582

### Barriers to Hiring People with Disabilities

Respondents were asked several questions to solicit their perceptions of how various factors pose a barrier to the employment or advancement of people with disabilities. For each of these questions, we present here the average “score” given to the activities, where “1” indicates strongly disagree and 5 indicates “strongly agree.” As the results (sorted from high to low mean score) in Table 5 show, there are several significant barriers hiring PWDs. The first two relate to the physical capabilities of PWDs and the third relates to the cost of providing health, life, or disability benefits to PWDs. The three barriers that are of the least concern to the respondents relate to possible negative reactions from customers or employees as well as whether PWDs are dependable employees.

<b>Table 5. Perceptions of Barriers to Hiring PWDs</b>	
<b>Potential Barrier</b>	<b>Mean Score</b>
Employees with disabilities have physical and/or stamina restrictions on their assigned job duties	3.000
There are health and safety concerns with hiring PWDs in this organization	2.957
Cost increases attributable to extending health, life, and/or disability coverage are too high	2.936
Type of work in this organization is unsuitable for PWDs	2.894
Organization lacks access/facilities/equipment suitable for PWDs	2.823
Cost of accommodations for PWDs is too high	2.816
PWDs lack the specific job-related experience required of job applicants for this organization	2.766
Employees with disabilities require additional management and supervisory time	2.752
Cost of training PWDs is too high	2.738
Employees with disabilities lack the ability to travel for work	2.638
PWDs lack the requisite skills and training of job applicants for this organization	2.631
Employees with disabilities lack the ability to work under great time pressure and stress	2.624
Employees with disabilities create additional workload for the HR staff	2.596
Employees with disabilities tend to be less productive	2.454
Organization is concerned about potential negative reactions from clients and customers	2.390
Employees with disabilities tend to have poor attendance and punctuality records	2.348
Staff may feel uncomfortable if asked to work with a PWD	2.298

## Effectiveness

Eight survey questions pertain to the effectiveness of various programs or activities in meeting the goal of assisting people with disabilities. In general, the responses all suggested that these activities are effective. The activity viewed most effective, on average, is “visible top management commitment to providing hiring and promotion opportunities for people with disabilities.” Least effective, on average, is “grants from government and/or community organizations to offset potential expenses associated with hiring and training people with disabilities.”

## Organization’s Experiences with PWDs

Respondents were asked another series of questions to solicit their perceptions of how their organization has responded to the PWD population. We present here the average “score” (ranked high to low) given to some of these activities, where “1” indicates strongly disagree and 5 indicates “strongly agree”:

<b>Table 6. Perception of Organization’s Activities with respect to PWDs</b>	
<b>Organization Characteristics</b>	<b>Mean Score</b>
People with disabilities have not applied for a job at this organization	3.298
This organization has an active champion for PWDs	3.007
This organization employs PWDs in entry-level positions	2.936
This organization employs PWDs in professional and/or technical positions	2.851
This organization has a supervisor, manager or senior leader who has a disability, or who has an immediate family member with a disability	2.816
This organization employs PWDs in supervisory positions	2.730
This organization intends to hire at least one PWD within the next two years	2.688
This organization employs PWDs in senior management level positions	2.660
This organization has dedicated personnel and/or a department to support people with disabilities	2.652
There is a lack of senior management support for hiring PWDs in this organization	2.638
This organization offers regular activities for its employees to interact with PWDs	2.624
This organization regularly works with local vocational rehabilitation organizations	2.596
This organization has formal objectives for hiring PWDs	2.532
This organization consistently markets its commitment to hiring PWDs	2.518
This organization has an active recruiting and hiring program for PWDs	2.475
This organization has had poor experience hiring a person with a disability	2.447
This organization regularly sends emails or newsletters with information regarding PWDs	2.440

As the results in Table 6 indicate, prior or current experience with PWDs impacts positively on organizational perception (at least from the perspective of the respondent). It is interesting to note that the strongest response in terms of agreement was to the statement that “PWDs have not applied for a job at this

organization.” A close second in terms of the strength of the response (3.0) relates to the importance of having a champion for PWDs within the firm. The next four statements also indicate general agreement and are related to PWDs in management or at the entry level position. It is interesting and perhaps informative to note that the firms’ experience with PWDs is positive and impacted by the presence of a champion, or PWDs in leadership positions or active in the firm. In general, the respondents indicated that they have not had problems with hiring PWDs.

#### **4. Analysis**

We turn now to an analysis of the relationships between perceptions, efforts, and success in hiring PWDs. In order to provide a better understanding of the factors driving perceptions, we focus on the extent to which certain individual and company characteristics explain the variation between perceptions, efforts, and success in hiring PWDs. At a minimum, we would expect that this information will be a useful in identifying areas where The Able Trust would want to focus its efforts and resources in the future.

##### Perceptions of Barriers

Individual attitudes and beliefs are shaped by personal and professional experiences. Through a series of questions, we asked respondents opinions about barriers that impact on the employment or advancement of PWDs. A simple factor analysis suggests that the responses to these questions are consistent across the questions, i.e., there are no obvious sets of questions for which respondents’ perceptions deviate significantly. We first compared these perceptions to four demographic characteristics: gender, age, experience, and education. We did not find any significant statistical relationship between gender and the responses to the barriers questions, but age and experience seem to matter. Education level also is not significantly related to these perceptions.

Age appears to be significantly related to a respondent’s attitude regarding barriers to employment. In nearly all questions related to barriers (see Table 5), older respondents were less likely to perceive potential barriers to employment.<sup>3</sup> The exceptions, in which no statistically significant relationship exists, were the perceptions that the type of work at the respondent’s company was unsuitable for PWDs, that there

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<sup>3</sup> Disagreement with the statement regarding barriers here means that the respondent felt that these were less of an issue or concern in hiring PWDs.

are health and safety concerns with hiring people with disabilities, that employees with disabilities have physical and/or stamina restrictions on their assigned job duties, and lack the ability to travel for work. In all other cases, older respondents were less likely to agree with the particular barrier. The magnitude of the differences in responses ranged from -0.13 to -0.31 in absolute terms, i.e, for each increase from one age category to the next, the mean score falls this amount.

Interestingly, the relationship between years of experience and these barriers was not statistically significant except that respondents with more experience were more likely to agree that there are health and safety concerns with hiring PWDs at the respondent's company. This result holds even as we control for the age of the respondent, suggesting that, regardless of age, the more time within a company, the more likely particular health and safety concerns for PWDs become evident.

The age variable is categorical, and hence the relationships described above capture merely the statistical correlation between the category level and the response, from 1-5, to the question. We ran additional tests to see if a particular age category, e.g., the youngest respondents, was more likely to agree or disagree with the particular statements regarding barriers. Here we suspected that the youngest respondents may have different perceptions due to educational efforts to promote diversity and tolerance among the younger generations. Surprisingly, we find that the responses from the youngest age cohort to be significantly related to greater agreement in several the barriers, while insignificantly related to the rest. For example, this group was more likely to agree with the statements that PWDs tend to be less productive, that staff may be uncomfortable working with PWDs, that the organization is concerned about potential negative reactions from clients and customers, employees with disabilities lack the ability to travel for work, and that they lack the ability to work under great time pressure and stress.

Education level does not appear to be significantly related to the perception of barriers. Across all questions, we do not find a significant relationship between the responses to the barriers questions and the education category levels (see Table 2). In all cases, the estimated relationship appears to be negative, but the relationships are not statistically significant.

The results of our analysis of personal characteristics imply that more positive perceptions regarding the employment of PWDs may be expected among employees who are older, but not necessarily more

tenured. The more negative perceptions (agreement with the barrier statements) we find among the younger respondents are likely to erode over time as personal experiences shape perceptions. The difference here may be that the workplace or life experience of working with or knowing PWDs helps to reduce the bias that younger workers may have towards PWDs. As noted above, older respondents were more likely to be concerned about the potential cost (insurance) that PWDs may have for the firm. This concern also is a byproduct of work experience as a younger employee advances to a management position where he/she is directly responsible for employee benefits or has greater knowledge of the costs of benefits like health insurance.

Next we evaluate whether perceptions of the barriers to the employment of PWDs is related to certain company characteristics. In particular, we consider whether respondents' perceptions of barriers are related to company size (number of employees), age, type of industry in which the company operates (manufacturing and services), company relationships with community organizations, participation in charity events, and whether the company offers flex hours or employee assistance programs.

Company size and age were captured using categories. The survey responses are fairly well distributed across all categories in both cases, although more than one-third of the observations are from companies that have been operating for more than 20 years. For larger firms, insurance costs were not perceived to be a barrier. These firms are more likely to have the facilities and equipment suitable for the employment of PWDs. These results indicate a perception that the risk of employing a PWD diminishes in larger companies, as this can be pooled across a larger workforce. Likewise, larger firms are more likely to have the resources and structure to support PWDs in the workforce.

Table 7 presents a summary of the analysis of correlations between the remaining company characteristics and the responses to the questions pertaining to barriers.<sup>4</sup> We present here the direction of the relationship for those relationships found to be statistically significant at the 90% level or higher.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Barriers are listed using general terms for ease in formatting; the rows correspond to the barriers listed in Table 5. The correlations do not control for any other characteristics of the respondent or company.

<sup>5</sup> Statistical comparisons based on two-sample t-tests, the comparative group in each case is all respondents in companies that do not meet the particular characteristic, i.e., respondents in manufacturing firms vs. all other respondents.

Interestingly, we find that the type of business is related to many of the perceptions regarding the employability of PWDs. Perceptions are significantly less “negative” for respondents that work in service-oriented companies than for those in manufacturing settings. The comparison group for both is the respondents from all other companies, suggesting that in other settings, perceptions are not significantly different, or lie somewhere in between those shown here.

We note that respondents from companies that are involved in charitable activities or have an association with community organizations report significantly higher positive attitudes regarding the employment of PWDs. Further, respondents whose companies offer flexible working conditions or have an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) report more positive attitudes compared to those in companies that do not offer these benefits.

Seventy percent of the respondents indicated that they either disagreed or strongly disagreed that the company lacked senior management support for hiring people with disabilities. For *all* barrier-related questions shown in Table 7, this group reported significantly more positive perceptions than for those who work in companies without such senior management support.

**Table 7. Correlation of Company Characteristics with Perceptions of Barriers to Employment of PWDs**

Potential Barrier	Type of Company		Organization Membership/Activities				HR Policies	
	MFG	BCS	BLN*	CHSUPT	COMM	CHAR	Flex	EAP
Accommodations					-	-	-	-
Training cost					-	-	-	-
Negative image					-	-	-	-
Staff comfort					-			
Lack of skills	+	-		-	-		-	-
Lack of experience		-						-
Insurance cost						-		-
Unsuitable work	+	-		-	-	-	-	-
Lack of facilities			-	-	-	-		-
Safety concerns	+	-		-				-
Less productive					-			
Additional workload		-			-			
Additional monitoring	+				-	-		
Punctuality								-
Physical restrictions								
Time pressure						-		
Travel restricted		-						-

**MFG= Manufacturing Firm; BCS= Business or Consumer Services; BLN=Member of Business Leadership Network; CHSUPT=Member of Local, State or National Chamber of Commerce that provides resources to support the hiring of PWDs; COMM= Participates in Community Initiatives; CHAR= Supports Charitable Events; Flex= Flexible Work Hours; EAP= Employee Assistance Plan**

**\*18 percent of respondents indicated that their firm was part of a BLN while roughly 35 percent indicated that they did not know.**

**Interpretation: + indicates a potential barrier to employment; - indicates that the potential barrier to employment is less of, or not a concern. Cells that do not have either a plus or minus sign indicates the correlation result was not significant at the 10 percent level or lower.**

Seventy percent of the respondents indicated that they either disagreed or strongly disagreed that the company lacked senior management support for hiring people with disabilities. For *all* barrier-related questions shown in Table 7, this group reported significantly more positive perceptions than for those who work in companies without such senior management support.

Several survey questions pertain to the company’s specific experience with, or activities pertaining to the employment of PWDs. Table 8 shows that most of these activities are significantly related to respondents’ perceptions of the barriers to employing PWDs.

**Table 8. Correlation of Specific PWD-related Company Characteristics with Perceptions of Barriers to Employment of PWDs**

Potential Barrier	Employment of PWDs			VOCRH	LEAD_FAM	CHAMP	DEDPERS
	#Hired2YRS	PCTPWD	SUPVR				
Accommodations	-		-	-	-	-	-
Training cost			-	-	-	-	-
Negative image							
Staff comfort							
Lack of skills			-	-		-	-
Lack of experience			-	-		-	-
Insurance cost	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Unsuitable work	-		-	-	-	-	-
Lack of facilities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Safety concerns	-	-	-			-	-
Less productive			-			-	
Additional workload			-			-	
Additional monitoring			-		-	-	-
Punctuality							
Physical restrictions			-	-		-	-
Time pressure			-		-	-	
Travel restricted	-					-	
<b>#Hired2YR= Number hired past two years; PCTPWD= Percent of PWDS employed; SUPVR= PWDs in supervisory positions; VOCRH= Company works with a local vocational rehab organization; LEAD_FAM= Senior leader or member of family has a disability; CHAMP= Active champion for PWD; DEDPERS= Dedicated personnel or department to work with PWDs</b>							

Effectiveness

Next we evaluate responses to questions pertaining to the effectiveness of various programs to encourage the hiring of PWDs, where respondents were asked to rank effectiveness on a 5-point scale from “very ineffective” to “very effective”. Here we are interested in whether personal characteristics, company characteristics, or both, are important factors related to the perception that such programs may provide value in the employment of PWDs.<sup>6</sup>

Forty percent of our respondents indicated that they are owners of their company and another 30 percent indicated that they are directors or managers. Perceptions of the effectiveness of various activities may be associated with the respondent’s position in the organization, reflecting varying degrees of participation in decision making. However, we did not find any significant statistical difference between the respondents based on position.

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<sup>6</sup> With just one exception, the personal characteristics – namely age, years of experience, gender, and education level – were not found to be significantly related to respondents’ perceptions of the effectiveness of various activities and programs.

Table 9 presents a summary of the analysis of correlations between select company characteristics and the responses to the questions pertaining to effectiveness of these programs. We find that there is little correlation between the type of industry and perception of these programs. Only one significant result is found among respondents in service-oriented companies: the use of on-site consultation or technical assistance for PWDs is more likely to be perceived as effective in these companies when compared to responses from other types of companies.

Respondents in larger companies and those in companies with Employee Assistance Programs were significantly more likely than respondents in other companies to view *all* of the possible approaches as effective. Companies' involvement with community organizations is also associated with more positive perceptions of the effectiveness of some of these programs, but not all.

<b>Table 9. Correlation of Company Characteristics with Perceptions of Effectiveness of Programs to Encourage Employment of PWDs</b>				
<b>Program</b>	<b>Service-Oriented</b>	<b>Size (# Employees)</b>	<b>Community Involvement</b>	<b>EAP</b>
Government tax incentives for hiring PWDs		+	+	+
Grants from government or community organizations to offset expenses associated with hiring PWDs		+		+
Short-term outside assistance with job supervision of PWDs		+	+	+
Supervisor or coworker training regarding effectively working with PWDs		+		+
On-site consultation or technical assistance for PWDs	+	+		+
Mentoring for the supervisors of PWDs		+		+
Visible top management commitment to providing hiring and promotion opportunities for PWDs		+	+	+
An easily accessible resource to advertise position openings to PWDs		+		+

Intent to Hire and Hiring Actions

Next we turn to an evaluation of the intent to hire PWDs and actual hiring actions. To capture intent, we asked respondents to indicate if their company intends to hire at least one PWD within the next two years. As indicated in the previous section, we also asked whether the company currently employs PWDs. Here,

we look for individual and organizational factors that may be associated with the responses to these questions.

We find that respondent’s personal characteristics are not associated with hiring intent or hiring actions. That is, we do not find any statistically significant correlation between education, experience, age, or gender and the responses to the questions about PWD hiring intent or actual hiring.

Organizational factors, on the other hand, are generally found to be significantly related to PWD hiring intent and hiring actions. Table 10 presents a list of company characteristics found to be significantly and positively related to hiring intent, hiring actions, or both.<sup>7</sup>

<b>Table 10. Correlation of Company Characteristics with Perceptions of Effectiveness of Programs to Encourage Employment of PWDs</b>		
<b>Company Characteristic</b>	<b>Hiring Intent</b>	<b>Hiring Actions</b>
Number of employees	+	+
Age of Company		+
Involvement with community groups focused on aiding PWDs	+	+
Membership in Business Leadership Network (BLN), Chamber of Commerce, or other business group encouraging the recruiting and hiring of PWDs	+	+
Company’s Chamber of Commerce provides resources and referrals that aid in recruitment and hiring of PWDs	+	+
Company participates in charity and/or community events	+	+
Company provides employees access to EAP	+	+
Company provides employees with flexible work hours	+	+
Company provides employees opportunities to work from home	+	+
Company is familiar with state/federal programs dedicated to supporting PWDs	+	+

For both hiring intent and hiring actions, the most highly correlated company characteristic are: (1) the company providing access to EAP, (2) the company’s Chamber of Commerce provides resources and referrals that aid in recruitment and hiring of PWDs, and (3) the company participates in charity and/or community events.<sup>8</sup>

In a comparison of hiring actions with the perceived barriers, we find that the three barriers most highly correlated with past PWD hiring actions are (1) a lack of senior management support for hiring

<sup>7</sup> Statistical significance determine through an analysis of correlations and bivariate regressions.

<sup>8</sup> Note that these results hold when we perform a multiple regression analysis, including all company characteristics simultaneously in the statistical models to predict hiring intent and hiring actions.

PWDs, (2) a lack of applications from PWDs for job openings, and (3) the type of work in the company is unsuitable for PWDs.

The intent to hire and the actual experience – number of PWDs hired in past two years – are highly positively correlated. This result suggests that the organizational commitment, which may be expressed by upper management, is shared by those individuals at the hiring level.<sup>9</sup>

### Internships

Existing research indicates that the factors inhibiting the employment of PWDs stem from employers' concerns that the relationship will not work out. That is, there is a risk that the PWD will not be able to perform the duties required for the position, or will need additional supervision and accommodations<sup>10</sup> Moreover, employers are concerned that, once the PWD is hired, there may be no way to terminate them if he/she does not meet the requirements for the position. To reduce this risk, employers may be more likely to hire PWDs in a temporary capacity, through an internship program, which allows for some period of evaluation before any long term commitment must be made.

One quarter of our respondents indicated that their company offers internships to PWDs. Of those, only two indicated that PWDs were not typically hired following the internship, while the remainder indicated that at least some fraction of PWD interns were hired into full time positions. We note a strong positive statistical correlation between companies that offer internships to PWDs and the number of PWDs hired: companies that offer internships to PWDs are twice as likely to hire at least one PWD in the past two years. However, this result does not appear to be consistent with results reported in Table 3C that indicate that 36 percent of the firms that have an internship program hire less than 1 of 5 interns for full-time employment while just 9 percent of firms that have an internship program are very likely to hire the intern (greater than 80 percent chance).

The use of interns is strongly negatively correlated with the perception that positions in the company are unsuitable for PWDs. The internship thus has the potential not only to alleviate employers hesitancy in committing to hiring PWDs, but may help to change corporate culture regarding the eligibility of PWDs for job openings.

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<sup>9</sup> See Schur, Kruse and Blanck, 2005.

<sup>10</sup> See Peck and Kirkbride, 2001.

## 5. Specific Issues Pertaining to Phases of the Employment Process

Our survey reveals a variety of issues associated with the employment of PWDs. Here, we discuss and interpret the findings that are most applicable at each stage: recruiting, interviewing, hiring and retaining PWDs.

### Recruiting

Existing literature cites a variety of barriers to the recruitment of PWDs. We find that a small minority (17%) of respondents indicated their companies have an active recruitment process for hiring PWDs. Further, another 17% indicated that their companies consistently market their commitment to hiring people with disabilities. This is somewhat surprising given findings that suggest companies recognize that they can improve their reputation by hiring people with disabilities.<sup>11</sup> A consumer survey found that 92% of respondents looked more favorably on companies that hire PWDs.<sup>12</sup>

Existence of an active department for recruiting PWDs is strongly positively associated with the existence of a supervisor or manager with a disability (or, who has a family member with a disability), an active champion for PWDs, and the availability of internships within the company.

Recruitment in many companies can include the internship process. As noted earlier, the internship allows an employer an opportunity to evaluate the “fit” of a PWD in a specific position before committing to full time employment. More than half (52%) of our respondents indicated that they do not offer any type of internship program.

Another form of recruitment stems from the relationships with vocational rehabilitation organizations. We find that these relationships are strongly related to less negative perceptions of the barriers to employing PWDs. Companies with these relationships are significantly more likely to have hired PWDs in the past two years.

We can draw additional conclusions regarding the PWD recruitment process from survey questions pertaining to outreach. As noted previously, few companies, according to our respondents, actively recruit PWDs or market their commitment to hiring PWDs. While slightly more companies are likely to offer

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<sup>11</sup> See Olson et al., 2001.

<sup>12</sup> See Siperstein et al., 2006.

regular activities for its employees to interact with PWDs (21%), only 17-18% of the respondents indicated that their companies regularly send out email and newsletters with information regarding PWDs, or have a formal objective for hiring PWDs. We note a strong positive correlation between the responses to the existence of formal objectives and active recruiting programs.

Finally, if companies are not actively recruiting PWDs, the employment of PWDs will depend on whether PWDs apply for positions, and subsequently, whether the interviewer has an open mind about job applicants who reveal a disability.<sup>13</sup> Not surprising, respondents in large companies or in companies with relationships with rehabilitation organizations were significantly less likely to report a lack in applications from PWDs. The barriers perceived by our respondents suggest that, in some organizational settings, e.g., small companies and those without active community involvement, little consideration is given to PWD applicants.

### Interviewing

Our survey questions do not directly address issues with respect to the interview process. However, we may assume that the barriers perceived by our respondents are likely correlated with those perceptions of staff within these companies who are involved in interviewing job applicants. That is, within certain types of companies, the PWD applicant may raise a particular concern. For example, compared to other respondents, our respondents in manufacturing environments were more likely to indicate the perception that lack of skills, safety, suitability of work, and the need for additional monitoring were barriers to employing PWDs. Many prior studies find evidence of negative bias in expectations of how well a person with a disability is likely to perform.<sup>14</sup>

### Hiring

The decision to hire a PWD requires success at the recruitment and interview phases. Recognizing the challenges in these first phases, there are some indications in our survey that companies undertake a variety of activities to encourage the hiring of PWDs. In addition to those more general company characteristics evaluated in Table 10, we find that the number of PWDs hired in the past two years is strongly positively related to whether (1) the company has an active recruiting and hiring program, (2) the company

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<sup>13</sup> See Boyle, 1997.

<sup>14</sup> See Colella, DeNisi & Varma, 1998.

consistently markets its commitment to hiring PWDs, (3) the company offers regular activities for its employees to interact with PWDs, (4) the company regularly sends emails and/or newsletters with information regarding PWDs, (5) the company has formal objectives for hiring PWDs, and (6) the company intends to hire at least one person with a disability within the next two years. To the extent that these activities may be encouraged through other means, the likelihood that companies hire PWDs should increase.

### Retaining

Retention rates for PWDs who are hired were not captured directly in our survey, but we may draw some assumptions regarding the challenge in retaining PWDs from our questions pertaining to internships. First, as we noted earlier, over one third of the firms that offer internships rarely offer full time employment to PWDs within the company. While we can't determine if this is due to a lack of "fit", we note a positive and significant relationship between companies that are more likely to hire PWDs out of an internship program and (1) the existence of a dedicated department to support PWDs, (2) the existence of a champion for employing PWDs, and (3) active recruiting and hiring programs for PWDs. Not surprising, these companies with more PWD-friendly characteristics were also those for whom respondents reported the least negative perceptions of barriers to employing PWDs.

## **6. Discussion and Recommendations**

Our analysis of the survey responses reveals several conclusions that are consistent with those obtained in our discussions with representatives from the BLNs and other individuals knowledgeable about the challenges and issues for PWDs seeking employment as well as the for the firms that seek to hire PWDs. Most striking is how the perceptions of barriers to the employment of PWDs are reduced when companies are involved in some specific activities, such as participating in charity and/or community events, offering an EAP, and having a champion or specific department designed to work with this population.

While our results do not yield a specific action list for The Able Trust in terms of priority, they do help to reconfirm in some cases and identify in others, the activities and area of focus that are likely to yield positive results for The Able Trust in its mission to support the PWD population. We provide the following list for further consideration:

1. Several key factors related to hiring PWDs are identified in the open ended questions (Table 1) and confirmed through the results presented in Table 5 on barriers to hiring PWDs. These results suggest a number of important areas in which The Able Trust may want to emphasize through its outreach and educational efforts. Note that both provide opportunities to either increase the likelihood that the PWD is hired (e.g. referral system) or reduce the likelihood that the PWD is not hired (e.g, perception that PWDs will not report to work on a regular basis).
2. The results indicate a generational bias towards PWDs in the workplace that appears to diminish as the employee gains more experience in the workplace and exposure to employees with disabilities. This finding suggests that programs targeted to the new hire might be useful in reducing this bias among the younger employees. If effective, this type of program could result in fewer personnel problems and improve the work environment for PWDs. It also should help to build support for hiring PWDs in the next generation of supervisors and managers.
3. The Able Trust may want to consider a program that specifically focuses on identifying and supporting organizational champions (e.g. Champions of The Able Trust). This program should be highly profiled within the firm and the community in order to further support and recognize the individuals who are playing a critical role in providing job opportunities for PWDs within their firms and working to find the resources necessary to ensure that these PWDs are successful after they are hired.
4. The results show that the barriers to employment are higher for manufacturing firms than for service firms. This information is helpful but it raises the question of whether a strategy that focuses on the service sector would be more effective than one that focuses on reducing the barriers to employment in the manufacturing setting (assuming that the survey responses are not strictly related to the physical inability to perform a manufacturing job). While both areas provide job opportunities for PWDs, it would seem that the manufacturing setting could potentially provide the opportunity for greater income than a service sector job. Strategies for improving PWD employment opportunities in the manufacturing sector should focus on reducing the specific perceived barriers in that setting (e.g., safety, skills, suitability, and the need for additional monitoring). With advances in technology and increasing computerization of the manufacturing process, technological skills become as or more important than

physical skills. As such, efforts to change perceptions regarding PWDs and barriers to employment in this sector may prove to be rewarding.

5. The results in part support the sense that internship programs for PWDs are important as they help to reduce perceptions regarding barriers to entry. As noted in the paper, there appears to be some disconnect between the perception regarding the importance of the internship in reducing barriers to employment and actual post-internship hiring practices. The impact of the economic downturn on business hiring practices may be one explanation. Another is that the internship may not be as effective in breaking down the barrier to full-time employment as the responses on internships seems to indicate.
6. The results also show that firms that are better corporate citizens (community outreach, charity support) are more likely to consider hiring PWDs as part their larger responsibility. Of course, this is sometimes driven by one individual, but it is a part of that business's culture and how they view themselves. This is an area that The Able Trust supports directly by providing financial support to community organizations. It may be worthwhile to consider how The Able Trust can help firms foster the caring culture that will ultimately benefit PWDs, e.g., through efforts to develop and support employee "champions" within companies that can serve as liaisons with the community.

Our conclusions suggest a number of areas in which the Able Trust may wish to conduct further research:

1. The significantly different responses across large firms vs. small firms is likely due to the resources that have been available, and the greater likelihood of finding personnel within the organization that act as champions for PWDs. The Able Trust may wish to increase activities aimed at large organizations in Florida. Further study in this area may explore how the large organization is able to foster a more PWD friendly and accommodating work place.
2. Our results suggest that increasing age is associated with better perceptions of the capabilities of PWDs in the workplace. Educational outreach directed specifically at young employees may improve the opportunities for PWDs over time. Thus, we suggest a targeted study of young employees, perhaps even students with some work experience, to gain a better understanding of the factors driving their perceptions of the barriers to PWD employment.

3. An internship program for PWDs can serve two purposes: it can improve the perceptions of employees with respect to the capabilities of PWDs and it can provide a mode of entry for PWDs into full time employment. We note a positive relationship between firm offering internships and firms hiring PWDs, suggesting that these internship programs may serve the first purpose quite well. However, the use of the internship as a mode of entry to full time employment does not seem to flesh out in practice, as few interning PWDs are offered full time employment. The internship offers the employer a chance to “test” out the PWD, and it is likely that less emphasis is put on the appropriateness of the PWD for the position. Further, firms may not provide adequate counseling and training for interning PWDs if they are viewed as “temporary”. We suggest the Able Trust consider a study of how internships are established for the PWDs, including an evaluation of the interview and placement process as well as the activities of supervisory personnel, to gain a better understanding of how the internship might lead to a greater likelihood of full time employment.

Finally, we provide the following additional research topic areas in the event that some or all may be useful to The Able Trust as it moves forward with its research agenda in support of its mission to serve the PWD community:

- 1. Identify programs that reduce barriers to employment nationwide (i.e., best practices).**

Comments: This research would investigate the various programs and practices used in firms to reduce barriers to employment for PWDs. The intent here would be to identify and evaluate the various innovative approaches (e.g., intern for a day) that are being used in the workplace today and consider the feasibility of their application to other environments.

- 2. Identify leverage or synergy opportunities in a fragmented community that provides support for PWD.**

Comments: There are a number of organizations (private and government) that support PWDs in some way. The goal of this type of project would be to identify: 1) the providers of these types of services/resources, 2) the segments of the PWD constituents that they serve, 3) the types of resources available (e.g., financial, educational, etc.) and 4) the geographic areas in which they operate.

**3. Identify and evaluate vocational rehab program characteristics/practices and performance metrics.**

Comments: In our conversations with BLN members, it was apparent that vocational rehabilitation specialists play an important role in finding employment opportunities for PWDs. The purpose of this study would be to capture information on the programs that provide these services and the education/professional skills needed to effectively serve in a vocational rehabilitation capacity as well as to identify ways to measure the impact of the vocational rehabilitation specialist and possible ways to enhance or support the vocational rehabilitation function.

**4. Examine and evaluate BLN characteristics and develop performance metrics.**

Comments: There are significant differences in the operation and goals/objectives of the BLNs. It may be useful for both The Able Trust and the BLN members to capture this information on a more formal basis. Additionally, it would create the opportunity to establish performance metrics that could be used for benchmarking purposes.

**5. Investigate relationships between education and pathways to employment for PWDs**

Comments: This research would examine the relationships between the various types of education and employment opportunities for PWDs. For example, does technical training make a significant difference for PWDs in terms of finding employment in the technology or manufacturing settings?

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## Appendix A. Survey Instrument

This survey is strictly confidential. Under no circumstances will your individual responses be made available to anyone other than the survey research team.

### Survey Instructions

Please try to answer the questions as honestly and as candidly as possible. There are no trick questions. This is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers. Please move through the survey quickly without spending too much time on any one question—your first response usually will be the most accurate. The survey should take about 10-15 minutes to complete. You will probably find some redundancy in the questions. This is deliberate and is done for statistical reasons. Please answer the questions even if they seem similar to ones you've already answered. You don't need to go back to the previous questions to make sure that your answers are consistent. This survey is strictly confidential. Under no circumstances will your individual responses be made available to anyone other than the survey research team. Information from the survey will be only be compiled into an overall research report consisting of aggregated responses from many individuals. The results may be published at a later time in aggregate form only. Please remember, individual responses will not be a part of these reports and participants will not be identified in any publications or reports generated from this study.

### Individual Information

Please tell us about yourself..

What is your age?

- 18-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51-60
- 61+

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

What is your highest level of education?

- High School
- Some College
- Bachelors Degree
- Post-graduate courses
- Post-graduate degree

What is your position in the organisation ?

- Owner
- CEO
- COO
- CFO
- VP HR
- VP Marketing
- VP Operations
- Director
- Manager
- Other

How many years of work experience do you have?

- 0-5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- 15-20
- 21+
- Click to write Choice 6

## Organizational Information

Please tell us about your organization...

How would you describe your business location?

- Headquarters/sole location
- If Branch office please list where the headquarters is located

In what region of Florida is this organization located?

- North
- Central
- Southwest
- Southeast

The population of this organization's service area is approximately:

- Below 10,000
- 10,000-50,000
- 50,000-100,000
- 100,000-500,000
- 500,000-1,000,000
- Above 1,000,000

How many people does this organization employ?

- 1-10
- 11-20
- 21-50
- 51-100
- 101-200
- 201-500
- 501-1000
- Above 1000

What is the principal service or product of this organization?

- Manufacturing
- Tourism
- Hospitality/food
- Healthcare
- Agriculture
- Real Estate
- Business Services
- Consumer Services
- Education
- State Government
- Local Government
- Other

What is the age of this organization?

- 0-3 years
- 4-6 years
- 7-10 years
- 11-20 years
- Over 20 years

This organization has access to local community groups focused on aiding people with disabilities.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

This organization is served by an existing local Business Leadership Network (BLN). [Note: Local BLN chapters promote diversity policies that include people with disabilities and hiring practices that target candidates with disabilities. They also serve as an information clearinghouse by providing employers with disability employment resources and networking opportunities for sharing best practices].

- No
- Unknown
- Yes

If your organization is a member of a local, state, and/or national Chamber of Commerce, please fill in the name of the organization in the space provided.

- Local Chamber of Commerce Group
- State Chamber of Commerce group:
- National Chamber of Commerce
- group:

If your organization is a member of another local, state, and/or national business association, please fill in the name of the organization where appropriate

- Local business group:
- State business group:
- National business group:

Our Chamber of Commerce group encourages the recruitment and hiring of people with disabilities.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Our Chamber of Commerce group provides resources and referrals that aid in the recruitment and hiring of people with disabilities.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

This organization consistently participates in community initiatives and/or charity events.

- Never
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often

This organization offers its employees access to an Employee Assistance Program.

- Never
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often

This organization offers its employees flexible work hours.

- Never
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often

This organization offers its employees work-from-home programs.

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Quite Often
- Very Often

This organization is familiar with local, State and/or Federal programs dedicated to supporting people with disabilities.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

### **Barriers to Hiring People with Disabilities**

Please tell us about the degree to which the following pose a barrier to the employment or advancement of people with disabilities in this organization.

The cost (time and dollars) of accommodations for people with disabilities is too high.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

The cost (time and dollars) of training people with disabilities is too high.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

This organization is concerned about potential negative reactions to people with disabilities from its clients and customers.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

The staff of this organization may feel uncomfortable if asked to work with a person with disabilities.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

People with disabilities lack the requisite skills and training required of job applicants for this organization.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

People with disabilities lack the specific job-related experience required of job applicants for this organization.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

The potential cost increases attributable to extending health, life, and/or disability coverage to employees or dependents with disabilities are too high for this organization.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

The type of work in this organization is unsuitable for people with disabilities.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

This organization lacks access/facilities/equipment suitable for people with disabilities.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

There are health and safety concerns with hiring people with disabilities in this organization.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Employees with disabilities tend to be less productive.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Employees with disabilities create additional workload for the HR staff in this organization

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Employees with disabilities require additional management and supervisory time.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Employees with disabilities tend to have poor attendance and punctuality records.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

This organization has had poor experience with hiring a person with a disability.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Employees with disabilities have physical and/or stamina restrictions on their assigned job duties.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Employees with disabilities lack the ability to work under great time pressure and stress.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Employees with disabilities lack the ability to travel for work.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

There is a lack of senior management support for hiring people with disabilities in this organization.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

People with disabilities have not applied for a job at this organization.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Are there any other problems or difficulties associated with the recruitment and/or retention of people with disabilities not listed above?

## **Effectiveness**

How effective or ineffective would each of the following be in reducing barriers to employment or advancement for people with disabilities within your organization?

Government tax incentives for hiring people with disabilities.

- Very Ineffective
- Ineffective
- Neither Effective nor Ineffective
- Effective
- Very Effective

Grants from government and/or community organizations to offset potential expenses associated with hiring and training people with disabilities.

- Very Ineffective
- Ineffective
- Neither Effective nor Ineffective
- Effective
- Very Effective

Short-term outside assistance with job supervision of people with disabilities (e.g. outside job coach).

- Very Ineffective
- Ineffective
- Neither Effective nor Ineffective
- Effective
- Very Effective

Supervisor and/or coworker training regarding effectively working with people with disabilities.

- Very Ineffective
- Ineffective
- Neither Effective nor Ineffective
- Effective
- Very Effective

On-site consultation or technical assistance for people with disabilities.

- Very Ineffective
- Ineffective
- Neither Effective nor Ineffective
- Effective
- Very Effective

Mentoring for the supervisors of people with disabilities

- Very Ineffective
- Ineffective
- Neither Effective nor Ineffective
- Effective
- Very Effective

Visible top management commitment to providing hiring and promotion opportunities for people with disabilities

- Very Ineffective
- Ineffective
- Neither Effective nor Ineffective
- Effective
- Very Effective

An easily accessible resource to advertise position openings to people with disabilities (website, newsletter, etc.).

- Very Ineffective
- Ineffective
- Neither Effective nor Ineffective
- Effective
- Very Effective

What else could community organizations dedicated to helping people with disabilities do to increase your likelihood of hiring a person with a disability?

### **People with Disabilities Use/Outcomes (actions)**

Please tell us about this organization's past hiring of people with disabilities.

How many people with disabilities has this organization hired within the previous two years? Please provide your best estimate.

- 0
- 1-2
- 3-5
- 6-10
- 11 or more

Within its existing staff, this organization has an active champion for people with disabilities.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

This organization has a supervisor, manager or senior leader who has a disability, or who has an immediate family member with a disability.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

This organization provides internship programs.

- Never
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often

If your organization doesn't offer internships to people with disabilities, why not? (Select all that apply)

- Bad experience with prior internships
- Lack of qualified candidates
- Too Expensive
- Requires internal resources lacking in this organization
- Requires too much time from supervisors
- Internships are offered to people with disabilities
- Other (please list)

If your organization offers internships to people with disabilities what is the typical length of those internships?

- 6 weeks
- 12 weeks
- 6 months
- 12 months
- Greater than 12 months
- None offered
- Don't know

If offering internships to people with disabilities, approximately what percentage of those interns are hired for full time positions in your organization?

- None offered
- 0-20%
- 21-40%
- 41-60%
- 61-80%
- 80-100%
- Don't know

This organization employs people with disabilities in entry-level positions.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

This organization employs people with disabilities in professional and/or technical positions (non-supervisory positions requiring at least a Bachelors degree).

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

This organization employs people with disabilities in supervisory positions.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

This organization has dedicated personnel and/or a department to support people with disabilities.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

This organization employs people with disabilities in senior management level positions

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

This organization regularly works with local vocational rehabilitation organizations.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Approximately what percentage of this organization's employees have a disability?

- 0-2%
- 3-5%
- 6-8%
- 9-10%
- 11% or above
- Don't know

If your organization doesn't hire people with disabilities, please explain the primary barriers to hiring people with disabilities.

### **Use/Outcomes (intent)**

Please tell us about this organization's intentions to hire people with disabilities in the future.

This organization has an active recruiting and hiring program for people with disabilities.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

This organization consistently markets its commitment to hiring people with disabilities.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

This organization offers regular activities for its employees to interact with people with disabilities.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

This organization regularly sends e-mails and/or newsletters with information regarding people with disabilities.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

This organization has formal objectives for hiring people with disabilities.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

This organization intends to hire at least one person with a disability within the next two years.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

What circumstances would make you more likely to hire a person with a disability?

What circumstances would make you less likely to hire a person with a disability?

### **Finish**

We appreciate that you have taken the time to complete this survey, and want to be sure we don't ask you again. Please enter the name of your company below. It will only be used to verify that we do not collect duplicate responses.

Would you like an executive summary of these results?

- Yes
- No

If you selected yes in the previous question please provide your information:

- Name
- Agency
- Street Address
- City
- State
- Zip Code
- Telephone
- E-mail address

Would you be willing to participate in a follow-up interview?

- Yes
- No

Thank you for your assistance!

If you have any questions, please call or email:

Dr. Randy Dumm

RE\_DUMM@YAHOO.COM

850.339.3820

Please click on the next button to submit your responses.

Survey Powered By Qualtrics®

## Appendix B. **Statistical Power calculations:**

- Assumptions:
  - Alpha-level: .05
  - Statistical test: Multiple regression
  - Model  $R^2$ : .10 (assumes a small level of explained variance)
  - Sample size: 141
- Power level (at varying number of regression predictors):
  - 1 predictor: Power = .98
  - 2 predictors: Power = .95
  - 4 predictors: Power = .90
  - 6 predictors: Power = .84
  - 8 predictors: Power = .80

The power levels above refer to the ability of the statistical test to reject a false null hypothesis, given the number of predictors in the research model and a specific sample size. In other words, the power levels provide a reasonable measure of the ability of the research model to detect a hypothesized effect. In this report, all statistical comparisons involve one predictor, indicating a 98 percent confidence level.