

Accessible Technology Action Steps: A Guide for Employers

Key to fostering an inclusive workplace is ensuring your technology can be used by all your employees, including those with disabilities. The following 8 action steps provide a roadmap for businesses of all kinds to think about, obtain, and use accessible technology.

Step 1: Understand the Basics

- **Accessible Technology** means tech that can be used successfully by people with a wide range of abilities and disabilities. When technology is *truly* accessible, each user is able to interact with it in ways that work best for that person.
- Inaccessible workplace technology not only prevents your employees from performing at their best, but also exposes your business to **legal risk**.
- Most importantly, when workplace technology isn't accessible to people with disabilities, it limits their opportunities to get hired, and creates a barrier to their success and career advancement. That means your business may be **missing out on opportunities** to hire and promote highly qualified candidates.

Step 2: Assess Your Technology

- A key step to ensuring an accessible workplace is to **take stock** of the information and communications technology (ICT) you already use.
- Take inventory of your existing technologies and note any accessibility issues that have come up or may emerge in the future.
- **Assessing your technology is an on-going process**, so make a plan to address any accessibility issues you identify and to assess your technology again in the future.

Step 3: Build Your Initiative

- Achieving an accessible workplace means having an **accessibility mindset** – and that typically means establishing an **internal, company-wide initiative** to help ensure that accessibility remains a priority.
- Some potential steps include **building a business case** for accessible technology, **securing buy-in** from top-level management, assembling an **accessibility task force**, and creating **formal corporate policies and programs**.

Step 4: Buy and Implement Accessible Technology

- If accessible workplace technology is your goal, be sure that any new technology you buy is accessible, and **deploy solutions that work for all users**.
- Build accessibility into all procurement processes and **validate accessibility** of technology products prior to implementing them.
- **Apply any assessment** developed in Step 2 to all new technology purchases.

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Step 5: Communicate

- Once you and your company make a commitment to accessible workplace technology, **it is important to communicate** it both internally and externally.
- **Internal communication** can mean updating employee handbooks, implementing accessibility training, using corporate intranets, and establishing internal forums for communication.
- **External communication** can mean producing accessible online job applications and website content, and sharing explicit language about your business's commitment to equal opportunity, non-discrimination, and accessible technology.
- You will also want to ensure that you **communicate with vendors clearly and directly** about the accessibility of products.

Step 6: Measure Your Success

- As you develop your accessibility efforts or launch a dedicated initiative, it's important to know – **and be able to prove** – that your activities are having a positive effect.
- Establish methods to **demonstrate the value of accessible technologies**, set goals, and monitor your progress toward a more inclusive workplace.

Step 7: Share What Works

- Building, buying, and adopting accessible workplace technology is a smart business strategy for employers – but don't take our word for it. **Peer-to-peer communication** between employers is an essential element for developing inclusive workplaces across Arizona. If you would like to share your experience or exemplary practice in accessible technologies, we invite you to visit **UntappedArizona.com** and share your story. Whether it's a strategy for ensuring leadership buy-in, a new product testing method, or a technique you used to advocate for accessible technology in your workplace, we want to hear what's working.

Step 8: Learn More!

- Visit **UntappedArizona.com** to discover more resources, join our community, and share your story.