



CAIP Innovative Attitude Change Project Proposal - Advancing Access and Inclusion

Project Title: Engage Talent
Submitted by: Ontario Disability Employment Network
Sector Targeted for Attitude Change: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employers, <input type="checkbox"/> Youth (preschool – Grade 12), <input type="checkbox"/> Community (geographic community or community of interest)
Specific Audience To Be Reached: Business owners and operators, through Chambers of Commerce, Human Resource Professionals Association Chapters
Specific Attitude To Be Established: That people who have disabilities also have abilities and talents to contribute to every business and the Canadian economy, in general. That business can't afford to exclude people who have disabilities from their workforce.
Geographic Reach: Ontario wide, but would be happy to partner with like-minded organizations in other provinces.
Project Description Summary: This would be a multi-tiered initiative of activities built upon two core concepts: 1. Hiring people who have a disability is a necessity for successful businesses; and, 2. All messages will be delivered by leading business champions using a peer-to-peer approach. ODEN has been using this method successfully for 8 years, tapping into employers that have exemplary and inclusive hiring practices. Our efforts have only been limited due to available resources. Even at that, the success has been beyond expectations. We would offer a variety of activities, including, but not limited to: Employer engagement sessions – lunch and learns, breakfast meetings, etc. These would be done in partnership with local Chambers of Commerce, Economic Development offices, HRPAs Chapters and Employment Service Agencies. Social Media Campaign – creating a series of short videos, focusing on inclusive business operators who speak to the myths and misconceptions around creating an inclusive workplace and the benefits they have gained in their business.



Webinars – create a series of webinars that focus not only on the ‘why hire’ question but quickly move to the ‘how to’ question, demonstrating a series of tools and strategies businesses can use.

In each of these activities, we would tap into the business champions to deliver the message.

Project Outcomes:

Change in attitude by employers. Dispel myths and misconceptions. Increase employment opportunities for people who have a disability.

Project Lead and Partners:

Ontario Disability Employment Network and Business Champions League (led by David C. Onley, Mark Wafer, et al.)

Also willing to partner with other like-minded organizations in other provinces to achieve greater reach. Once materials are established, distribution beyond Ontario becomes cost-effective.