

# Communication Toolkit

## DESIGN - Disabled Employability Signaling

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This is a Communication Toolkit designed for:

### **Job Placement Services managers working with disabled people**

It offers a set of recommendations and useful resources that managers, job mediators, social workers can take to improve the job placement counselling services they offer and to break the discrimination cycles and society prejudice barriers that people with disabilities are facing.

Any organization, job centre or employers' association can, under request, get access and use it to promote the DESIGN job placement service model.

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## How to use the toolkit?

***The Communication Toolkit was prepared by DESIGN project consortium, under the coordination of AFID Fundação Diferença and the European Association for Social Innovation, for inspiring the managers to find the most suitable job for a person with disabilities. A set of specific recommendations and tips tailored on the needs of the JPS Managers are available, as well as the resources that provide a more practical guidance.***

It begins by helping you to reflect on the difficulties faced by people with disabilities on the open labour market, to be aware of the relationship between the business world, social organization and disabled people and to have knowledge of the European legal framework. The other chapters are more practical, presenting different methodologies of companies' involvement, the most useful channels and communication tools that can be used to reach employers who offer suitable jobs, a list of "To Do and Not To Do", concluding with a series of inspirational models used by other European organizations.

The aim of this Communication Toolkit is to assist you in the job counselling process and to provide tools, instruments and resources to be used while dealing with employers' engagement, to find matching job places according with disabled people's employability profiles.



# INTRO

SECTION  
01













***DESIGN project is a three-year project funded by Erasmus+ programme and led by Afeji, which has established a partnership of seven organisations, from France, Romania, Portugal and Hungary. DESIGN stands for finding the most suitable person for a job, breaking discrimination cycles and society prejudice barriers that persons with disability face. DESIGN aims at delivering high job placement counselling services, both to people with disabilities, and for those employers with suitable job places.***

***The main goals of DESIGN project are:***

- 
 To develop new, innovative and multidisciplinary approaches of learning in the context of disabled persons job placement services (JPS).
- 
 To identify the suitable disabled person assessment on employability issues, to support more effective JPS in matters of providing better counselling in labour market integration.
- 
 To develop a learning programme focused on improving JPS professional's key transversal and professional competencies.
- 
 To create a disabled person JPS communication toolkit to increase employers' engagement and job mediation services effectiveness.
- 
 To pilot the JPS model supporting about 96 unemployed disabled persons finding suitable job place and retaining it, increasing the learning curve and productivity of both employers and placed employees.
- 
 To setup a Learning Network Platform focused on the exchange of good practices, mutual development and lobbying on disabled persons employability.

For achieving these goals, the project foresees the implementation of five intellectual outputs: IO1 - Evidence review on disabled persons job placement services, IO2 - Job Profile Assessment Tool and manual (JPAT), IO3 - JPS Learning programme manual, IO4 - Communication toolkit, IO5 - Job Placement Service Model, several multiplier events and teaching activities.



# **Inclusion of people with disabilities on the open labour market**

SECTION

02



***The World is changing, especially the characteristics of the labour market, permanent contracts become temporary, local organizations have to globalize to survive and the process of reducing hiring is leading to an increasingly restricted labour market.***

These facts lead to great challenges to social organizations in their role of business advisers, since the economic recession leads to disinvestment, in particular to the cuts in the hiring of new employees as in the restructuring of the organization, which often goes through the dismissal. These difficult decisions have consequences in the open labour market, especially when we talk about the inclusion of people with disabilities. Facing with this shift in our work as job placement consultants, and in the face of changing perceptions of our candidates towards work, it becomes more important

than ever to innovate the forms of support and services offered. This change in methodology implies that social workers who accompany and mediate professional integration present themselves to companies with solutions and as a resource. In this sense, social organizations, through their experience in supporting and evaluating the capacities and needs of their clients, assume a consolidated and valid support position for the employer.

### ***Actions to involve the employers on the inclusion of people with disabilities on the open labour market:***



- Provide awareness about the possibility of hiring people who match the required job profiles
- Advise on tax and labour advantages
- Advise on commercial advantages as a consequence of social clauses
- Facilitate a fluid communication channel between the company and the social entity, to achieve a better understanding of the needs of the company
- Help the company in the clarification of the professional profiles, since the adaptation to the requested profile is considered the basis of the success of the labour insertion
- Whenever there is a need to adapt or readapt a job, make the evaluation and highlight the points where adaptation is imperious
- Together, do the analysis of the curricula of the candidates, demystifying some points that leave doubts in the eyes of the employer or the human resources department
- Promote awareness and training actions to employees about disability

The development of the assumption of equal opportunities and citizenship rights implies the transformation of social intervention strategies, especially from the place of the person assisted and supported. The integration of people with disabilities into the labour market will, therefore, have to be seen as a regular, non-welfare or paternalistic activity. This relationship between the promoter of employability (social organization) and the contracting company assumes a new role with a new language in equality and not subservience. Social organizations and promoters of employability for people with disabilities will gain a new language and business speech.

It is necessary to change the perspective of the monitoring of people with disabilities in their integration into the labour market. It is not an assistance or support activity but the promotion of the fundamental right. The person responsible for the inclusion into the labour market must be at the centre of all actions through a comprehensive holistic model, in accordance with the image attached.

**Integration of people with disabilities is based not on the support given to them but on their skills and abilities. The person with a disability is an asset to the company as a single and unrepeatable person just like others employees. The inclusion of a person with a disability in a company is justified by the value added by he/she generated.**

The support given to enterprises for the integration of people with disabilities should be understood only with recognition and initial release measure. The mediators of labour integration are responsible for promoting and clarifying the benefits for companies in hiring people with disabilities.

## THE MAIN BENEFITS OF HIRING A PERSON WITH DISABILITY

- Collaborator committed and motivated by the opportunity generated and provided
- Financial benefits in terms of tax rates
- Measures to support the contraction and adaptation of the workplace
- Social impact through hiring and support for people with disabilities
- Use of the social responsibility exercise by the Marketing department
- Promoting an organizational culture focused on people
- Promoting positive interpersonal relationships



# **What this Communication Toolkit covers**

SECTION  
03



*This Communication Toolkit will be split into five steps, where each of it will include a set of recommendations and tips to help on the inclusion and integration of a person with a disability on the open labour market.*

# Step 1. Normal labor market openness assessment

*Before starting the job placement process, it is recommended to run an analysis of the national business context for tailoring the services on the specific needs that are identified.*

This process requires updated information about the company profiles, available jobs, trends in different sectors, the openness of the companies for employing disabled people. In some cases, companies hesitate on hiring disabled people often due to a lack of knowledge or real information, giving rise to prejudices and stereotypes.



## Self-evaluation of the society openness towards people with disabilities – checklist

People with disabilities are visible in the society (having a walk, working in different sectors, participating on social and cultural events, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
People with disabilities are independent.	<input type="checkbox"/>
People with disabilities often need assistance.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The public transportations are accessible for people with disabilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The educational system is covering the needs of people with disabilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The medical system is adapted to face the needs of people with disabilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The social system is well prepared to support the people with disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>
The current legislation is adapted according to the profile of the disabled people.	<input type="checkbox"/>





**Offering a clear message that provides information and data on the situation, presenting mostly the positive experiences helps to banish such arguments. In terms of doing this, you should first:**

- Analyze the national legal framework;
- Identify the benefits of employing disabled people (reducing taxes, etc.);
- Make an analyzes between job profiles and the disabilities of people;
- Create a list of stakeholders that you can collaborate with.



**Materials to be used for doing the evaluation:**

- ☒ Local employment reports
- ☒ Official market studies
- ☒ The results of the business research groups
- ☒ Consult the National Institute of Statistics, employer organizations, trade unions, networks of organizations working to place disabled people on the open labor market

### **TO MAKE THE WORK EASIER:**

A list of job market indicators should be also considered, such as data on employment rates, any emerging sectors and those with recruitment possibilities, the activity of different sectors in the region, etc. Based on the analysis of the composition and organization of the businesses located in your region, you can evaluate all the options you have, in order to place the disabled person in the most proper working environment. At the same time, this regional analysis should aim to identify the trends in the local job market and to take into account relations with local government bodies and business associations in the area.

Our advice is to organize the information in a way that it can be easily updated, for example, order the list of companies by sector, company size, recruitment possibilities, etc.

# Step 2. Communication methodologies, channels and tools for company involvement

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## 2.1 How to get involved with the employers?

### IN PERSON MEETINGS

Considering the first contact with a company, the first meeting to promote the services that the social organization can provide in terms of consulting should be held. It will be important that the job mediator presents clear, concise and objective information of the services that can provide and the importance of the process of recruiting people with disabilities, knowing that business time has associated costs, so the meeting should be properly worked in order to not take unnecessary time.

The information presented should include:

- Social organization services
- Clear listing of the services to be provided to the company
- Candidate exit profiles that may potentially interest businesses
- Show availability to listen to the demands of HR departments
- Know the business area of the company, preferably be expert in the tasks of greater business volume of the company

Examples of materials to be presented:

- Short video of good integration practices;
- Profile of the candidates;
- Brochures - Guides for companies.

## **MEETINGS OF SEVERAL PARTNERS TO PROMOTE THE RELATIONSHIP (E.G. OPEN DAY EVENT, JOB FAIRS)**

The meeting with several companies is a methodology that has generated good results in the involvement of the partners and in the sharing of best practices. The sharing of good practices by a company in a cluster of other companies is an extremely important element in stimulating the development of the rest of the group. In the competitive world of business, no one wants to be left behind and everyone wants to demonstrate the reach of their success.

The Open Days to the companies fulfil two objectives mainly: the companies know better the social organization and its work and they can share experiences with other companies.

In order for these goals to be achieved it is necessary to properly prepare the events, which means:

- Definition of a regular periodicity for the open days according to the type and culture of the companies involved (biannual, annual);
- Publicizing the program in a timely manner;
- A personalized invitation to the participants you want to collaborate with;
- Taking care of the graphic and communication aspects;
- Ensure a moment of training/novelty/ learning for the participants coming from the invited companies;

## EXAMPLE: ORGANIZING AN OPEN DAY FOR EMPLOYERS

Steps to prepare the Open Day event for employers:

### STEP 1

Prepare a team of specialists, including people with disabilities for the planning and organization of the event;

### STEP 2

Think about the tasks that disabled people can do during the day to include them as much as possible: design the invitation, prepare and serve food and coffee, register the participants, introduce the organization, perform some activities, share their experiences, etc.;

### STEP 3

Define the schedule of the day keeping in mind that it should be versatile, create interesting and positive experiences for employers;

### STEP 4

Chart the profiles of employers as a target group for the event (specialized interests/field of activities or a mixed group);

### STEP 5

Send the invitations to employers at least 2 months in advance, so they have time to set the date on their agenda;

### STEP 6

Do not count on the very large group - up to 20 employers would be the recommendation, to make possible individual contact with everyone;

### STEP 7

Make the practical arrangements for the day; if possible - record the day to make an introductory video for the next events;

### STEP 8

Map out the possibilities within the social organization to create an informative and entertaining day for employers;

### STEP 9

Talk to employers (with or without experience in hiring people with disabilities) about their needs and interests in relation to the subject;

### STEP 10

Request feedback from companies after the event;



***An Open Day event should provide to the participants:***

- ☒ The opportunity to become more familiar with the work of the social organization and interact with people with disabilities in a relaxed, safe and fun environment;
- ☒ General information about disabilities;
- ☒ The opportunity people with to meet and conduct activities with people with
- ☒ The opportunity to see a person with disabilities in a working environment, to those interested in the subject of social responsibility
- ☒ Information, advice and support from specialists, and directly from people with
- ☒ A proper environment for sharing information between employers with experience in hiring people with disabilities and employers interested in the subject;
- ☒ Information related to the opportunities and benefits for the employer when hiring people with disabilities (government financial advantage, tax cuts, etc.);

## PRACTICAL EXERCISES TO DO DURING THE EVENT:

### *Adventure game: employers and people with disabilities*

1. Form teams of 4 (2 employers, 2 persons with disabilities) to continue the day with an adventure game around the house;
2. The teams receive hints to go to different locations around the house;
3. In each of these locations there will be a person waiting for them with a task they need to solve together as a team and receive information about the next location;
4. The tasks should highlight the abilities of the persons (e.g. computer skills, handicraft skills, woodwork skills etc); they also know the place better and this way can demonstrate their skills in the orientating part;



**Tips! Choose the persons who are eager to participate and prepare them, so they know exactly what to expect; Use your imagination to adjust this game according to your goals, needs and possibilities.**

### *Role-play: employers experience a disability (4-6 people in a group)*

1. The employers are in a team and receive a joint task for the whole team (e.g. make a cake, solve a puzzle – the important thing is that they all have to be included in this activity); Some of the employers can be observers if you have more people and cannot create several groups;
2. All of the employers who are playing receive a role description – it includes a made-up name and the description of a disability, e.g. visual impairment, blindness, hearing impairment, deafness, hearing external sounds with no obvious source, repeating the first two letters of every word they say 4 times (stuttering), moving in a wheelchair etc.
3. They receive some aids to demonstrate the disability – silent headphones to demonstrate deafness; eye scarf to demonstrate blindness; special glasses to demonstrate visual impairment; headphones with occasionally mixed chaos of voices to demonstrate hearing voices etc.
4. There are also specialists who guide them in their roles;
5. They have to complete the task in a team, so that everyone is involved which means they have to be there for each other to assist and help;
6. At the end of the role-play, there is a discussion about their first-hand experience with a disability, they can share their experience and ask open questions.

### ***How to measure the effectiveness of the Open Day event:***

- ☒ Ask for feedback from the companies (qualitative feedback – would they recommend this event to a friend, how they describe their experience)
- ☒ Feedback from the participants – team
- ☒ The number of employers who stay in further contact about internships/jobs
- ☒ The number of employers who will hire/offer internship or employment places in the following year for people with disabilities

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## ***2.2. Best communication channels and tools for company involvement***

The communication skills represent the ability to absorb and transmit ideas orally and in writing. A subset of the communication skills are interpersonal skills or the ability to relate well with peers, management staff, company stakeholders, clients and suppliers.

Employers are looking to collaborate with people who can communicate effectively both orally and in writing. **The Job Placement Services managers, who can communicate succinctly via email, sound persuasive on the phone, write a complex description about why a person is the most suitable one for a job are the one who will succeed to deliver effective job placement services for people with disabilities.** Having good communication skills will lead to better results on job placement services for people with disabilities, but not only.

Withal, for having an effective communication, the channels that you are using requires to be determined by the preferences of the targeted employers. Beside the face-to-face meetings during the job fairs or other events, tools such as e-mails, magazines, promotional and presentation email, flyers, testimonials on social networks, online communication platforms (LinkedIn) are an important key for reaching your goals.



## PROMOTIONAL AND PRESENTATION EMAIL

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Writing a professional email seems to be something easy to do, but there are a few rules that you need to keep in mind if you want to be taken seriously.

- First thing to do, include a subject title;
- Instead of starting the e-mail with Dear Madam or Dear Sir, do an in-depth research and find the name of the company recruiter or hiring manager who originally posted the job;
- Prepare a short introduction where you say the reason of contacting the person;
- Keep just an idea for each paragraph – people will better understand your message;
- Pay attention to the punctuation and grammar rules;
- Include your signature and be sure it contains the proper information, such as: name and surname, your position, phone number, e-mail address.
- Include suitable salutation: Best regards, Respectfully, Thank you, etc.



## SOCIAL NETWORKS

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The social networks represent one of the ways to know more about the employers you work with and about the open job position, they have. Different networks, like LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, and others offer recruiters a tremendous opportunity to connect with candidates, who would never be found through traditional sources. For that reason, as a JPS Manager, you can use this opportunity to find suitable jobs for disabled people on the open labour market.

### Tips! How to communicate with employers on social media

- Choose to follow the right organisations/institutions for your purpose. Focus your energy and spend your time to build relations with your main target.
- Try to be a good follower, which means to take some time to see what their interests are, what are they regularly writing about and maybe you can repost their sharing, in this way becoming more visible to them.
- Find common things. We are talking about connections, so using LinkedIn as an example, find someone that works at the company you're interested in that you have a connection with, could be someone you worked with, fellow alumni, or member of professional association. Use this connection to reach out and ask for help reaching the right person to talk with about opportunities.
- Have courage. It is very popular to engage potential employers by using social media. The easiest way is to message them and ask what is the best way to collaborate and present them the opportunities of hiring people with disabilities. It helps to have a brief reason on why you think they are the perfect company for this collaboration.



- Use social media to share your value. Try to present articles, videos, stories and to make the subject of diversity in the workplace visible for all your followers. It will be easier to approach these employers if they are already familiar with the subject.



## LIST (DATABASES) OF PARTNER ENTITIES

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Being part of a network is crucial if you are a provider of job placement services. Therefore, it is important to have a list that includes all the partner entities you have collaborated with it, list that constantly should be updated.

While creating the list it is good to keep in mind some characteristics that will make your work easier: we talk about *quality*, because you want to communicate with people who offer work conditions for people with disabilities, e.g. reasonable accommodation; *relevance*, even if we are interested on the jobs from the open labour market we need to consider if the employers from our list have suitable jobs for people with disabilities;



## ONLINE COMMUNICATION PLATFORMS

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In our days, there are now very little difference between the communication platforms and social media sites. Still, the online communication platforms are mainly designed to enhance the process of communication and to simplify it. Therefore, platforms like Zoom, TeamViewer, Slack, Skype for Business, GoToMeeting are making the communication with the employers easier and more affordable.

- **Zoom** - is an all-in-one collaboration tool, which offers video and web conferencing solutions as well as cross-platform instant messaging and file-sharing features.
- **TeamViewer** - gives anyone complete access to desktops, applications and data so users can skip explaining problems and reduce miscommunication.
- **Slack** is a multipurpose platform, mainly used for project management, instant messaging and video conferencing. It allows you to create several channels for different teams and makes it easy to add new members to multiple channels. In our case it can be used in the relation with your clients – the person with disability and the employer.

- **Skype for Business** is the quintessential video chat platform, and the Business edition comes with a plenty of features, including large group meetings with up to 250 people, collaboration tools and screen sharing.
- **GoToMeeting** it is a basic, easy-to-use web conferencing solution. You can access a dozen of useful tools to make your meetings more productive and interactive. These include screen sharing, web audio, a dial-in conference line, drawing tools and the ability to record meetings.



### **Tips for communicating with employers in general!**

- **Be responsive** - If you miss a potential employer's phone call and it goes to voicemail, be sure to call them back within 15 minutes. You'll impress the potential employer with your responsiveness. Do not wait to call them back the next day.
- **Be available** - If potential employers are calling you or they have time for a meeting do your best not to cancel. Also, keep your phone always with you while you are at work and check your emails at every 30 minutes.
- **Be transparent** - If you have problems during the recruitment process announce the employer so you can discuss together possible solutions. Keeping an open line of communication will usually keep problems from arising, but if a problem does come up, let the employer know and open up a channel of discussion.
- **Use online communication platforms**, like Skype for Business, GoToMeeting, etc. - Do not just rely on emails and phone calls. Your employers will feel better putting a face to a name, especially those employers who are located in other cities or countries.

# Step 3. The mediation and communication process

*Developing the process of communication mediation between the disabled person looking for work and the companies that look for employees is a challenge that will be easier achieved according to the methodology presented below.*

## 1

### THE FIRST CONTACT

The first meeting is always decisive in all interpersonal relationships and should be properly prepared and carefully planned by the mediator to the person with the disability. For this, it is necessary to take into account the following aspects:

- Care of the personal presentation of the candidate - knowledge of the dress code of the company
- Try to know the interviewer or the selection method and this information to the candidate
- In special cases, present the characteristics and skills of the candidate in advance of the meeting
- Know the place of the meeting and inform the candidate about these characteristics
- Find a topic of conversation important to the company to trigger the communication
- Ensure that the candidate arrives on time
- Ensure that the applicant has the company's contacts if an impediment arises

## 2

### ANALYSIS OF HUMAN RESOURCES NEEDS

In the process of mediation, the mediator needs to know the characteristics of the companies and their needs in terms of jobs, so that the candidates are sent with the competencies for the functions and tasks to be developed. For this, it is fundamental that:

- Get to know the company, its history and future projects
- If necessary, seek to have a conversation with the human resources manager or the person(s) responsible for recruitment and selection
- Know the typology of employees in the company
- Evaluate the job offers published by the company

## 3

### PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES

Whenever mediation has involved a direct and face-to-face involvement of the mediator, it is essential that the candidate's presentation to the company have to be done in a personal way to guarantee the continuity of the relationship. The following methodologies may be used:

- Prepare your personal presentation to the peer group and company
- If possible, support the beginning of the professional activity and attend in person the presentation to the group of colleagues
- Prepare the image of the candidate and how to present themselves according to the company and the proposal of work (dress code)
- Identify what should and or not be mentioned in the first contacts regarding the characteristics of the company and the group of employees
- Ensure the communication support materials whenever they are needed (sign language, augmentative communication, etc.).

## 4

### FOLLOW-UP ON INTEGRATION

In order to ensure lasting relationship with the company and the possibility of other opportunities for social and professional integration, the work of the mediator does not end with the inclusion of the person with disabilities having an employment contract or when they arrive in the company. It is fundamental to guarantee the continuity of the monitoring of this integration, with the collaborator and with the company.

There are several ways to ensure continuity of support and mediation:

- *Contact the person in charge of the company by telephone, e-mail or do a visit:*
  - Assess integration
  - Identify needs in the training of human resources for communication and interaction with the new employee
  - Find out the need for support in the adaptation of job
  - Find out if the company has been able to achieve all the benefits, to which it is entitled
  - Know and evaluate complementary training and / or support needs for the person with disability to be integrated
- *Contact with disabled person already integrated to:*
  - Assess satisfaction and motivation
  - Find out the difficulties and to identify the needs
  - Evaluate if the accessibility is guaranteed and otherwise what is necessary to develop
  - Identify the need to involve other partners in helping to develop good work experience

## 5

### POSITIONING FOLLOW-UP

The interpersonal relationship in the working environment is fundamental in the process of initial reception and in the course of the professional activity. The socio-professional inclusion mediator must therefore ensure the follow-up of communication and interpersonal relationships.

You should therefore:

- *The company and its employees must:*
  - Evaluate interpersonal relationships and integration or segregation of the new disabled employee
  - Ensure availability and training on disabilities (limits and competencies) if this need is identified
  - Support the reduction of relational paternalism. In addition, in this sense, train employees to promote the autonomy of people with disabilities in the tasks they perform
  - Whenever possible, identify someone from the team who is the reference and / or supervisor element of the disabled person
- *Along with the employee's with disability:*
  - Evaluate their relationship with the peer group
  - Provide ongoing training in inter-relational skills (know-how) as long as it is identified and felt to be necessary
  - Individual monitoring and supervision
  - Ensure that there are channels and people identified for communication and reporting in case of doubt or difficulty
  - Help to identify what they should and should not communicate with co-workers avoiding exaggerated / unnecessary exposure

## 6

### IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Whenever possible, it will be important to measure the impact of socio-professional integration and to use this result to demonstrate the importance of including people with disabilities. To do this, it is necessary to define, before the integration, a set of indicators for the impact measurement in order to compare the results obtained before the integration and a later time. For this, we advocate the following activities:

- Identify where we want to ask for the impact (company, disabled person included, family, integration institution)
- For each site/person, define a set of indicators for impact measurement. Example, for the employee with disability - financial value available for their monthly management
- Measure and record the results of the indicators at the zero point (before integration)
- Define the time frame for the impact assessment
- Measure again the result of the same indicators after the period defined for the impact assessment
- Evaluate deviations
- Communicate the results and conclusions - especially with the person and the company itself

# Step 4. Integration of disabled people within the workplace

*People with disabilities face greater difficulties in accessing the labour market due to a set of barriers and stereotypes people have about them.*



People with disability cannot have a productive and a successful life – This stereotype promotes the assumption that people with disabilities are not able to have a family, to get a good job or take on responsibilities. The focus still remains continually on the person's impairment rather than on the person's abilities.



People with disabilities are always sick – Many people see the disability as a sickness that needs to be fixed, an abnormality to be corrected or cured. They should know that people with disabilities are like people without disabilities, they get sick on occasion and just sometimes they may be in pain.



People with disabilities have a high level of absenteeism – This prejudice is connected with the previous one, based on the way of thinking that disability is a disease and people need to take more days off than the rest of the employees.



People with disabilities have a low level of autonomy - This stereotype tends to mean that people with disabilities are to be pitied as they spend their whole life depending and needing others people help.

*Through experience and scientific studies, it has been shown that the prejudices and barriers presented are attenuated with the experience of professional relationship.*

*The inclusion of people with disabilities in the labour market demonstrates on the reverse that after the placement these people have:*

1//	<b>HIGH TOLERANCE TO ROUTINE</b>
2//	<b>FOCUS ON TASKS</b>
3//	<b>LOW LEVEL OF ABSENTEEISM AND HIGH MOTIVATION</b>
4//	<b>COMPETENCIES IN THE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP AND COMMUNICATION WITH CLIENTS</b>
	<b>THE CORPORATE IMAGE IS ALSO STRENGTHENING:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Together with the human community - for the witness of social responsibility and equal opportunities offered</li> <li>- Together with employees - increasing the diversity and skills of the work team and stimulating creativity and innovation</li> <li>- In global terms - increasing the complementarity of team tasks (especially those of a routine nature and usually showing more wear and tear)</li> </ul>

*In this way, the great challenge lies at the level of mediation in the socio-professional integration in order to overcome the initial resistances that are described below:*

- *Application process*
- *Selection and interview*
- *Accessibility*
- *Relationship with peers*



**While employing a disabled person might take more energy and time (one-on-one help, longer learning period etc.) but definitely, it will worth it on the long run.**



## Application

In the application process, it is necessary for the candidate (disabled person) to explore in a deep and well-oriented way the the following questions:

- Elaboration and presentation of the curriculum and presentation letter
  - adapt a general curriculum to each job offer to which it is applying
  - focus on skills rather than disability
  - description of successful work experiences
  - motivation for work
  - presentation and description of personal skills
  - hobbies and civic and social involvement
- Start with the needs' assessment, including what type of position is the most appropriate for the person concerned, how many hours of work per week is able to do, evaluation of the skills needed, salary etc.
- Study of open proposals submitted (employment services, employability promotion companies, public offers in the media, etc.). In these proposals evaluate and decide - focus - attention on those that are most in line with the interests, skills and profile of the candidate.
- For each proposal, assess their personal skills and realistically identify their difficulties and their benefit.

It is necessary to:

- Know well the proposals in terms of tasks and future work to be develop, if there are doubts contact the company
- Evaluate and discuss the relationship between the task to be performed and the requirements and profiles of academic competencies required. A solution could be to restruct the positions in the company to suit the capabilities. Taking out one task from one position, gathering similar tasks from several positions to create a new position
- Study the company about its culture and tradition in the employability or not of people with disabilities
- Ensure good contact and relationship with the people / departments of the companies that manage human resources
- Know the company's history in order to help the candidate to have a fluent conversation content in the interview selection
- Inform the company about the benefits and legislation, support measures, in the inclusion of people with disabilities in the labour market
- Inform companies about the awards and strategies of public recognition as an inclusive company

## The Selection Interview

The selection interview process is a crucial time in the recruitment process, so it should be prepared and mediated with the following recommendations for both parts.

*The following activities must be prepared and carried out with the candidate:*

- Help the candidate to know all the necessary information about the company (history, culture, work focus, type of customers, relevant facts)
- Role-play selection interview with identification of points and possible issues
- Analyse the candidate's posture in the answers given
- Prepare the candidate on how to present himself/herself according to the company profile and the proposal of work (e.g. dress code)
- Identify what should and should not be spoken according to the open proposal
- Define a strategy to help the candidate to maintain the focus of the interview on individual skills and competencies
- Identify the good experiences of job inclusion and the tasks and jobs that he / she has developed
- Inform the candidate about the benefits and legislation, support measures, for their inclusion in the labour market
- Ensure that he/she have communication support materials at the time of the interview (sign language, augmentative communication, etc.)

*Together with the company and in the role of mediation to the accomplishment of the interview for recruitment and selection you should:*

- Prepare a presentation of the candidate and profile for the task
- Evaluate the importance of accompanying the interview
- Evaluate the possibility of supporting the interview in terms of language adaptation to ensure there are no barriers of communication
- Prepare with the company the existence of communication support materials to carry out the interview (sign language, augmentative communication, etc.)

## Accessibility

Interpersonal and work relationship require equal opportunities and circumstances between different actors in order to establish communication. For this, it is essential that existing barriers they have to be minimize overcome or circumvented. The promotion of accessibility gains its foundation in the need to guarantee equal opportunities and facilitation of communication and interpersonal relationship.

"Accessibility is a characteristic of the environment or an object that allows anyone to establish a relationship with that environment or object, and use them in a friendly, cared and safe way."

Accessibility, therefore, is a broad concept, which means access to a built environment, the public thoroughfare, transport, information and communication technologies, with the greatest possible autonomy and usability.

Guaranteeing accessibility therefore implies the promotion not only of physical access but also of communication in order to ensure the conditions for the exercise of citizenship and autonomy for all people.

*Together with the candidates and / or employees with disabilities, the following actions must be taken:*

- Ensure material to support interpersonal communication
- Guarantee the necessary support materials for their physical and displacement autonomy
- Evaluate and study with the person with disabilities the travel routes between residence and workplace
- Evaluate the characteristics of public transport in terms of adaptation to people with reduced mobility and the information available to deaf and blind people, or to use augmentative communication
- Assess the need to adapt the workplace and the tasks inherent to the job
- Ensure accessibility on the public road through communication and involvement of public bodies

*Together with the employers, the following actions must be taken:*

- Inform about the existing support for job adaptation
- Support and ensure the assessment of physical and communicational accessibility within the company
- Ergonomic adaptation for the jobs according to the employees and the tasks performed
- Accompany the company in public recognition about the inclusion of people with disabilities and / or disabilities
- Simplification of work processes by subdivision of tasks
- Support and follow the adaptation of internal communication media within the companies (writing, sound, pictographic, tactile)

## Relationship with co-workers

The interpersonal relationship in the working environment is fundamental in the process of initial reception and in the course of daily interaction. Communication and interpersonal relationship represent important parts of the process for the promotion of well-being and quality of life. Taking care of this dynamic is fundamental to guarantee and increase the motivation of the teams and consequently their productivity.

*In this perspective, it is fundamental that the following actions and competences had been develop with the disabled employee:*

- Training and promotion of inter-relational skills - know-how
- Individual monitoring and supervision
- Take care of the initial presentation to co-workers presented their skills, abilities and characteristics
- Ensure that there are channels and people identified for communication and reporting in case of questions or difficulty
- Help to identify what they should and should not communicate with co-workers avoiding exaggerated / unnecessary exposure

*The company and its employees must:*

- Ensure availability and training on disabilities (limits and competencies)
- Ensure training in assertive communication
- Train employees to promote the autonomy of people with disabilities in the tasks that they perform
- When possible, identify someone from the team who is the reference and / or supervision element of the disabled person
- Prepare the future colleagues. How? Identify a mentor person who would work more closely with the disabled person, propose a role-play situation for future colleagues, and give them the opportunity to ask questions from employed disabled persons in other companies



# **Development of an action plan to engage the companies in hiring disabled people**

SECTION

04



***The creation of an action plan is crucial for the successful insertion and integration of a person with disability on the open labor market.***

ELEMENTS	DESCRIPTION
Context	<i>(identify the problem, needs)</i>
Target	<i>(employers, stakeholders)</i>
References	<i>(e.g. openness to employ people with disabilities, sector need for workforce, good practice models among employers that can be used as an example for other companies, it is not clear if the sectors provide workplace for disabled people, etc.)</i>
Methodology	<i>(awareness campaign, direct approach of the employers, etc.)</i>
Actions	<i>(see annex 3)</i>
Evaluation	-

This action plan is a tool that provides information, and guides the professionals on the pathway of matching the job places according with disabled people's employability profiles. It is highly recommended to be constantly updated (at least annually) according to the agreements reached by your organization. The plan of action is also considered a source of information to measure the outcome of work with companies, both individually and in total.



# Annexes

SECTION

05

## EUROPEAN POLICIES AND DOCUMENTATION

### The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights

In accordance with Article 21, any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited.

In accordance with Article 26, The European Union recognises and respects the right of persons with disabilities to benefit from measures designed to ensure their independence, social and occupational integration and participation in the life of the community.

### European Disability Strategy 2010-2020

The European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 provides a framework for action at European level, as well as with national action to address the diverse situation of men, women and children with disabilities.

It was adopted on 15 November 2010 and it consists of three documents:

- Communication on a European Disability Strategy 2010- 2020
- Initial plan to implement the Strategy: List of Actions 2010-2015
- Background Document with facts and figures

The Commission has identified eight main areas for action: Accessibility, Participation, Equality, Employment, Education and training, Social protection, Health, and External Action.

### EU implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with

The CRPD is a legally binding instrument that aims to protect and promote the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities.

### European Accessibility Act

The European Accessibility Act aims to improve the functioning of the internal market for accessible products and services by removing barriers created by divergent legislation. This will facilitate the work of companies and will bring benefits for persons with disabilities and elderly people in the EU. Based on this, the businesses will benefit from common rules on accessibility in the EU leading to costs reduction, a wider range of opportunities for their accessible products and services and an easier cross-border trading.

## TO DO AND NOT TO DO

TO DO	NOT TO DO
Present services to the needs and expectations of companies	Have a pre-designed package to present the available services
Gather pertinent and concise information on the business support measures, e.g. flyer	Present to the companies your services without having previous knowledge of their measures
Provide the companies with specific knowledge about disability, pathologies and syndromes in particular	Speak in general terms about disability
Make an assessment of the employer: their job profiles and their measures of adjustment.	Mediating the hiring of the disabled person without the proper adjustments to the tasks and job
Assist on the recruitment process by giving guidance to the managers conducting a job interview with a person with a disability	Do not alert managers of recruitment processes about the use of an appropriate interview.
Promote moments of team building for the construction of inclusive teams	Fail to keep up with work teams where people with disabilities are included
Contribute actively to the public recognition of companies with a social entrepreneurship brand through the sharing of good practices with future employers	Try to raise companies to the bag of potential employers without sharing the added value of investing and including people with disabilities in their teams
Assertive training of candidates' communication during recruitment and post-placement	Map out the candidate profile without focusing on their communicative limitations
Promoting interrelationship in the work environment	Train the disabled persons only for the interaction with their peers and team
Find effective communication channels	Use the poorly inclusive conventional communication channels
Promote the qualification of candidates	Give importance only to knowing how to do
Promote the model of labour inclusion and explain the difference of integration or inclusion	Promote the assistance model

## SET OF ACTIONS

### **BUSINESS WORLD ASSESSMENT**

Action 0 Analyze the national and European legal framework

Action 1 Consult the national statistics, official market studies, reports ran by other stakeholders

Action 2 Provide employers with a set of benefits resulted from hiring a person with disabilities

### **RECRUITMENT**

Action 3 Identify and verify the skills of disabled people

Action 4 Help on developing skills for the job requirements

Action 5 Match the abilities of disabled people with employers' needs

Action 6 Provide equal opportunities in recruitment and combat stereotypes

### **EMPLOYMENT MEDIATION**

Action 7 Prepare the working environment (accessibility, self-awareness among the co-workers, etc.)

Action 8 Enable long-term employability

Action 9 Make the business world more open for hiring disabled people

### **MAINTAINING THE RELATIONSHIP**

Action 11 Provide evaluation and follow-up

Action 12 Coordinate actions between all stakeholders

## GOOD PRACTICES

<b>Organization:</b>	<i>Kézenfogva Alapítvány<sup>1</sup></i>
<b>Approach of external communication:</b>	<i>Response to employer's request</i>
<b>Communication channels</b>	<i>Personal meeting with the representatives of employers</i>
<b>Content</b>	<i>Legislation, benefits, about the foundation in general, about our employment service and the way of contribution: contract, contact person,</i>  <i>the process of the service</i>
<b>Activities to engage the enterprise</b>	<i>-Yearly Special Job Fair (reverse job fair: the employees sitting by tables, grouped after desired positions, and the employers visit them)</i>  <i>- casually special workshops for employers (thematic: legislation, accessibility, long-term employment)</i>
<b>Resources and materials used to promote the communication</b>	<i>Leaflet with success stories (quotations from employers and their employees); after the meeting we send an e-mail with summary about employment service, contract, references, thematic of sensitization training</i>
<b>Feedback from the company about the approach:</b>	<i>The best feedback when we sign a contract and deliver sensitization training for all the company employees</i>
<b>Evaluation and conclusion about your methodology:</b>	<i>Survey among employers about their needs in order to have long-term employment of people with disability</i>
<b>Contact person:</b>	<i>Before placement: the expert from the foundation who made the personal meeting</i>  <i>Placement process and follow up: the mentor of the placed client</i>

<sup>1</sup> <http://kezenfogva.hu/>

<b>Organization:</b>	<p>AFEJI<sup>2</sup></p> <p>ESAT Westoek</p>
<b>Approach of external communication:</b>	<i>We use our commercial department (external services) in order to look for jobs for our clients (workers with disabilities): The customers can see workers with disabilities on the job situation</i>
<b>Communication channels</b>	<i>Phone calls, meetings with the Purchases department and Human Resources</i>
<b>Content</b>	<i>Legislation argument: when outsourcing ESAT, 50% of the amount paid to the external services can be reduced from their legal obligation to hire people with disabilities</i>
<b>Activities to engage the enterprise</b>	<i>Promotion of the actors working with employees with disabilities or workers with social difficulties, "Salon de l'achat responsable" (Club economie sociale et solidaire, 17 members); Club of Chamber of Commerce; videos to promote services to companies;</i>
<b>Resources and materials used to promote the communication</b>	<i>Commercial brochure ESAT Westoek, presentation of the RSE external services, employment of people with disabilities</i>
<b>Feedback from the company about the approach:</b>	<i>No interest to hire people with disabilities and assume risk and responsibility in comparison to externalize the services realized by people with disabilities; Valorisation in EA (find a job in ordinary market - financial incentive) and ACI, but not in ESAT</i>
<b>Evaluation and conclusion about your methodology:</b>	<i>Methodology to work for external services, but less adapted for integrated people in ordinary jobs.</i>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.afeji.org/>



<b>Organization:</b>	ASSOC <sup>3</sup>
<b>Approach of external communication:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Direct approach of the employers</li> <li>- Based on different procedures (project based)</li> <li>- Based on JobPlanner (<a href="http://www.jobplanner.eu">www.jobplanner.eu</a>)</li> </ul>
<b>Communication channels</b>	Mostly directly, but also through phone calls or emails
<b>Content</b>	Especially legal support, informing employers regarding their benefits and subventions when employing disabled persons
<b>Activities to engage the enterprise</b>	Workshops and conferences (mostly based on different projects ASSOC has)
<b>Resources and materials used to promote the communication</b>	Presentations, leaflets, roll-ups, even brochures, depending on the project that the event (workshop, conference, etc.) is part of.
<b>Feedback from the company about the approach:</b>	Employers usually respond well to our phone calls and emails and we have received good feedback regarding our direct approach.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.assoc.ro/>

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