

# Key Reasons why you should include people who have a disability in your business

## Demographic

- At almost 5.3 million people and 15.9%, people who have a disability make up the **largest minority** of the Canadian population.
- There are almost 1.8 million working age Ontarians who have a disability. The **unemployment rate** in this group is 49% and would be higher if it included people who have never been able to access the labour market.

## Economic

- Workers who have a disability are **5 times more likely to stay on the job** than other workers. Toronto-based Tim Horton's franchise owner, Mark Wafer, cites an average tenure of six years compared to less than one for non-disabled employees. With the cost of turnover ranging from 30%- 150% of that position's annual salary, employee loyalty is vital.
- Currently, Canadians who have a disability control \$25 billion in disposable income. With more people working, this **spending power** could vastly increase.
- The Conference Board of Canada projects a **labour shortage and decline in gross domestic product (GDP)** by 2020. Increasing the workforce participation rates of people who have a disability must define part of the solution.

## Social

- A Job Opportunity Information Network (JOIN) 2009 employer study indicated that employers feel that people who have a disability **add value and bring a fresh perspective** to the workplace. Diversity breeds **innovation**; this is vital in a competitive market.
- As well as increasing staff morale, having a diverse workforce demonstrates community and corporate responsibility and creates an inclusive and accepting work environment for all people. Employers can become **community leaders** in diverse hiring practices.
- A Harris study showed that 46% of workers who have a disability **work harder** than other workers and are 39% **more reliable** than other workers.
- With people who have a disability making up a significant portion of the Ontario population, businesses have realized that having a workforce that represents their diverse base of customers/clients builds **favourable customer response**.
- Just like everyone else, most people who have a disability want to work, be a taxpayer, contribute to their communities and demonstrate their capacities and skills.

Sources: Vision Consulting, Joe Dale, Principal, 'Disability and Employment', 2009 and [www.joininfo.ca](http://www.joininfo.ca)