



## **Kit 7:** **Funding to Hire Someone** **with a Disability**

The perceived cost of hiring a person with a disability can be intimidating, however, the most common workplace accommodations cost little or nothing! In the event that a business has to pay for an employee accommodation, funding options do exist.

### **QUICK FACTS**

- 80% of accommodations in the workplace for people with disabilities cost under \$500.
- The most expensive accommodations are retrofits, such as building accessible washrooms
- Accommodations help to retain existing employees, increase productivity, and reduce costs
- Accommodations have indirect benefits like increased moral and improved employee interactions.

### **THE REAL COST OF ACCOMMODATION**

Many businesses are resistant to the idea of making accommodations for employees with disabilities but the reality is that employers accommodate their employees all the time. For example, one employee might want to change their schedule in order to accommodate childcare, while another might need to change the workplace temperature to be warmer or colder. There are all kinds of accommodations being made for employees on a regular basis and employees with disabilities are no different in their need – and right – to request the same.

Accommodations help employees to do their job better, be engaged and feel a valued part of the organization. Accommodations benefit everyone!

Did you know that?

- 80% of accommodations in the workplace cost under \$500,
- Employee engagement is often greater for employees with disabilities
- Employee turnover is 5x less for those with disabilities compared to those without

The most expensive accommodations are retrofits, such as making a bathroom accessible to mobility device users. However, even costly changes can have a positive impact on an organization's sustainability. When Tim Hortons renovates a new store, franchise owner Mark Wafer usually sees a 1.4% drop in sales. However, when Wafer renovates his existing stores for accessibility, with accessible customer service training, and the installation of Order Assist buttons at doorways and the drive-through, he sees an 8% increase in sales! Clearly, accessibility is good for business.

Supports are available to businesses looking to increase accessibility such as [Stop the Gap](#) for building ramps; the [Enabling Accessibility Fund](#) which supports the capital costs of construction and renovations related to improving physical accessibility; [Abilities Connect](#) which helps organizations to remove financial barriers associated with accommodating employees with disabilities in the workplace; and [Ready, Willing & Able](#) which will help you to find, hire, and train an employee with intellectual disabilities or autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

The misconception that accessibility is nothing more than charity is preventing businesses from taking full advantage of the push ahead that the AODA offers. Accessibility creates profit for businesses, increased market reach, innovation, and a positive brand image.

## RESOURCES

- [Ready, Willing & Able](#)
- [Enabling Accessibility Fund](#)
- [ConnectAbility](#)
- [Stopgap.ca](#)