

Castle

LIVE WORK LEARN

A Business Case for Hiring People With Disability



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Employing someone with a disability could be your best business decision this year

I believe the vast majority of Australians would agree people who have a disability deserve the same opportunity to find work as everyone else, and supporting people with a disability to get work is the right thing to do.

And it seems business owners tend to agree. When surveyed last year, 77% of Australian business owners stated they were open to hiring people with disability¹.

However, when it comes to taking action, there's evidently a disconnect. Because while 77% said they were open to it, only 39% of larger businesses, 29% of small-to-medium businesses, and 17% of micro businesses currently employ a person with a disability².

With 14% (2.1m) of Australians of working age having a disability, this is a significant issue.

Chances are you know someone with a disability and, if you do, you'll no doubt have seen first-hand the difficulty they have finding work – unemployment rates are higher (9.4% compared to 4.9%) and participation rates are lower – (53% of people with disability are in work compared to 83% of all Australians.)¹

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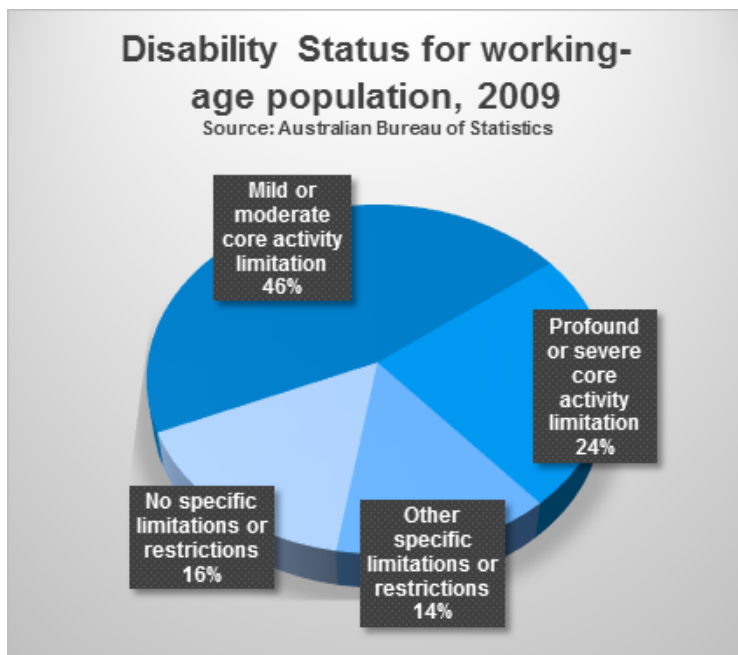
In fact, Australia's employment participation rates for people with disability are amongst the lowest in the OECD.

You can see the extent of the challenge, and hopefully, you can understand why I feel so passionately about building more inclusive communities and workplaces.

It is my desire to make this a social priority, and fortunately, I'm not alone.

The employment of people with disability made it onto the agenda at the 2018 World Economic Forum, so there is global interest in addressing this issue.

So, if you're a business owner who supports the notion that people with a disability, health condition or injury should be helped to find work, but has yet to take action, read on – you may be pleasantly surprised at how easy – and beneficial for everyone – it is.



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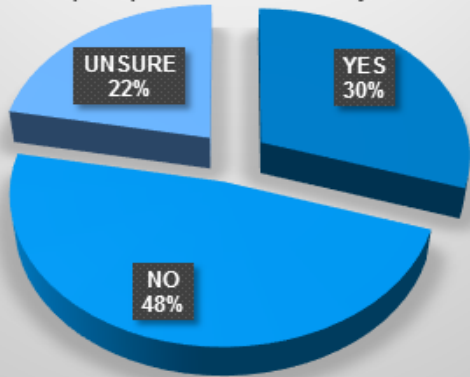
What is disability, health condition or injury?

Disability, health conditions and injury cover an incredibly wide range of people and conditions; many are 'hidden' or invisible. When you hear disability you might think of someone in a wheelchair. Did you know less than 5% of people with a disability in Australia, use a wheelchair?³

Some people have a temporary condition that may be due to an injury. Others have a lifelong health condition or disability, which may include vision or hearing loss, intellectual disabilities, physical disabilities, amputations, Asperger's or autism.

Over 45% of the people with disabilities we work with have a mental health condition. Mental health is a huge issue, with 1 in 5 Australian employees affected by mental health issues each year. This alone is estimated to cost Australian businesses \$10.9b in lost productivity annually.

Australian Network on Disability: Disability Confidence Survey 2017
Q: Does your organisation employ people with disability?



The proportion of Senior Managers who are aware that they have employees with disability has declined from 60% in 2016 to 39% in 2017.

The benefits for the individual, community and employers

Employment can help people with disability find a real purpose in life; it offers a meaningful connection with their community and, most importantly, financial and social independence.

Hiring a person with a disability is not an act of charity. You will gain a contributing member of your team.

The secret to success is matching the right person to the right job. When you work with a disability employment specialist, like Castle (who won't charge you a cent), you will be presented with candidates who are the right fit for your business, with appropriate qualifications, experience and skills.

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Castle has worked with many employers across Newcastle, the Hunter region and Central Coast for almost 30 years. The benefits for businesses who employ a disabled person are wide-ranging and hugely impactful, including;

- You get a talented, loyal and committed member of staff.



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- Employing someone with a disability is the right thing to do and creates a very positive message for your business, your staff and your customers.
- Your customers will love it. You no doubt have customers with disabilities, who are three times as likely to avoid an organisation and twice as likely to dissuade others, because of an organisation's negative diversity reputation⁴.
- You actively demonstrate to customers and potential staff you are an inclusive, progressive employer of choice.
- Knowing you have positively changed someone's life and are helping build a more inclusive community.

The challenges preventing you from taking on someone with a disability

In our experience, we've found it's often the more practical issues businesses face – putting the theory into practice. Of course, the unknown is just that, and many businesses are incredibly busy and simply haven't got the time to delve into figuring out how to go about it all.

It is for this reason the Commonwealth Government has developed an [employer's toolkit for hiring people with disability](#) and why organisations such as Castle exist. We are funded by the Commonwealth Government to help employers navigate the process, access the supports available - including government funding for workplace modifications, assistive technology, wage subsidies and most importantly to provide on the job support to your new employee - for as long as you and they need it.



Now is the time to act!

Hiring a person with disability can be mutually rewarding for your business. And if you partner with the right provider (like Castle), the journey is seamless and thoroughly rewarding.

Of course, it's a big decision, but I would like to appeal to you to start the conversation with us today.

You may not be ready to bring someone into the business just yet. It may be something you 'might' want to do in the future. If you have the slightest interest in helping people in the local community and helping us build a more inclusive society, please contact me for a no-obligation chat.

Alternatively, sign up for our newsletter to keep up-to-date with how other local businesses are benefiting from employing people with a disability.

I'd love to hear from you.

Dianne Hamer
CEO, Castle Personnel

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Frequently Asked Questions

Common questions and issues employers encounter about disability employment range from the suitability of business premises to logistics and cost.

Fortunately, there are very easy answers to all of these questions!

Our building isn't suitable.

Castle can help you access government funding to make workplace modifications if any are identified as being necessary

It'll cost too much and there'll be too much paperwork

Castle can help with the paperwork – it is included in our free service. In fact, in some instances you may be eligible for a wage subsidy of up to \$10,000 depending on the person you hire.

What sort of person will I get / will I get a choice of person?

Castle will take the time to understand your needs and to match candidates to these. We seek to find the right person who is the right fit for your business and present you with a shortlist.

How will my customers react?

Research shows hiring people with disability is good for business – with 20% of the population having a disability it is likely that 20% of your customers may have a disability also. Businesses that employ people with disabilities attract customers with disabilities, you are actually opening yourself up to new customers!

How much on-boarding and training will they need?

It varies from person to person and job to job, but broadly speaking about the same as anyone else. Of course though if more is required, this is where Castle can help. We support your new employee for as long as it takes to help them settle into their new role.



1. https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/document_making_it_easier_to_employ_people_with_disability
2. https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documen_making_it_easier_to_employ_people_with_disability
3. <https://www.and.org.au/pages/disability-statistics.html>
4. <http://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/rights-and-freedoms/publications/missing-out-business-case-customer-diversity-2017>