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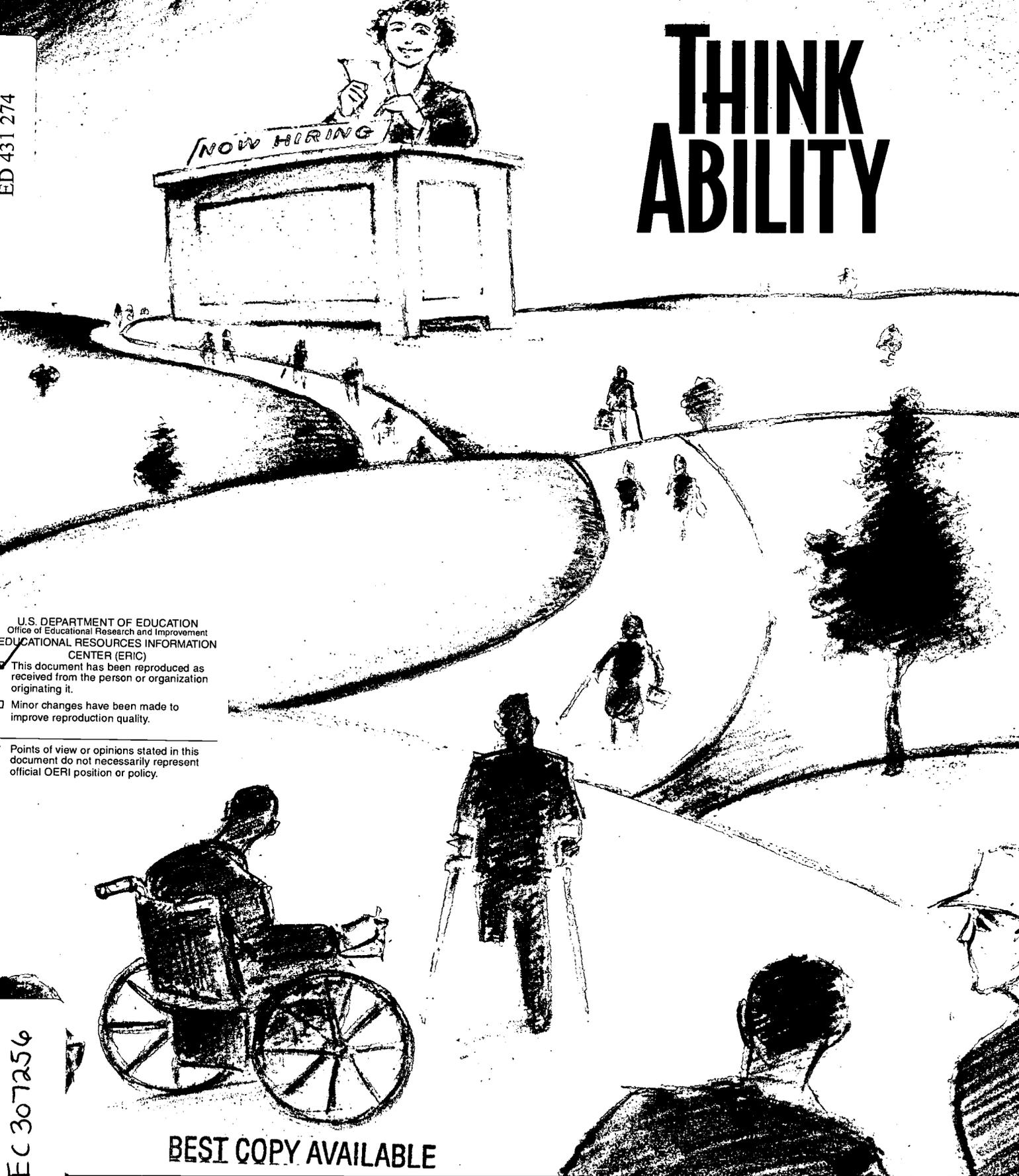
ABSTRACT

This kit contains materials for educational activities that foster employment of people with disabilities. The materials can be used for programs to celebrate the anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and National Disability Employment Awareness Month, as well as on other occasions. An introduction lists examples of activities to promote employment of individuals with disabilities that were carried out in 1998 and provides a sampling of materials that can be ordered from the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities to assist with educational programs. Following the introduction, perforated pages suitable for reproduction discuss the following topics: (1) attitudinal barriers; (2) making management decisions about accommodations; (3) preparing for and conducting an effective job interview with a person with a disability; (4) disability data resources; (5) significant court cases under Title 1 of the ADA; (6) temporary employment options for people with disabilities; (7) technology and people with disabilities; and (8) writing and formatting a scannable resume. (CR)

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THINK ABILITY



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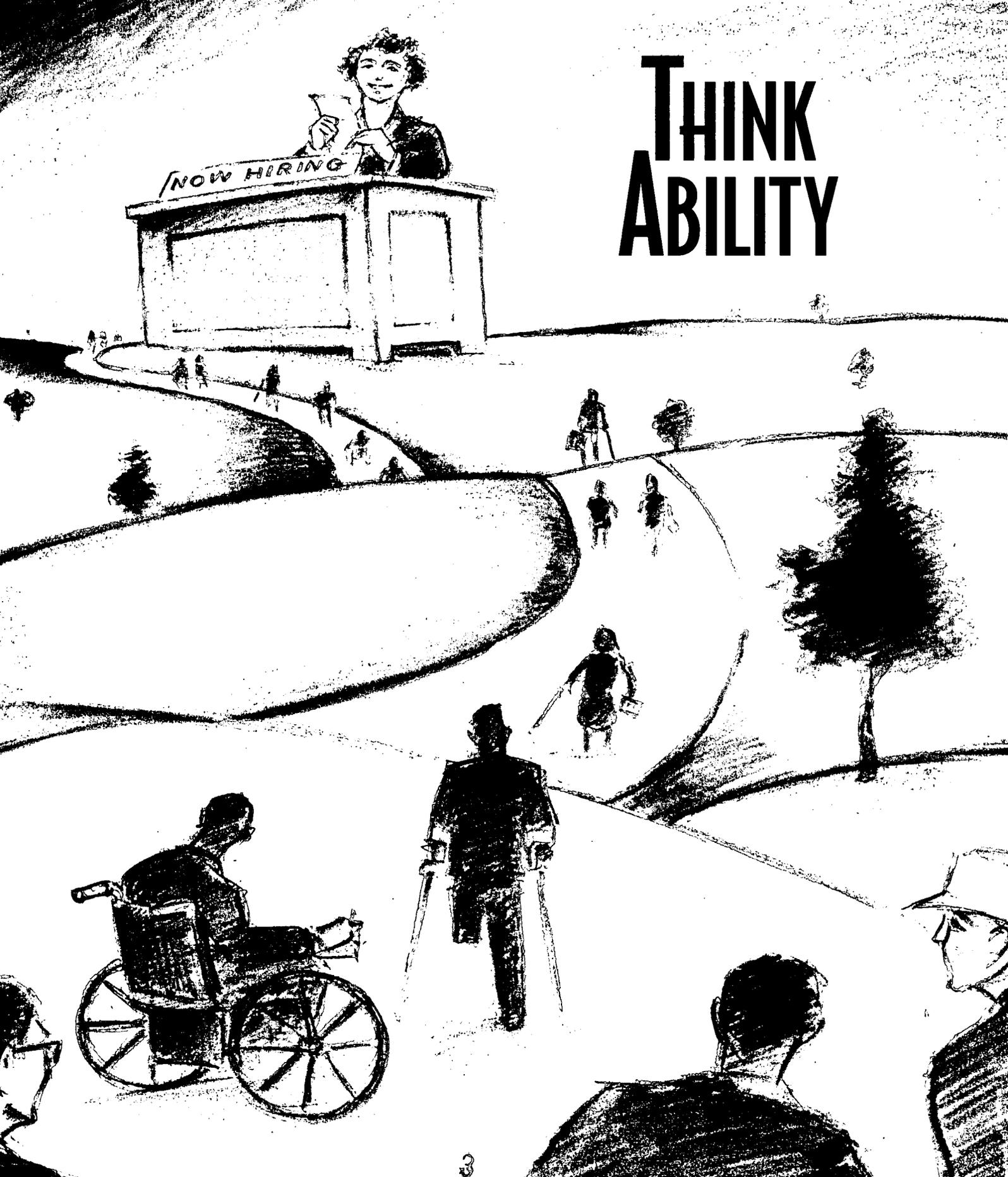
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PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
EDUCATIONAL KIT 1999



THINK ABILITY



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ERIC'S COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



A MESSAGE FROM CHAIRMAN TONY COELHO



“Think Ability.” The theme of this year’s education program conveys a simple yet critical message: Attitude is the key to raising the level of employment for people with disabilities.

Ten years ago, as a Congressman, I had the privilege of introducing the Americans with Disabilities Act in the House of Representatives. Today, I am frequently asked how the employment scene has improved for people with disabilities. Have we made progress?

The answer, without a doubt, is yes. During just the first three years after ADA was passed, more than 800,000 adults with severe disabilities went to work. As more and more individuals enter and re-enter the workforce, our example helps to erode deeply rooted stereotypes, myths and misconceptions. But for the millions of people with disabilities still waiting for the opportunity to prove themselves, statistics are not very encouraging.

The staggering unemployment rate facing Americans with disabilities is a problem that affects all of our citizens, and it is up to everyone to confront his or her own attitudes. By making a conscious effort, each of us can make a difference.

Employers who actively recruit qualified employees with disabilities often discover untapped skills, talents and aspirations—and much more. As a group so often overlooked, those of us with disabilities are among the most loyal, committed and motivated employees. We are natural problem solvers, and contribute valuable consumer perspectives regarding what the disability market needs and wants.

Educators, service providers and family members should encourage young people with disabilities, as well as individuals who acquire disabilities during adulthood, to pursue their career interests. Preparation for the workplace may involve any combination of academic study, vocational training and work experience. Opportunities to develop social and leadership skills are important, too.

Finally, those of us with disabilities must believe in ourselves. A positive mindset and self-advocacy can be our most powerful assets. Success is contagious. Day by day, one person at a time, we are tackling the barriers blocking the path to employment.

Landmark civil rights legislation to protect the 54 million Americans with disabilities—and those who will inevitably join our ranks in the future—was only a first step. As we round the last lap toward the next century, hurdling attitudinal barriers remains our greatest challenge.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tony Coelho". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "T".

Tony Coelho

◆The Spread Effect

People assume that an individual's disability negatively affects other senses, abilities or personality traits, or that the total person is impaired. For example, many people shout at people who are blind or don't expect people using wheelchairs to have the intelligence to speak for themselves. Focusing on the person's abilities rather than his or her disability counters this type of prejudice.

◆Stereotypes

The other side of the spread effect is the positive and negative generalizations people form about disabilities. For example, many believe that all people who are blind are great musicians or have a keener sense of smell and hearing, that all people who use wheelchairs are docile or compete in paralympics, that all people with developmental disabilities are innocent and sweet-natured, that all people with disabilities are sad and bitter. Aside from diminishing the individual and his or her abilities, such prejudice can set too high or too low a standard for individuals who are merely human.

◆Backlash

Many people believe individuals with disabilities are given unfair advantages, such as easier work requirements. Employers need to hold people with disabilities to the same job standards as co-workers, though the means of accomplishing the tasks may differ from person to person. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) does not require special privileges for people with disabilities, just equal opportunities.

◆Denial

Many disabilities are "hidden," such as learning disabilities, psychiatric disabilities, epilepsy, cancer, arthritis and heart conditions. People tend to believe these are not bona fide disabilities needing accommodation. The ADA defines "disability" as an impairment that "substantially limits one or more of the major life activities." Accommodating "hidden" disabilities which meet the above definition can keep valued employees on the job and open doors for new employees.

◆Fear

Many people are afraid that they will "do or say the wrong thing" around someone with a disability. They therefore avert their own discomfort by avoiding the individual with a disability. As with meeting a person from a different culture, frequent encounters can raise the comfort level.

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

Unlike physical and systematic barriers, attitudinal barriers that often lead to illegal discrimination cannot be overcome simply through laws. The best remedy is familiarity, getting people with and without disabilities to mingle as coworkers, associates and social acquaintances. In time, most of the attitudes will give way to comfort, respect and friendship.

Tips for interacting with people with disabilities:

- Listen to the person with the disability. Do not make assumptions about what that person can or cannot do.
- When speaking with a person with a disability, talk directly to that person, not through his or her companion. This applies whether the person has a mobility impairment, a mental impairment, is blind or is deaf and uses an interpreter.
- Extend common courtesies to people with disabilities as you would anyone else. Shake hands or hand over business cards. If the person cannot shake your hand or grasp your card, they will tell you. Do not be ashamed of your attempt, however.
- If the customer has a speech impairment and you are having trouble understanding what he or she is saying, ask the person to repeat rather than pretend you understand. The former is respectful and leads to accurate communication; the latter is belittling and leads to embarrassment.
- Offer assistance to a person with a disability, but wait until your offer is accepted before you help.
- It is okay to feel nervous or uncomfortable around people with disabilities, and it's okay to admit that. It is human to feel that way at first. When you encounter these situations, think "person" first instead of disability; you will eventually relax.

This tip sheet was prepared with the help of freelance writer Eric Minton, a member of the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities Communications Subcommittee.

July 1999
President's Committee on Employment of People
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MAKING MANAGEMENT DECISIONS ABOUT ACCOMMODATIONS

An accommodation in the workplace is a reasonable adjustment to a job or work environment that makes it possible for an individual with a disability to perform job duties. Put another way, an accommodation is an investment an employer makes in his or her business in order to make the business more efficient or profitable. For example, when word processing systems were proven to be much more efficient than typewriters, businesses invested in personal computers for their employees. Similarly, employers send employees to staff training classes and seminars to upgrade their skills. Decisions about making worksite accommodations for people with disabilities should be made in the same light as decisions about staff training or buying new office equipment. Successful accommodations are beneficial both to the employee and the employer.

SOME ISSUES TO CONSIDER

When an employee with a disability requests an accommodation, the employer and employee should discuss the job duties, how the accommodation will assist the individual in performing his or her job, and possible alternative solutions. Among the issues to be considered are:

- What are the functional limitations of the individual seeking the accommodation?
- What specific job tasks are affected by the individual's functional limitations?
- What types of equipment are used/needed to perform the job?
- Are there work place policies or procedures that affect the individual's ability to perform the job?
- Are all the necessary areas of the work environment accessible for this individual?

WHERE TO FIND ASSISTANCE

One resource available to both the employer and the employee in the accommodation decision-making process is the President's Committee's Job Accommodation Network (JAN), accessed via a toll-free telephone call (800-ADA-WORK). JAN consultants will ask questions about the specific situation and will recommend adjustments in the worksite, administrative actions or product options that might be effective. Conversations with JAN

consultants are confidential.

Fear or lack of information, both on the part of the employer and the employee, may be the greatest impediments. Both employers and employees should feel free to ask questions about the accommodation itself, as well as issues related to the accommodation.

QUESTIONS EMPLOYERS MIGHT ASK

- How do I determine a reasonable accommodation for this particular situation?
- Where can my company obtain these products and is it possible to purchase equipment on a trial basis, or is there a facility near the place of business where the equipment may be tested?
- What if the accommodation doesn't work?
- Where can I find local resources for services like worksite evaluations?
- Who pays for the accommodation?

HOW A SATISFACTORY SOLUTION IS REACHED

Since the implementation of the ADA, inquiries to JAN about accommodations have become increasingly complex. Following are examples of both complex and simple accommodations made by employers who have consulted JAN.

Case Study

Situation: A nurse was diagnosed with an allergy to latex. All gloves used in the medical facility are made of latex.

Solution: Although the medical facility had already determined that it wanted to be proactive in preventing latex sensitivity among its staff and patients, recognition of the LPN's latex sensitivity prompted immediate attention to the initiative. The employee was given time off with pay until her unit could be cleaned to prevent exposure to latex powder. The employee also met with a latex allergy prevention team to discuss accommodations. The medical/surgical unit was made a powder-free glove unit. The employee was provided latex-free sterile gloves and vinyl gloves for non-sterile situations, as well as a latex-free stethoscope and tourniquets. To fully address the issue, the medical facility provided mandatory latex allergy



medical examinations at the post-offer stage do not have to be related to the job. However, if the offer is withdrawn, the employer must show that the individual could not perform the essential function of the position or would pose a direct threat.

5. If testing is part of the interview process, make sure the test does not reveal information about physical or mental impairments (i.e., make sure it is not a medical examination.) Other tests which demonstrate the applicant's ability to perform actual or simulated job tasks are permitted under the ADA. Inform the applicant before the interview that a test will be part of the interview process. The applicant can then request an accommodation such as a different format for written tests.
6. If you are not prepared to make a commitment to hire her or him immediately, the usual reasons given to applicants who are not hired at the close of the

interview apply: "Thank you for coming in, we will notify you in a few days of our decision," "It will be necessary for you to talk with the supervisor in charge of that unit," "The boss isn't available today," and so on.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)

Technical Assistance: (800) 669-4000 (V), or
(800) 800-3302 (TDD)

Documents: (800) 669-3362 (V), or
(800) 669-3302 (TDD)

Website: <http://www.eeoc.gov>

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DISABILITY DATA RESOURCES

Who are people with disabilities? What do we know about people with disabilities? How many individuals with disabilities use assistive devices? How many people with disabilities are working? What are people with disabilities' demographics? These are just a few of the questions that are asked every day as we develop and implement programs and strategies to combat the high unemployment rate of persons with disabilities. Numerous resources are available to provide statistical data to answer these questions and provide information on other disability related topics. Many resources now post their information on Web sites which makes researching disability data readily accessible and fast. Outlined below is information on some of the data resources regarding people with disabilities.

NATIONAL CENTER ON HEALTH STATISTICS (NCHS)

The National Center on Health Statistics in 1998 made available national information on assistive devices used by people with disabilities from their National Health Interview Survey on Disability (NHIS-D), conducted in 1994. This is the first time national data on the use of assistive devices by people with disabilities has ever been released. The data covers: anatomical devices (braces, artificial limbs), mobility devices, hearing devices and vision devices. The complete NHIS-D survey is available in NCHS's Web site: <<http://www.cdc.gov/nchswww/default.htm>>. To obtain a print or CD-ROM copy, call (301) 436-7551. A CD-ROM is also available which offers far more disability data than appears either on their Web site or is available in print.

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION ON DISABILITY (NOD)

The 1998 National Organization on Disability/Harris Poll of Americans with Disabilities, a nationwide survey of 1,000 Americans with disabilities aged 16 and older, was conducted in mid-1998. This survey found that Americans with disabilities continue to lag well behind other Americans in many of the most basic aspects of life. Large gaps still exist between adults with disabilities and other adults with regard to employment, education, income, frequency of socializing and other basic measures of ten major

“indicator” areas of life. Furthermore, most of these gaps show little evidence of narrowing. In some cases, the gaps have even widened over time.

Employment continues to be the area with the widest gulf between those who are disabled and those who are not. Forty two percent of those who are disabled and not working believe that attitudinal barriers keep them from working (i.e., that employers are unwilling to recognize that they are capable of taking on a full-time job). A significant majority of people with disabilities who work (64 percent) and people with disabilities who want to work (81 percent) have encountered supervisors and co-workers who are afraid that a person with a disability “cannot do the job.”

The study provided some interesting data on the use of technology by persons with disabilities.

- Only one in four (25 percent) of individuals with disabilities who work and four out of ten (40 percent) of individuals with disabilities who want to work say they need special equipment or technology to perform effectively the kind of job they prefer.
- Half (49 percent) of people with disabilities who work full or part-time use computers at work. Those who work full-time are much more likely (60 percent) to use a computer than those who work part-time (35 percent).
- More than a quarter (28 percent) of people with disabilities own special equipment or technology to assist them because of their disability. The number has risen significantly since 1994 when it was 22 percent. Those who describe their disability as very or somewhat severe are more likely (33 percent) to own special equipment than those who characterize their disability as slight or moderate (19 percent).
- Fifteen percent of people with disabilities who work full or part-time, or would like to be working, need a personal computer.

For more information on this study visit NOD's web site: <<http://www.nod.org>>, or call (202) 283-5960 (V) or (202) 293-5968 (TDD).



THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DISABILITY AND
REHABILITATION RESEARCH (NIDRR)

The National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research is a federal government agency charged with maintaining disability statistics. Recently, NIDRR published "Chartbook on Work and Disability in the United States, 1998," a compendium of key findings from numerous statistical sources. It can be viewed on the Web site, or in print copy.

Web site:
<<http://www.infouse.com/disabilitydata/workdisability.html>>
Phone: (202) 205-5633 (V)

DISABILITY STATISTICS CENTER

The Disability Statistics Center is a national center of research and training. The Center receives its primary funding from NIDRR. The Center has ongoing research projects on the cost of disability, employment and earnings, access to health and long-term care services, housing, mortality and national statistical indicators on the status of people with disabilities in America.

Web site: <<http://www.dsc.ucsf.edu/>>
Phone: (415)502-5217 (V)

THE CENSUS BUREAU

The Census Bureau plans to include questions on disability in the 2000 Census. In the meantime, the Census Bureau maintains a disability statistics web site. The statistics include information on the numbers of persons with disabilities on a state-by-state and metropolitan area basis.

Web site:
<<http://blue.census.gov/hhes/www/disable.html>>
Phone: (301) 457-3242 (V)

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- Issues regarding the employer's responsibility to grant open-ended scheduling or an indefinite period of leave as reasonable accommodation have resulted in a mixed reaction from the courts.
- Issues regarding the responsibility of the employer to provide reassignment and the scope of the reassignment have not resulted in a consensus from the courts.

Court Findings

- Generally, courts are recognizing that meeting ADA's requirement for "reasonable accommodation" is a "continuing duty" for employers and does not end after the first accommodation effort. For example, in *Ralph v. Lucent Technology*, BNA 7Ad cases 1, 3, 4, & 5, (1st Circuit 1998), a plaintiff with psychiatric disabilities originally was accommodated with leave time. Upon returning to work, the person requested another accommodation in the form of part-time work for four weeks. He was turned down by management. The 1st Circuit ruled against the company, stating "making reasonable accommodation is an ongoing obligation for the employer under the ADA."
- Courts also are rejecting employees with disabilities' requests for open-ended schedules or indefinite periods of leave. Appellate courts are beginning to focus on the reasonableness of the particular accommodation request, vis-a-vis costs and benefits. In addition, courts are reviewing the employer's total efforts at accommodation to determine sufficiency.
- Courts have determined that unpaid leave may be a form of reasonable accommodation. However, the granting of requests for indefinite, unanticipated, and/or unpredictable leave may not be required if it would result in an undue hardship.
- Some courts are deciding that an employer is not obligated to provide the best available accommodation as long as he/she provides an accommodation that is effective.
- EEOC and some federal circuit courts have ruled that reasonable accommodation includes the employer's obligation to reassign qualified employees with disabilities unable to perform the

essential functions of their current position, with or without reasonable accommodations, unless the employer can show an undue hardship. However, the courts are split on this issue. The 7th Circuit Court (*Gile v. United Airlines*, 95 F.3d 492, 498 (7th Circuit 1996) and the 8th (*Benson v. Northwest Airlines, Inc.* 62 F.3d 1108, 1114-15 (8th Circuit 1995) have concurred with the EEOC position. Under Title I of the ADA, reassignment can be used as a means of accommodating an employee with a disability when accommodation in the employee's current position is possible, but difficult, for the employer. The 5th Circuit, in *Foreman v. Babcock & Wilcox.*, 117 F. 3d 800, 807-09 (5th Circuit, 1997), ruled that if it is impossible for an employer to accommodate a worker in his or her present job, then there is no obligation to reassign. The conflicting decisions on this issue by the courts create the need for the Supreme Court to settle this issue.

As with any new law, clarification will come from court rulings and U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's policy guidance.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT

President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities
 (202) 376-6200 (V), (202) 376-6205 (TDD),
 (202) 376-6219 (FAX)

Equal Employment Opportunities Commission:
 For Technical Assistance: (800) 669-4000 (V) or
 (800) 669-6820 (TDD)
<http://www.eeoc.gov> (Internet)

Article by Christopher G. Bell, President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities Employer Subcommittee member, entitled, "Some Key Trends in Judicial Decisions: Interpreting Title I of the ADA."

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PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES—TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), since 1996 the number of people working or available for hire has only increased at the rate of 1.1 percent a year. BLS projects that the rate of increase of the labor pool will continue to shrink until at least 2006 because of the aging of the population. The booming economy, coupled with the tight labor market, provides a challenge to the country's business sector. As a result, employers will need new strategies to find pools of talent, hire quickly and retrain staff if they are to keep their companies competitive. One strategy being used to address this problem is the services of temporary staffing agencies.

The staffing industry has expanded rapidly during the last 25 years. Temporary employment placement has increased from 165,000 people in 1972 to more than two million in 1995, reflecting an annual growth rate of more than 11 percent. Nine out of 10 U.S. businesses use the services of a staffing industry firm, according to a recent survey by *Business and Legal Reports*. More than one-third of the companies surveyed plan to increase their use of staffing industry services. The BLS estimates that between the years of 1994 and 2005, temporary employment opportunities will expand by more than 50 percent.

Temporary staffing agencies may be one answer to people with disabilities finding employment opportunities. Qualified persons with disabilities represent a largely untapped labor source. Although some companies are already having trouble finding employees to fill their jobs, the unemployment rate for people with disabilities continues to be high. The 1995 Census Bureau's Current Population Survey indicates that fewer than one-third of the country's more than 16 million working-age, non-institutionalized persons with disabilities are employed. Three-quarters of persons with disabilities currently unemployed would rather be working according to the National Organization on Disability 1998 Harris Poll.

In addition to matching candidates with jobs, temporary staffing agencies are taking on additional human resource functions including training and evaluation. Many temporary jobs become permanent. Temporary staffing agencies are not only strong

sources of qualified, experienced employees, but are also becoming an important resource for linking people with disabilities to full-time employment opportunities.

TEMPORARY STAFFING AND HIRING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Temporary staffing agencies work with people with disabilities in the same way they work with people without disabilities. "The ADA did not impact our business dramatically. From inception, our company focused on what people can do in the work place. That is our business, and that is how we create shareholder value," says Mitchell Fromstein, Manpower Chairman and Chief Executive Officer.

The focus of the job placement process for all applicants is on individual abilities, job skills and interests. The staffing industry uses job assessment services, temporary job assignments and work skills training to help individuals with and without disabilities find their employment niche. These services provide job seekers with opportunities to build a work history, experience different types of jobs, and increase their employment marketability and earning potential through enhancement of work skills.

The following features used by staffing agencies result in effective job placement for all persons:

- Individualized applicant assessment procedures
- Focus on individual abilities, job skills and interests
- Systematized skill assessments for a variety of tasks
- Matching employee skills to workplace demands based on an assessment of local customer needs
- Individualized job training
- Providing accommodations as part of the placement process

EEOC POLICY GUIDANCE

There is a lack of clarity concerning whether the employer or the temporary staffing agency is responsible for paying for accommodating temporary employees with disabilities. The following EEOC policy guidance may assist in this area.



- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act Policy Guidance, issued September 20, 1991, (IN-917-002), addressed what constitutes an employment agency; how charges against employment agencies should be investigated; and what remedies can be obtained for Title VII violations by these agencies. This guidance concludes that Title VII covers employment agencies, as well as employers, and prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, religion or national origin.
- EEOC's policy guidance on the concepts of integrated enterprise and joint employer, issued May 6, 1987 (N-915) clarifies that the identity of the employer is based on economic realities of the relationship and extent of the party's control over means and manner of an employee's performance. Factors that can be used to determine economic realities and control are:
 - Level of skills required for the position
 - Location of the work
 - Duration of relationship of parties
 - Hiring party's rights to assign additional projects to employee
 - Extent of employee's discretion of how and how long to work
 - Method of payment
 - Whether hiring party is in business
 - Whether the work is part of hiring party's regular business
 - Whether hiring party provide benefits
 - Whether hiring party deducts employment-related taxes.

RESOURCES

For additional information contact:

Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC)

For Technical Assistance: (800) 669-4000 (V) or (800) 669-6820 (TDD)

To Obtain Documents: (800) 669-3362 (V) or (800) 669-3302 (TDD)

Internet: <http://www.eeoc.gov>

President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities

(202) 376-6200 (V),
(202) 376-6205 (TDD),
(202) 376-6219 (FAX)

Study by Peter Blanck, President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities Communication Subcommittee member, entitled, "The Emerging Role of the Staffing Industry in the Employment of Persons with Disabilities: a Case Report on Manpower, Inc.," 1998.

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TECHNOLOGY AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Technology creates gateways to jobs, training and education for people with disabilities. Specialized devices, also known as assistive technology, together with generic or mainstream technology products and services that have been designed with the widest number of users in mind (“universal design”), can enhance the ability of person with a disability to earn a living.

The U.S. Census Bureau 1992 Survey of Income Program Participation identified more than 22 million Americans who have functional limitations in hearing, seeing or having their speech understood. In addition, millions of individuals with cognitive disabilities (e.g., mental retardation, learning disabilities) have difficulty using the products and services developed by America’s telecommunications and information technology industry sectors. With America’s population aging, the implications for manufacturers and developers of assistive technology and mainstream technologies are clear: there are critical, and growing, numbers of people who cannot with ease—

- hear and manipulate voice menus and instructions
- see what is displayed on computer screens and other read-out devices
- walk, wheel up to or physically operate devices that access information (e.g., computer kiosk, computers)
- speak to a human or electronic operator, or have great difficulty in doing so
- manage controls, buttons, levers and switches
- understand, or who become confused, when using or operating communication devices and services.

ELECTRONIC TOOLS THAT HELP

People with various disabilities are able to do what many people without disabilities take for granted when access needs are incorporated into mainstream products or when adaptive devices are readily available. Listed below are just a few examples.

- adapted computer keyboards and large button key pads
- computer software zoom and large print features
- closed captioning for video products
- web browsers that work for people with visual problems

- E-mail text or audio messaging
- pagers that vibrate
- talking caller ID

FEDERAL LAWS

People with disabilities are at a disadvantage when essential job functions require using or operating technology devices and services, or manipulating information appliances to access work-related content, if products and services have not been designed with disability in mind. Federal laws which help address these problems for people with disabilities are discussed below.

Telecommunications Act of 1996: PL 104-104

- Section 225 (Relay Services) mandates a nationwide system of telephone relay services to enable people with hearing and speech disabilities to have phone conversations with employers, friends, family and others.
- Section 255 (Access by Persons with Disabilities) requires all manufacturers of telecommunications equipment and providers of telecommunications services to ensure that equipment and services are designed, developed and fabricated to be accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, if readily achievable.
- Section 713 (Video Programming Accessibility) ensures that video services (e.g., movies, television) are accessible to individuals with hearing and speech disabilities through closed captioning. Section 713 also addresses the issue of video description for people with visual impairments.

Several other sections of the Telecommunication Act will change how communication services are delivered. These changes will benefit people with disabilities if their access needs are considered.

- Section 251 (Interconnection) states that telecommunications carriers cannot install network features that take away or reduce functionality for users with disabilities.
- Section 256 (Coordination for Interconnectivity) provides that access by people with disabilities be



WRITING AND FORMATTING A SCANNABLE RESUME

WHAT JOB SEEKERS WITH DISABILITIES NEED TO KNOW

Because we are living in an information age where technology drives most interactions, resumes sent via E-mail and traditional paper are likely to be scanned for key information by a machine, not a human being.

WHAT IT MEANS TO HAVE YOUR RESUME SCANNED BY A MACHINE

Because employers receive more resumes than they can process efficiently, they are switching to text-searching or artificial intelligence software to track resumes. These systems use optical scanners to put resumes into the computer which then searches for skills that match a job description. Optical character recognition—OCR—software looks at the image to distinguish every letter and number and creates a text file. Such systems are important because they significantly lessen the time it takes to search for qualified applicants to fill a job. These systems can also help employers by creating a centralized resume pool in companies that have a decentralized human resource function.

WHY SCANNABLE RESUMES ARE IMPORTANT TO YOUR SEARCH

In order to efficiently review resumes, an increasing number of employers are letting computers take the first crack at selecting a first round of applicants for certain jobs. Because computers are programmed to search for certain words, every word in a resume is important in the selection process. Artificial intelligence software “reads” the text and extracts important information such as your name, address, work history, experience and skills. A clear resume allows the scanner to obtain a clean image in order to maximize “hits” (when one of your skills matches the computer search).

HOW TO PREPARE A RESUME THAT WILL SCAN TO JOBS YOU ARE SEEKING

Following are important tips on making your resume “scan-friendly.”

- Use a standard typeface such as Courier, Helvetica, Futura, Optima, Universe or Times with a point size of 10-14.
- Use black ink on white 8 1/2 x 11 inch paper. Do not use colored paper.
- Use only capital letters or boldface to emphasize important information. Do not use italics, underlining, boxes, graphics, or horizontal or vertical lines.
- Avoid a two-column format or resumes that look like newspapers or newsletters.
- Use only a laser-quality printer.
- Do not fold or staple pages.
- If faxing, use fine resolution and follow up with a mailed original.
- Avoid “formatting peculiarities.” If you use E-mail, save your file as “text only” or “ASCII” to avoid the possibility that your word processor and your prospective employer’s word processor are incompatible. E-mail a copy of your resume to yourself to make sure it looks the way you meant it to look.
- Use “key-words”—phrases, terms, industry jargon, and titles to describe your abilities. Describe your experience with concrete words rather than vague terms. Be sure to use state-of-the-art terminology to describe yourself. If you have been out of the job market awhile, research new developments in your field and use up-to-date terms to present your skills. Savvy job seekers often mimic the words a company uses in its help-wanted ads. The more skills and facts you provide, the more opportunities you have for your skills to match available positions.

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HOW HIRING MANAGERS AND RECRUITERS USE ELECTRONIC APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEMS

Typically, hiring personnel set up a search request and tell the computer whether certain qualifications are required or desired. Many resume-scanning systems then rank the candidates they select from the system. Some of the leading systems place a number or percentage next to a candidate's name indicating how many of the manager's requirements are reflected in the resume.

As we move into the 21st century, it is important to use technology to find a job. If you push yourself to go the extra mile in your job search, you will find the opportunity you are seeking.

This tip sheet was prepared with the help of EDS. EDS participates in the President's Committee's Business Leadership Network (BLN), a business-led initiative that aims to stimulate best disability employment practices and enhance employment opportunities for job candidates who happen to have disabilities.

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President's Committee on Employment of People
with Disabilities
1331 F Street, NW Washington, DC 20004-1107
<http://www.pcepd.gov>

- Be concise and truthful.
- Use more than one page if necessary.
- If you have extra space, describe your interpersonal traits and attitude. Key words could include: time management, team player, dependable, leadership, and responsibility.
- Use a keyword summary of your skills at the top of your resume to get the attention of robotic and human inspectors. For example, if you are looking for an entry level position in architecture, your keyword summary might include: BS in Architecture, internship experience with large commercial project, knowledge of AutoCAD, PhotoShop, AccuRender, 3-D Studio. Place your name on its own line at the top of the page. Use the standard format for your address below your name. Then list each phone number on its own line.
- For job search purposes you may choose to have two versions of your resume:
 - One to send for the computer to read (scannable format and detailed descriptors).
 - One for people to read during an interview (a creative layout, enhanced typography, and summarized information.)
- Be sure to proofread your resume before sending it.





PRESIDENT'S
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