

# PARTNERING WITH A DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT SERVICE



## Q&A

### Q. What is a Disability Employment Service?

A. An independent not for profit or profit employment service funded by the Government to help employers attract, recruit and retain candidates with a disability.

### Q. Why employ a person with a disability?

A. 18.5% of Australians have a disability – that means over four million people. A major untapped labour pool.

### Q. How do I know the person is the right person?

A. The DES will work with you to understand your business, the vacancy and your workplace culture before sourcing a candidate for interview.

### Q. Can I expect the same level of productivity from a person with a disability?

A. Yes you can and should. The DES will work with you to formulate a Support Plan to bring the new worker up to speed.

### Q. What if my employee cannot work at the required productivity rate?

A. There is a process called The Supported Wage System that allows employers to pay a productivity-based wage that matches an independently assessed productivity rate. So you only pay the percentage of the wage that matches the productivity output.

### Q. What will my staff think?

A. Staff will benefit from a diverse workforce, and if there are specific concerns about the new employee, the DES will provide information and source training (if necessary) for all co workers.

### Q. How long will the DES support be available?

A. Indefinitely if that's what you and your employee want and need. After the initial intensive training period, our staff will continue to monitor and support your employee, co workers and you to address any new barriers that may arise.

After one year, your employee will be assessed by an Independent Assessor who will decide, after consultation with you, whether the employee needs continued support from the DES.

### Q. Do I get Government financial support?

A. There are limited wage subsidies available, along with workplace modifications and special assistance packages. Ask your DES provider about these.

## THE EMPLOYER /DES CHECKLIST FOR SUCCESS

- Have a good understanding of the business.
- Undertake a job analysis on behalf of the employer
- Confirm with the employer the tasks to be undertaken
- Commit to a Support Plan for on the job training and support
- Provide co worker training where required
- Know who is responsible for performance feedback to the new employee
- Set review dates aligned to the Support Plan
- Investigate workplace modifications
- Participate if required, to ensure Induction training is understood

## THE PHASES

### 1. Approaching the Employer

The DES will work with you to gain a thorough understanding of your business, including, workforce skills, knowledge and capabilities required of your workforce.

The DES will ask for a lead person to deal with – this allows a relationship to be built. This person usually knows the most about the workforce or position requirement and can make or recommend the employment decision.

### 2. Proposing a Solution

After gaining insight into your requirements, the DES can put forward a mutually beneficial proposal.

The DES will advise how the proposed candidate can meet the requirements of the job, benefits gained across the workforce, and the support that the DES will provide ongoing. The DES will analyse:

- The inherent requirements of the job
- Undertake a job analysis including any job customisation that may be required and develop a Support Plan to create a good job match for both the prospective employee and the employer.

### 3. Placing a new employee

The DES will now work with the employer to address any issues and define each party's role in the process. This can include:

- Type of support the new employee will need
- Training requirements for specific tasks and productivity coaching
- Identify natural workplace and co worker supports
- The exit strategy for the DES when productivity and integration has been achieved.

### 4. The Probationary Period

**The DES will:**

- provide the employer with regular reviews of the employee's progress
- Source required workplace modifications
- Address any non-vocational barriers
- Support the compliance to all business rules and OH&S requirements.

### 5. Retaining and Supporting

There is no 'end date' set by the DES. Depending on the needs of the employee, support can be ongoing and indefinite. As the employee's employment continues, the DES may scale back support they provide, however, additional supports can be requested at any time if either the employers or employees needs change.

Employer support to address issues of changes to jobs, tasks, co workers or business needs will be available from the DES.



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