

Myths and Facts

Myth: People with disabilities can't keep up with other workers and take sick days more often.

Fact: Many studies show that employees with disabilities are just as productive and dependable as their co-workers without disabilities, and that staff retention is 72 per cent higher among persons with disabilities. That adds up to savings of millions of dollars every year in hiring and training costs.

The experiences of many employers show that when businesses hire people with disabilities:

- the pool of potential employees becomes larger
- staff retention rates increase
- absenteeism decreases.

Myth: A person with a disability cannot work in a position requiring physical labour.

Fact: It is important not to make assumptions about a person with a disability and what they are able to do. According to Statistics Canada (2006), 11.5 per cent of Canadians have mobility-related disabilities. But that does not necessarily mean that they can't work in a physically demanding job. It's ability, not disability, that counts.

Myths and Facts continued

Myth: Accommodations and supports in the workplace would be difficult and costly.

Fact: The vast majority of people with disabilities do not require special workplace accommodations. For those who do, the cost is often minimal, if there is a cost at all – for example changing a desk layout (\$0), or purchasing a telephone amplifier (\$48) or a specialized chair (\$400). According to the Job Accommodation Network, more than half of all accommodations cost less than \$500.

Myth: Workers' compensation rates increase when people with disabilities are hired into the workplace.

Fact: Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) premium payments depend on the health and safety risk of the type of business, the size of the payroll, and on the company's health and safety record – not on whether employees have disabilities.

Myth: It would be difficult to terminate an employee with a disability.

Fact: The laws regarding termination of employees for cause are no different for a person with a disability than for a person without a disability.

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