

UNTAPPED ARIZONA Presentation 11/1/2013

I would like to thank Larry and the council for approving the funding for Untapped Arizona

- I currently serve as a council member on the SRC. I also serve on the MWC board and am past vice chair, MWC Youth Council Board Member. Past board member of Goodwill, and served as their Business Advisory Council Chair. Past HR Committee Chair for the National Restaurant Association and past VSHRA board member
- I believe everyone can work

The following are the priorities for the next few months:

- Soliciting board members – It has been previously discussed that board members should be leaders in the business community that have a demonstrated commitment to hiring people with disabilities and are committed to supporting the financial and programmatic sustainability of the organization.
- Finalizing business practices with DES/EA around the use of the AZ Job Connection and Business Service Representatives
- Updating the website to accommodate the business practices with DES/EA
- Develop training for the provider community on how to support job candidates to prepare for work/interview, register in Az Job Connection and register on the Untapped Arizona website to get information on new job postings to AJC.
- Working with Partners in Brainstorms to conduct research in preparation for the strategic planning process that will be initiated in January. Research would include soliciting input from the business community and the employment service provider community on their needs to support successful employment for individuals with disabilities.
- Provide job seeking skills training seminars for clients and service providers

Meetings that are already set up:

- > -Define the business practices around the AZ Job Connection with DES
- > -Outline qualifications/requirements and develop outreach materials to solicit board members
- > -Development of the strategic plan that includes a survey to business leaders

Untapped Arizona: Talking Points

What do we use for the elevator speech?

- Supported by a single point of contact, Untapped Arizona is a Collaborative of organizations working together to help businesses meet their workforce needs by tapping into the labor pool of individuals with disabilities
- Originally started to assist businesses in responding to the national “Think Beyond the Label” campaign by providing access to job seekers with disabilities and information and technical assistance supports to diversify their workforce. It became clear that the effort should be permanent infrastructure to collectively serve Arizona businesses to meet their workforce needs.
- Serves to eliminate the silo oriented efforts of businesses to meet their workforce diversity needs. Untapped Arizona is a single, primary resource that can connect businesses to qualified job candidates with disabilities as well as support businesses to get their questions answered about hiring and retaining workers with disabilities.
- Partnerships with entities that are connected to job seekers with disabilities include:
 - One-Stops
 - Veterans Administration
 - Public and Private Vocational Rehabilitation
 - Regional Behavioral Health Authorities
 - Ticket to Work Employment Networks
 - Post-Secondary Educational Institutions
- Untapped Arizona also engages in long-term workforce planning discussions to help prepare individuals with disabilities to become a viable labor pool for future workforce needs of Arizona (or soon to be Arizona) businesses

Business Case Talking Points

Human Capital

- Workers with disabilities are often more proficient, productive, and efficient than their peers without disabilities
Business Week, "The New Workforce: A Tight Labor Market Gives the Disabled the Chance to Make Permanent Inroads," March, 2000

Diversity

- People with disabilities represent the largest single minority group in the country
U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy
<http://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/business/business.htm>

Marketing

- People with disabilities and their families represent a trillion dollar market segment
United States Bureau of Census, 2000
<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/disability/emperndis.pdf>
- A large number of Americans say they prefer to patronize businesses that hire people with disabilities
Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, July 2005, "National Survey of Consumer Attitudes Towards Companies that Hire People with Disabilities."
<http://www.mdworkforcepromise.org/docs/business/National%20Survey.pdf>

Workforce Preparedness

- Employment in Phoenix is not forecasted to reach the 2007, pre-recession levels, until 2016
Phoenix Business Journal, "Phoenix employment won't recover until 2016," June 20, 2011.
- Arizona's workforce is not prepared for current available jobs
Arizona Republic, "Training needed in growing Arizona fields," June 4, 2011 and "Job mismatch curbs economic rebound," June 22, 2011.

Several myths exist about employing people with disabilities. These myths can lead to missed business opportunities when employers ignore disabled candidates or choose not to focus recruitment efforts on the disabled population. HR can help support diversity initiatives by identifying these myths, dispelling them through educating managers and executives, and taking some easy steps to help create an inclusive work environment

Myth #1: People with disabilities are not qualified applicants. **Reality:** There are many qualified candidates with disabilities. Employers should not assume that persons with disabilities lack the necessary education, training and experience for employment, or that a disabled person would not be able to perform essential job functions. Many times, the only difference is that disabled workers might do things *differently*. "Differently" could mean more efficiently and better than what others have previously done in the position. Open managers' minds to the idea that new ideas and methods of performing work can come from workers with disabilities too and that disabled workers may have ideas not provided by non-disabled workers.

Myth #2: Reasonable accommodations are expensive. **Reality:** Many employees with disabilities require nothing more than the consideration you may already be providing to your employees, such as flexible work schedules, telecommuting or restructured. HR can help managers understand that accommodations are tools to ensure that a person with a disability can be productive, in the same way tools are provided to those without disabilities to ensure their productivity. The tools may be different (i.e., a computer with a larger monitor vs. a computer with a glare screen, or a desktop vs. a laptop to work from home), but they are all just tools to help ensure productivity. Successful organizations invest in all employees and do not limit themselves in finding creative solutions to move the organization forward.

Myth #3: Managers can't expect the same level of performance from employees with disabilities. **Reality:** According to the EEOC, "an employee with a disability must meet the same production standards, whether quantitative or qualitative, as an employee without a disability in the same job. Lowering or changing a production standard because an employee cannot meet it due to a disability is not considered a reasonable accommodation. An employer should evaluate the job performance of an employee with a disability the same way it evaluates any other employee's performance." When hiring new employees and evaluating current ones, In addition to dispelling myths, HR can help attract candidates with disabilities by:

- Using disability inclusion statements in job advertisements and the career section of your internet site.
- Attending disability-focused job fairs.
- Posting jobs on disability-oriented job boards.
- Ensuring applications are in formats that are accessible to all persons with disabilities.
- Providing reasonable accommodations that the qualified applicant will need to compete for the job.
- Educating all employees, especially managers, about working with employees with disabilities.

Finally, keep in mind that any employee at any moment could develop a disability and require a reasonable accommodation. Many times, these employees face termination of employment, and the business incurs substantial costs to hire and train a new employee, which can far exceed any reasonable accommodation provided to keep the employee employed.