

## **Responding to Employer Objections: Worksheet**

Businesses often have concerns about and possible objections to hiring job seekers with disabilities. Often, these concerns can be addressed and fears alleviated if we are prepared to respond to particular issues. The point in preparing responses is not to make you “fast-talker” but rather to help you feel more confident and establish credibility in discussions with potential employers. The responses offered here are not comprehensive but provide a starting point for being responsive and helpful in addressing possible concerns. When dealing with employers, please keep the following strategies in mind:

### **Strategies**

1. Draw out employer concerns/previous experiences
2. Be prepared: address possible concerns if you are doing a presentation
3. Avoid questions becoming objections: answer honestly and completely
4. Rephrase concerns/questions assuring understanding, showing empathy
5. Establish credibility: let your success with other businesses speak for you

### **Issues, Questions and Potential Ideas & Responses**

#### **“Can’t afford it...”**

- Using us as an employee pool can save advertising and/or training dollars.
- Most accommodations are of minimal to no cost. Person has funding for accommodations.
- Can’t afford not to hire this qualified candidate.
- Tax incentives available.

#### **“Is this a liability?”**

- A common myth. Actually, research shows that people with disabilities don’t have any more accidents on the job than other employees.
- Workers Compensation is more a function of accidents in a workplace not a particular demographic group.

#### **“Don’t have the time to give extra supervision...”**

- Job training (e.g. OJT) and coaching may be provided through our organization.
- We provide ongoing support and resources to you, such as information about hiring people with disabilities, ADA and tax credits, etc.

#### **“Bad past experiences...”**

- It is so important to have a good job match, just as with any employees. I think that (job seeker) has the skills that you are looking for.
- Maybe we can talk about your experience and what the problem(s) were.

#### **“Why hire them?”**

- Qualified, organized, reliable, dedicated.
- We can provide support on the job that you won’t get from traditional hiring.

- Talk about specific skills as identified in job description and how they could match the job seeker, in the employer's language.

**“Not qualified...”**

- Identify previous experiences candidate has had for transferable skills.
- Restructure job so that candidate can do components for which he/she is qualified.
- Clarify specific qualifications for future candidates.
- Leave door open in case future opportunities arise for this candidate.

**“It is a multi-tasked job...”**

- Able to perform complex tasks despite the disability.
- Discuss job re-structure.

**Safety issues**

- Let's discuss the specific safety issues to determine if this would be relevant to (job seeker) doing this work.
- Many of our referrals are able to perform safely in this environment.

**“Not safe for wheelchair accessibility ...”**

- Candidate does not require a wheelchair on the job.
- Our agency can assist you with compliance with the ADA to prevent future situations.

**“No driver's license...”**

- Job share, para-transit, ride share...
- Is driving required to perform essential functions(?)....perhaps there are other positions or tasks that can be carved (i.e. Job re-structure).
- Has no difficulty getting to and from work without a license.

**“The boss hired already...”**

- That's great. Do you anticipate a similar position opening up in the future?
- Are there other positions available for which I may have qualified candidates?
- If I can be of assistance to you re: education about ADA, tax credits, training for disability awareness etc....

**“I don't make those decisions...”**

- Could you please give me the name/number of the person who does?
- I'd like the opportunity to speak to the person who does about (job seeker's) experiences and qualifications

**“Call me later...”**

- Thank you! When would be a good date/time for you?
- Perhaps we can set a time right now so I don't interrupt you....

**“Everyone needs to do everything...”**

- We would be happy to do a job analysis, to examine job tasks and help you to write a job description for a (job seeker) that alleviates some of the incidental tasks that you are currently paying top employees to perform.

### **General Obstnacy**

- What a shame about \_\_\_\_\_, because (job seeker) has proven to be a great employee with long-term job retention. I hope you find someone as qualified. If you change your mind, feel free to call. (Bring up your testimonials/ success stories)

### **“I think we can find someone much more qualified...”**

- Sometimes hiring someone overqualified leads to decreased employee satisfaction and high turnover. It is really all about the match (the skills = the job).
- How about if we stay in contact if other opportunities arise.
- This candidate’s dedication and strong work ethic enhances the likelihood of your satisfaction with hiring him/her.

### **They promise the job, but there is no follow through**

- Show understanding about employers’ potential fears angst. I appreciate your ability to see the skills that (job seeker) possesses. Some employers feel too intimidated to hire, because they don’t understand how (job seeker) communicates.
- You were very open to exploring this opportunity and I am glad you felt comfortable asking questions. Please keep us in mind if future opportunities arise and I’ll be sure to stay in touch. I know (job seeker) has a lot to offer in the way of (specific job details).

### **“What about their productivity?”**

- Our agency will assist (job seeker) with learning how to do the job in order to increase productivity to a level that meets your needs. This will spare you the resources you typically provide new employees.
- Research has shown that the performance of workers with disabilities is comparable to others
- I know you will be pleased with (job seeker’s) performance. He is a conscientious worker, who does not spend excessive time chatting with co-workers or taking extended lunches.
- There is no reason why (job seeker) cannot perform at the rate of any of his co-workers.

### **“Upper management said no...”**

- I would really like to set up a meeting to speak with management, I am sure we can address concerns. Could I have his/her name/number?

### **After much work, no start date**

- Follow up with calls to determine the problem
- Alleviate concerns before employer verbalizes them.
- Attempt to identify next steps that would be helpful.

### **“Not enough work now”**

- Job shadowing opportunities in the meantime?
- Start with job training prior to official start date?

- Begin on part-time basis?
- When will business pick up/do you anticipate an opening?

#### **Reviewing (or lost) applications**

- Allow me to identify (Nancy's) skills that will meet your hiring needs.
- Keep in mind that (job seeker) brings you me as a resource for job training, information about current legislature, ADA, etc.
- What is your email/fax #, I'll send one right away.

#### **"Too much supervision needed..."**

- Our agency will arrange for the supervision needed to help get established in his/her new position. I will also be available anytime you have questions.
- Actually, friendly reminders from co-workers, other natural supports will suffice.
- We will have regularly scheduled supervisory meetings.

#### **Security**

- Pinpoint specific issues and address them

#### **"I don't know about these job gaps on the resume..."**

- Qualified candidates often do have gaps, particularly in today's economy. Fortunately, he/she has just the skill set you are looking for.

#### **"How can a person with \_\_\_\_\_ do this type of work?"**

- Let's allow (job seeker) to demonstrate how he would accomplish that task.
- I would be happy to explore accommodations that will allow him/her to do the job.

#### **Business is waiting for something else to happen before hiring**

- This candidate is eager to learn the job and would be happy to begin training in the interim.
- Let's get the preliminary paperwork underway so that your productivity needs do not suffer.

#### **Union Issues**

- I can contact the union rep and identify exactly what the issues are so we can address them.

#### **"Won't this be disruptive to workplace...?"**

- That is what the former employer expected, but later identified what an asset (job seeker) was to the overall dynamic of the team.
- When he/she is focused on work, behaviors subside.
- Working in a quiet environment allows him/her to be more productive.

#### **Payroll issues (Worker's Compensation, insurance)**

- There is no increase in WC claims for people with disabilities than with the general public.
- There are tax incentives that can actually save you money.

### **Image issues - Clothing**

- This will be addressed and we will arrange for him/her to assist with dressing according to the work culture.
- This does not affect his/her job performance, and, his/her, maybe we can work out job duties would not require working with the public.

### **High Stress Environments**

- Perhaps you will allow me to observe the job to see if the environment would be suitable, possible restructure or carving, an accommodation could work, etc.
- Stress is not a problem for this particular person. He/she thrives in a busy

### **Fast Paced Environment**

- He/she works well/thrives under pressure and high-pace environment.
- He/she can be very flexible with hours, and may benefit from working during off-peak hours.

### **“Can’t hire for a part-time position”**

- We’d like to talk about sharing this full-time position amongst two qualified candidates. This may help your current employee, who will be on maternity leave?

### **“Co-workers would feel awkward”**

- As you’ve seen he/she has a nice way of helping people feel relaxed about the disability
- I would be happy to train/ tale with staff to address fears.

### **Paranoid about people with disabilities in general**

- I understand. It can be very intimidating but with deeper awareness, you will realize that you already support your employees using strategies that will work just a well for people with disabilities. (Help address fears, angst.)

### **“No openings at this time”**

- I can follow up on (a specific date) to help you maintain your staffing needs.
- When do you anticipate you will have positions opening up?

### **“Already filled that position”**

- That’s great. Do you have any other openings?
- How is that experience working out for you?

### **“Did that already and it didn’t work”**

- There is never a guarantee, is there? Let’s talk about what didn’t work.
- Now I can work with you and assist with job training, retention, etc. to ensure success.

### **“Already have a person with a disability working here....”**

- And how is that working out?
- Yes, there are many qualified people who may have some sort of disability.
- Often employers have a few people with disabilities without realizing it, as disability is often not related to how a person performs on their job.

**“They may need to take too much time off”**

- Research shows attendance rates of people with disabilities are comparable to others
- He/she has a great attendance record. Very reliable and dedicated.
- He/she is able to work a flexible schedule to adjust for time taken off.

**“We can’t have a job coach here...”**

- (What is the real issue here?) Help employer feel at ease.
- Many of our referrals won’t need job coaches
- This job trainer is skilled at blending into the environment/non-intrusive.

**“They won’t fit in...”**

- Employers often underestimate the flexibility of their employees. I’ve found that in most cases, my candidates gain credibility as they perform their job well.

**Language/communication barrier**

- Let me show you how we communicate.
- I understand, I thought it would be a challenge to communicate, too, but there are a number of strategies....