

**READY** **PRÊTS**  
**WILLING** **DISPONIBLES**  
**& ABLE** **& CAPABLES**

# INCLUSIVE HIRING WORKS

THE BUSINESS BENEFITS OF HIRING PEOPLE WITH AN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY OR AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER



## Building an Inclusive Labour Force

The difference between success and failure lies in the talent and diverse skill set of your workforce. Across Canada, there are close to 500,000 working-aged adults with an intellectual disability or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). This untapped workforce can help address current labour shortages while making your business stronger, more diverse and more productive.

Ready, Willing and Able (RWA) is a national initiative of the Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL), the Canadian Autism Spectrum Disorders Alliance (CASDA) and their member organizations. Funded by the Government of Canada and active in each province and territory across the country, RWA supports Canadian businesses to build an inclusive workplace that capitalizes on the skills and qualifications of people with an intellectual disability or ASD.

There is rapidly increasing pressure on businesses both large and small to be on the cutting edge of innovative practices, processes, and products. A business that can build and retain a diverse team where employees are engaged and invested, and where their skills and interests align with their roles, is much more likely to be successful.

As a national strategy to create inclusive and effective labour markets, RWA provides:

- Insights on the business benefits of inclusive hiring and the return on investment experienced by Canadian businesses who hire people with an intellectual disability or ASD
- Access to research and best practices for leveraging the benefits of a diverse and inclusive workforce
- Disability awareness training
- An individualized approach to developing and implementing inclusive recruitment and selection strategies
- Coordinated access to a broad talent pool of persons with an intellectual disability or ASD
- Direct connections to local employment agencies who provide on-the-job supports and accommodations to candidates and new employees with an intellectual disability or ASD

## MISCONCEPTIONS

Across the country, many jobs go unfilled because individuals with an intellectual disability or ASD are not considered as potential candidates. Their strengths and talents are often overlooked due to outdated and false perceptions that focus on the ‘disability’ rather than the ‘ability’.

Common concerns for Canadian businesses in considering hiring an individual with a disability include:

- ✓ Productivity and performance
- ✓ Impact on corporate culture
- ✓ Impact on consumers
- ✓ Safety
- ✓ Cost of accommodations

These **preconceived concerns** about hiring employees with an intellectual disability or ASD averaged 42% higher than the challenges actually experienced in hiring them according to research from the **Institute for Corporate Productivity**.

(Parrey, Davis, Lykins, Johnson, & Riehle, 2014)

## PRODUCTIVITY & PERFORMANCE

Making a hiring decision should always come down to selecting the best person for the job. While each new employee brings their own strengths, there are significant positive performance trends noted by businesses that have hired people with an intellectual disability or ASD.

**89%** of businesses rated employees hired through RWA as well as or better than average on **CONTRIBUTING TO THE FIRM’S PROFIT MARGIN** (CIC, 2018)

**76%** of businesses rated employees hired through RWA as well as or better than average on **PRODUCTIVITY** (CIC, 2018)

“DUSTIN FITS IN TO THE COSTCO COMPANY CULTURE PERFECTLY, AND HAS A WORK ETHIC THAT **SETS THE BAR** IN THE STORE.”



— *Chriss Little, Front End Manager  
Costco, Winnipeg MB*

“TAKE THAT LEAP OF FAITH. THERE’S A LOT OF SUPPORT OUT THERE. YOU’LL GET **PRODUCTIVITY** AND IT IS VERY REWARDING TO THE ENTIRE TEAM.”



— *Mike McGregor, Branch Manager  
Bluewave Energy, Sudbury, ON*



## RELIABILITY

When an employee does not come into work it can result in lost business, reduced productivity or missed deadlines; all of which hurt performance and profitability. Absenteeism in Canada resulted in an annual estimated cost of \$16.6 billion, according to Statistics Canada (2012), but businesses that have hired through RWA report high rates of employee reliability.

(CIC, 2018)

Businesses rated employees hired through RWA as well as or better than average on:

PUNCTUALITY **94%**

ATTENDANCE **95%**

USE OF SICK DAYS **98%**

Source: Centre for Inclusion and Citizenship (CIC) at the University of British Columbia, 2018

## RETENTION

Inclusive hiring contributes to a stronger, more stable workforce. Recruiting new staff, training and orientation, and covering missed shifts takes time and resources. Companies that have an effective retention strategy are able to maintain skilled labour and reap the benefits of knowledge continuity in the workplace, resulting in significant cost savings.

**97%** of businesses rated employees hired through RWA as well as or better than average on **TURNOVER** (CIC, 2018)

Employees hired by businesses working with RWA demonstrated a **93% RETENTION RATE** (CIC, 2018)

**“CLIENTS APPRECIATE THAT WE HIRE EMPLOYEES WITH AN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY OR AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER - DIVERSITY GIVES US A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE.”**



— Sarah Hunter, Co-owner  
Coop Coco & Calendula, Montreal QC

## INNOVATION

Creativity comes from diversity. Many companies that hire inclusively experience an innovation advantage. In addition to innovative practices that new perspectives bring, the creativity and flexibility used to meet the needs of a diverse and inclusive workforce translates to an ability to innovate and adapt to changing markets.

(Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, 2013)

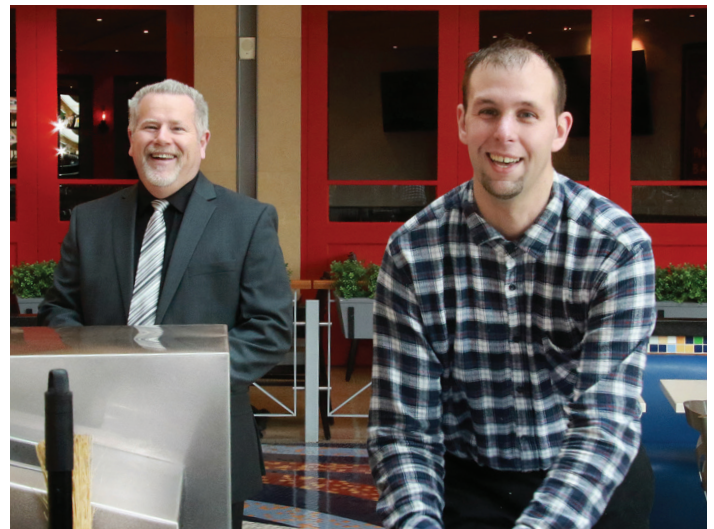
## IMPACT ON CORPORATE CULTURE

Although job performance tends to be the focus of most research on employees with an intellectual disability or ASD, inclusive hiring impacts the whole team and enhances workplace culture. Businesses working with RWA report that having a diverse and inclusive workforce has boosted morale, enhanced connectedness and enriched leadership and management skills among senior level staff.

**“A DIVERSE WORKFORCE AND THE INCLUSION OF TALENT FROM DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS MAKES OUR ORGANIZATION STRONGER AND WE APPRECIATE THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THOSE WITH DIFFERENT ABILITIES.”**



— Richard Taylor, President  
Niagara Casinos, Niagara Falls, ON



Businesses rated employees hired through RWA as well as or better than average on:

THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARDS WORK **99%**

GETTING ALONG WITH CO-WORKERS **97%**

GETTING ALONG WITH MANAGEMENT **100%**

GETTING ALONG WITH CUSTOMERS/CLIENTS **90%**

CONTRIBUTING TO POSITIVE WORKPLACE MORALE **99%**

Source: Centre for Inclusion and Citizenship (CIC) at the University of British Columbia, 2018

## IMPACT ON CONSUMERS

Successful businesses recognize the value of developing long-lasting relationships with their customers. In today's market, consumer loyalty can be the key to a business' long-term success. People want to frequent businesses that reflect their communities and values.

**92%** of individuals regarded companies who hired people with a disability **MORE FAVOURABLY THAN THEIR COMPETITORS**

(Siperstein, Romano, Mohler & Parker, 2006)

**87%** of people indicated they would prefer to give their business to companies **WHO HIRE INCLUSIVELY**

(Siperstein, Romano, Mohler & Parker, 2006)

**73%** of businesses that hired through RWA reported receiving positive feedback from customers/clients regarding their **COMMITMENT TO INCLUSION**

(CIC, 2018)

## SAFETY

As a responsible business, ensuring the safety of employees is always top of mind. Research supports that employees with disabilities do not pose a higher safety risk on the job than their co-workers without disabilities. Hiring someone with an intellectual disability or ASD does not increase your liability for workplace safety, Workers' Compensation and general insurance coverage.

A 2012 study explored the impact of inclusive employment at two Walgreens distribution centres. As compared to all other distribution centres in the company, these two centres had:

- ✓ 40% lower safety incident rate
- ✓ 67% lower medical treatment costs
- ✓ 73% lower employee time away due to accidents
- ✓ 77% lower overall costs associated with accidents

(Kaletta, Binks & Robinson, 2012)

## COST OF ACCOMMODATIONS

Providing required accommodations for employees is standard practice for Canadian businesses. Unfortunately, with respect to persons with disabilities, the perceived increased cost of such accommodations has been identified by many businesses as a barrier to inclusive hiring.

Research indicates that these costs are minimal in actuality, especially given the return on investment:

**57%** of job accommodations cost nothing and **37%** had a one-time cost of \$500 or less (Job Accommodation Network, 2013)

Where there are accommodation requirements, RWA and our employment agency partners offer a range of supports and resources at no cost to employees or businesses. From support with selection and onboarding and job coaching, to adaptive technology and equipment, RWA removes the perceived financial barriers of inclusive hiring.

**“DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS TO SUPPORT YOUR SUCCESS IS INTEGRAL TO THE PROSPERITY OF ANY BUSINESS. I THINK IT IS A MISSED OPPORTUNITY TO NOT TAKE ADVANTAGE OF WHAT RWA HAS TO OFFER.”**



— Matthew MacKenzie, General Manager  
The Algonquin Resort, NB



## IT'S ABOUT FIT

Since 2014, thousands of Canadian businesses have collaborated with RWA to diversify their workforce and tap into the talents of employees with an intellectual disability or ASD. Collaborating with businesses of all sizes and industries, RWA supports businesses across the full employment trajectory, to ensure the best fit for both the business and the candidate. Through RWA, candidates find opportunities that align with their strengths, and businesses gain talented and productive employees who enhance their bottom line.

[www.readywillingable.ca](http://www.readywillingable.ca)

Funded by the Government of Canada's Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities.

Financé par le Fonds d'intégration pour les personnes handicapées du gouvernement du Canada.