# Improving the attraction & selection of people with disabilities

People Solutions undertook a research project to investigate the gaps between best practice and actual practice in the recruitment of people with disabilities in Western Australia. Here are the results:

55 organisations participated, representing over **120,000** employees

6 organisations knew how many of their employees have a disability

- 29% Not-for-profit
- 29% Public sector
- 42% Private sector
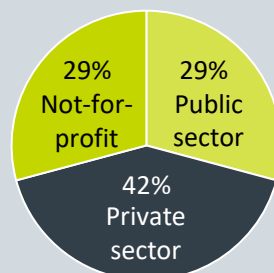
Common **challenges & barriers** in hiring people with disabilities

39% Unconscious bias, myths & perceptions

36% Lack of education & awareness

27% Lack of policies, procedures & support

24% Difficulty making accommodations
Difficulty sourcing candidates

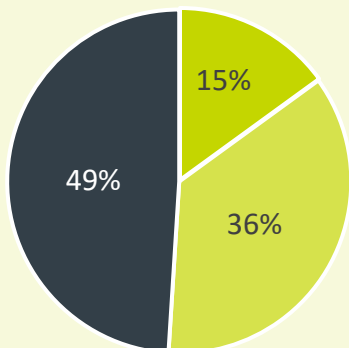## Perceived **benefits** of hiring people with disabilities

88% Create inclusive work culture

82% Increase diversity

58% Loyalty & reduced turnover

52% Positive customer connections

Policies, targets & support

- 15%
- 36%
- 49%

■ Specific policy relating to disability

■ Disability forms part of Diversity & Inclusion policy

■ No policies around disability

Only **17%** had hiring targets for people with disabilities

Only **33%** collect data on the number of employees with disabilities

Senior management support for efforts to increase the recruitment of people with disabilities tended to be lacking.

There tends to be a lack of opportunities for people to disclose their disability.

Most organisations were aware of the government support available to them.

Becoming an attractive and accessible employer

Many organisations did nothing to specifically attract candidates with disabilities

The most commonly used strategies were not disability-specific (supported diversity in general)

Public sector organisations appeared to do more to attract candidates with disabilities than those in the private sector

Improving attraction and accessibility

- Offer flexible work options
- Make job ads accessible
- Allow alternative application formats
- Advertise willingness to make adjustments
- Remove non-essential criteria from job ads
- Partner with Disability Employment Services
- Diversity statement on job ads

- Visible representation of people with disabilities
- Advertise via JobAccess
- Celebrate disability days
- Offer work experience and internships
- Memberships with disability/diversity organisations
- Create specific roles for people with disabilities
- Disability awareness training for all staff

Creating fair and unbiased selection processes

Many organisations just used standard selection processes for all job applicants

The most commonly used practices were not disability-specific (good practice for recruitment in general)

More organisations had made previous accommodations for candidates with physical disabilities than cognitive

Improving selection practices

- Offer accommodations to everyone up front
- Make accommodations as necessary
- Allow candidates to bring support person
- Partner with Disability Employment Services
- Audit processes to identify barriers
- Monitor candidates with disabilities to identify drop-out points

- More than one assessor
- Diverse selection panels
- Disability awareness training for hiring managers
- Ask all candidates the same interview questions
- Tests based on essential job functions
- Review psychometric tests for suitability and alter or omit tests if necessary

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Embracing and recruiting for neurodiversity

There has been an increasing trend in recent years from organisations recognising and leveraging the unique strengths and skill sets of 'neurodiverse' candidates (those with neurological variations such as Autism, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, and ADHD).

Some tips for success and for supporting these candidates through recruitment:

- Provide details of recruitment process and what to expect up front
- Allow candidates to preview interview questions and prepare answers
- Provide quiet and distraction-free environment
- Carefully match candidates to roles/teams
- Have a dedicated internal neurodiversity group

- Look for alternatives to traditional recruitment methods (e.g. work trial, informal interviews)
- Inform candidate of any changes ahead of time
- Consider removing/changing time restrictions
- Provide specific training for those involved in recruitment process
- Partner with support organisations

For a copy of the full white paper, contact:

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