

## Small Business Planning Matrix

This matrix is designed to assist small businesses in establishing priorities for employing people with disabilities. It identifies bottom line actions that small businesses can take, provides spaces to add additional activities, a checklist to indicate those activities the business will address, and offers a timeline for when selected activities will be addressed.

### Instructions:

1. Determine which Bottom Line Actions your business will take and place an “x” next to them.
2. Determine two or three time periods in which actions should be implemented, focusing initially on top management commitment, planning, and communications. Decide in which period each action will be initiated and write down the date or quarter by which it will be completed. Some actions will be on-going.
3. Assign one or more people to be accountable for each action and any others who should be involved in the leadership of the action – write their name in the Accountability column.

**NOTE:** It is important to include key stakeholder groups such as senior management, supervisors, legal counsel, and employees with disabilities. If no people with disabilities are currently employed by your company, reach out to outsiders who have a disability and expertise in your industry and/or the employment of people with disabilities.

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X	Bottom Line Actions	0 to 6 Months	7 to 18 Months	19 to 30 Months	Accountability
	Articulate the business case for employing people with disabilities				
	Communicate the plan and business case frequently and thoroughly, especially to supervisors and middle managers				
	Write a document that voices the CEO's philosophy and commitment toward employing people with disabilities and place it on the company website in a prominent place				
	Get senior managers involved in a community organization that serves people with disabilities or in mentoring people with disabilities				
	Make all steps in the application process accessible; focus on the match between skills, experience, and education of the applicant and the essential functions of the job; treat all applicants equally				
	Find community partners				
	Offer internships to people with disabilities and ensure that current internship programs are inclusive of people with disabilities				
	Assign mentors to newly hired employees with disabilities prior to their arriving on the job and to those employees with disabilities already on the job				
	Provide reasonable accommodations even if your business is too small to be covered by the law (they don't cost much and they'll build a lot of goodwill and potentially provide access to customers and clients)				
	Offer at least a half-day of disability awareness and etiquette training. An additional benefit is that it will help attract and satisfy clients and customers with disabilities				
	Establish a focus group of employees with disabilities to be convened quarterly or at least biannually to understand how they are experiencing your workplace, their unmet needs, and how the workplace can be improved				
	Provide at least a half day of training on leading inclusively and supportively for all supervisors				
	Conduct a short, confidential annual survey to assess the work climate; if you already conduct an employee survey, add three to five questions that are relevant to employees with disabilities				
	Take advantage of financial incentives				
	Engage employees with disabilities in establishing a "disabilities" branding for your business and don't hesitate to publicize your company's real accomplishments				
	Create a focus group of consumers or clients with disabilities to assess your branding and understand their evolving needs and requirements				