



DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY

Version	003	Compiled By	Tara Doyle
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1.1 AIM and OBJECTIVES

The BIZLINK Disability Employment Strategy aims to support the 'National Disability Strategy 2010–2020' objective to "Improve employment, recruitment and retention of people with disability ... in funded organisations." The Disability Employment Services Deed requires BIZLINK to "produce and implement a Disability Employment Strategy." The Deed defines the Disability Employment Strategy as "a strategy implemented by the Provider designed to attract, develop and maintain employees with disability within the Provider's own organisation.

KEY PRINCIPLES OF THE STRATEGY

Our strategy is based on the following key principles:

- We value an inclusive and diverse workforce;
- We recognize that people with a disability have diverse knowledge, skills, abilities and aspirations;
- We believe people with a disability can achieve sustainable open employment given a good job-match and appropriate supports.

1.2 SCOPE

This strategy covers activities related to the employment participation of people with a disability both within and external to BIZLINK. It includes the:

- Recruitment, training and retention of BIZLINK employees with a disability;
- Promotion and job-matching of people with a disability;
- Training and retention of new or existing employees with a disability;
- Disability awareness training.

1.3 REFERENCES

- National Standards for Disability Services
- ISO 9001:2016
- The Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)
- Disability Employment Services Deed
- National Disability Strategy 2010–2020

1.4 STRATEGIES

1.4.1 Disability Employment Strategy Document

The Disability Employment Strategy references:

- The purpose and scope of the strategy;
- The relevant standards with which BIZLINK complies;
- Our commitment to the engagement and retention of people with a disability;
- The strategy being available to stakeholders;
- Employees having an awareness of the strategy;
- Document and Data Control;
- Revision of the document.

1.4.2 Collection of Equity Data

BIZLINK employees are asked to complete the Employee Details form which includes an optional section regarding Equity Data including identifying as having a disability. BIZLINK will encourage employees to provide Equity Data and will assure employees that providing such information will not negatively affect them.

1.4.3 Strategy Objectives

Objective 1. Increase the participation of people with a disability in employment

Skills gaps, skills shortages, an ageing workforce and labour shortages are issues of concern for all employers. It is in each employer's best interest to market itself as an employer of choice by adopting innovative recruitment and retention strategies. This can include strategies to explore relatively untapped labour pools, and invest in the recruitment and development of workers with a disability.

Some 20% of the Australian population identify as having a disability. Employing more people with a disability makes good business sense for a range of reasons, including the following:

- Attracting, retaining and developing the capacity of people with a disability will assist an organisation to be seen as an employer of choice, particularly when demand for skilled and talented employees increases;

- People with a disability offer varying perspectives, experience and knowledge which can add value to an organisations culture;
- Increasing the diversity of workplaces promotes interaction, which enhances knowledge and awareness of, and competence in, working with people from a range of backgrounds.

BIZLINK Employee Recruitment

To attract people with a disability to apply for employment with BIZLINK and facilitate engagement through our recruitment procedures BIZLINK Managers and employees involved in recruitment processes will:

- Be aware of the BIZLINK Policy on Equal Employment Opportunity which ensures that employee selection practices within BIZLINK are based solely on merit and are not influenced by extraneous factors, including sex (gender), marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, family responsibility or family status, race, religious or political conviction, impairment, disability or age.
- Consider the content of our job advertisements and our website as regards attracting people with a disability to apply for positions.
- Provide flexible interview and selection processes. Providing additional assistance to any applicant as required to explain the selection process and how best to address the Selection Criteria and prepare for the interview.
- Consider inviting applicants for a workplace visit prior to a formal interview to meet members of the BIZLINK team and to become more comfortable with the work environment.
- Consider choosing to convene applicant interviews in a less formal environment and modifying the room set-up to ensure it is welcoming and relaxed.
- Consider work trials, work experience, School Based Traineeships, Work-based Traineeships, flexible employment options, including naturally occurring vacancies, job creation, job restructuring and job sharing to engage people with a disability.

People with a disability registering with BIZLINK

To attract people with a disability to register with BIZLINK for their employment service to build our reputation as a service of choice for employers seeking to engage people with a disability:

- Managers will facilitate service access through our policies, procedures and employee training.
- The Managing Director will set registration targets to increase the number of clients using BIZLINK services, whilst maintaining high levels of service performance e.g. Star Ratings.
- Employees will promote BIZLINK as a service that supports people with a disability, particularly as regards direct registration pathways via Schools and Community-based organisations.

- Employees will seek out community partnerships with Schools and Mental Health Units to share resources and promote the registration of people with a disability.

Employers Recruiting BIZLINK Clients

BIZLINK will promote people with a disability to employers to increase their participation in employment by:

- Providing job-matching and on-the-job support to meet the individual needs of each person with a disability and the requirements of the employer.
- Reference this strategy to provide information to employers (co-workers) on how best to engage and retain people with a disability.

Objective 2. Improve the job-retention rate of people with a disability.

BIZLINK Employees:

To retain employees with disability employed by BIZLINK:

- Management will provide opportunities for skills and career development.
- Managers will be encouraged and supported to provide individually designed professional development opportunities for all BIZLINK employees in accordance with their Performance Appraisal, Key Position Requirements and Training Record.
- Managers may implement flexible employee support strategies including mentor support and holistic or pastoral care (considering broader issues which may be outside of work e.g. personal and social wellbeing, health, social issues and emotional support) and will utilise community or natural supports wherever appropriate.
- Managers and employees will be aware of the BIZLINK Policy on Equal Employment Opportunity which ensures that employee training and promotion practices within BIZLINK are based solely on merit and are not influenced by extraneous factors, including sex (gender), marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, family responsibility or family status, race, religious or political conviction, impairment, disability or age.
- Managers are encouraged to access education and training (including work-based traineeships) to continuously improve and enhance the skills and knowledge of BIZLINK employees.
- People with a disability who resign or exit BIZLINK will be encouraged to complete an exit survey/interview in line with the BIZLINK policy and procedures on the exit interview for all employees. This information can be used to improve our retention and attraction of people with a disability.

Employee / Employer Training

BIZLINK will provide employees and employers (co-workers) with information and/or opportunities for training and education regarding creating and maintaining a supportive and inclusive workplace:

- Managers will provide resources and seek out training opportunities to ensure that all employees have access to information regarding the support of people with a disability, that can be shared with employers (co-workers).
- BIZLINK will offer disability awareness training for employees and provide co-worker training to employers as needed.
- Co-worker Training offered by BIZLINK will be flexible and adapted to meet the employer's needs. It can be a formal training session on or off-site or ongoing informal advice, support and mentoring.

Fostering a Culture of Inclusion / Work Environment

BIZLINK will promote events that raise awareness of disability issues, achievements and celebrations, for example, BIZLINK Employer of the Year Award, which promotes inclusive employers and people with a disability in quality employment in diverse roles, International Day of People with a Disability, using, for example, client newsletter and posters as appropriate.

Positive communication and attitudes are encouraged from the perspective that the language and terminology used provides direct evidence of employee's values e.g. employees speak positively and respectfully about people with a disability and avoid the use of labels or derogatory language with regard to age, gender, race, culture, religion or disability.

BIZLINK will promote www.jobaccess.gov.au as a site that provides useful information to improve disability awareness and inclusion.

BIZLINK will share this Disability Employment Strategy as a resource for our employers who currently engage or who are seeking to engage people with a disability.

1.5 Review

Management will review this Disability Employment Strategy every three years, however, if at any time the legislative, policy or funding environment is so altered that the document is no longer appropriate in its current form, it will be reviewed immediately and amended accordingly.

1.6 Documentation / Quality Records

Disability Employment Strategy	Key Position Requirements
Employee Details	Training Record
Employee Start & End Dates	Performance & Board Reports
Policy on Equal Employment Opportunity	Quality Review Committee Minutes
Employee Performance Appraisal	

GETTING INFORMATION HOW YOU NEED IT

ABILITIES

BIZLINK assists people with a range of abilities.

ASSISTANCE

BIZLINK employees can read and explain this information as needed

ACCESS

BIZLINK can provide the information in different ways, such as in large print, another language or electronically, as needed.

The Australian Government funds BIZLINK services, the views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect those of the Government.



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