

Wilson Resources, Inc.

**Working with Business:
A Successful
Public-Private Partnership**



Working with Employers

Presenter

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Working with Employers

Introduction

There are 54 million American with disabilities - 1 in 5

35% of people with disabilities are working full or part-time as compared to 78% of the rest of the population

Two out of three (63%) of those who are not working would prefer to work.

Since 1986, 18 years ago, the employment rate for ALL people with disabilities has only increased ONE PERCENT (34% in 1986 vs. 35% in 2004)

The Employment Puzzle

There are Four Critical Pieces to the Employment Puzzle:

1. Individuals who want to work
2. Government Commitment
3. Provider Commitment
4. EMPLOYERS



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Business Commitment

Messages to Attract Employers

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Business Commitment

According to the

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics:

American businesses will face a shortage of 10,000,000 workers by 2010 (151 million vs. 141 million)

Business Commitment

U.S. Chamber of Commerce Position on Hiring Workers with Disabilities

“...Employers tell us that, once hired, this labor source provides some of the best employees within a corporation. They are generally dependable, dedicated, hardworking, and productive.”

U.S. Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Tom Donohue
October 2003

Business Commitment

Other Benefits to Business

➤ ***A national survey of 803 consumers randomly selected from across the U.S., found that 92% felt more favorable toward companies that hire people with disabilities and 87% said they would prefer to give their business to such companies.***

A National Survey of Consumer Attitudes Toward Companies That Hire People with Disabilities

Center for Social Development and Education, University of Massachusetts, in collaboration with the America's Strength Foundation and The Gallup Organization

Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, January 2006

Business Commitment

Consumers with disabilities represent an enormous market niche. People with disabilities have a combined income of more than \$1 trillion with \$220 billion in discretionary income. In comparison, the teen market controls \$140 billion.

“Disability: Dispelling the Myths”
Center for Workforce Preparation
An Affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce

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Common Myths

Employer Myth #1:

“Accommodations are too expensive!”

Most accommodations (81%) cost under \$100 and 73% of employers found that their employees with disabilities did not require accommodations.

Common Myths

Employer Myth #2: *“I’ll be sued!”*

EEOC statistics show that an employer is more likely to have claims filed against him/her for gender, age or racial discrimination as compared to disability-related claims.

Business Commitment

BOTTOM LINE: Why should employers get involved in promoting the employment of people with disabilities?

- 1. Workforce Shortages – Diversity**
- 2. High Visibility for the Business**
- 3. New Customers**
- 4. Free Advertising**
- 5. Opportunities for Networking**
- 6. Personal Issues**

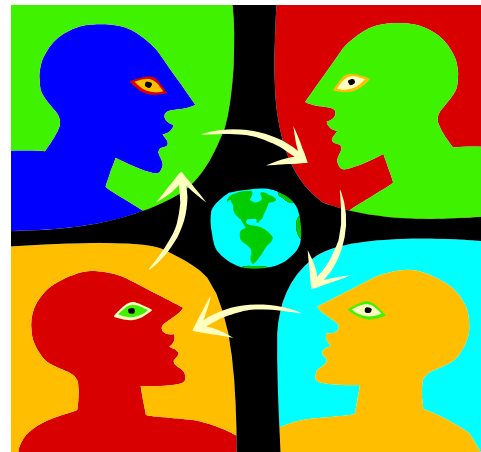
Business Commitment

Models and Approaches of Involving Businesses in Promoting the Employment of People with Disabilities

- Getting the Biggest Bang for Your Investment**

Business Leadership Networks

The purpose of the BLNs is to create awareness of the skills and abilities of workers with disabilities, emphasize the benefits and dispel myths through the organization of an employer-to-employer network.



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Business Leadership Networks

**Organization of the local Florida
BLNs is funded
by grants from the
Florida Agency for
Persons with Disabilities' MIG
and Workforce Florida**



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Business Leadership Networks

Florida's Local BLNs Working with Wilson Resources, Inc.

Established BLNs: Miami Dade, Big Bend (Tallahassee), Polk County, First Coast (Jacksonville), Greater Orlando, Tampa Bay Metro

Developing BLNs: Palm Beach and Bay Area (Panama City)



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Business Leadership Networks

BLN Mission Statement

The Business Leadership Networks educate and encourage employers to recruit, hire, train and retain employees with disabilities as part of promoting good business practices.



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Business Leadership Networks

BLN Activities to Achieve the Mission:

- Kick-Off Events
- Bi-monthly Postcards
- Training Events: *Turning Diversity into Dollars...*
The Many Benefits of Hiring Workers with Disabilities
- Workshops and Presentations – Chambers and SHRM
- Customized Training at Employers' Worksites
- Paid Internship Initiative



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Business Leadership Networks

BLN Activities to Achieve the Mission:

- Website: www.MyAbilities.org
- Employer Awareness Campaign
- Miami Dade BLN Won the 2005 United States BLN Chapter of the Year Award
- Comcast Cable Won 2006 Employer of the Year due to its work with the Big Bend BLN and Employing People
- APD Won 2006 Partner of the Year for funding BLNs



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Examples of BLN Companies

- Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, Merrill Lynch
- Federal Reserve Bank, SunTrust, Bank of America
- Holland and Knight Law Firm, Jackson Lewis Law Firm
- Home Depot, Office Depot, Lockheed Martin
- Comcast Cable, Brighthouse
- Walt Disney World, SeaWorld, Busch Gardens
- Mount Sinai Hospital, Baptist Health South Florida
- University of Miami, Miami Dade College, UNF
- TMP Worldwide (formerly a division of Monster.com)



Business Leadership Networks

“People with disabilities have a lot to contribute to their communities and to employers who are smart enough to reach out to them...I want to challenge every organization here to hire a person with disabilities this year -- and another one next year, and the year after that. This effort isn't charity or good corporate citizenship – it's just smart business.”

Governor Jeb Bush

August 31, 2006 at the First Coast BLN Kick-Off

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Other Models for Collaborating with Business

- Focus on Workforce Shortage Issues
- Look at Employer Segments/Industries
- Find a Champion Company(ies) –
Examples



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Other Models for Collaborating with Business

- **Statewide Business Collaborative**
- **Business Advisory Councils**

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Potential Partners

- State Chamber of Commerce
- Society for Human Resource Management
- Industry Liaison Group (NILG.org)
- Other Industry Groups



U.S. Chamber of Commerce



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Business Commitment

Other Allies for Working with Business

1. Economic Development Councils
2. One-Stops & Disability Navigators
3. Groups representing older adults
4. Welfare to Work Initiatives

Employer Awareness Campaigns



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How do you Sustain the Effort?

- Dedicated staff with business expertise
- Loaned executives - USBLN
- Constant business focus – what is in it for them (WIFM)?
- Get them involved in the mission

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How do you Sustain the Effort?

- Meetings have to be exciting & informative, examples
- Target different activities in different parts of the state
- Disability Mentoring Day flowing into Internships

MIG Leadership Councils

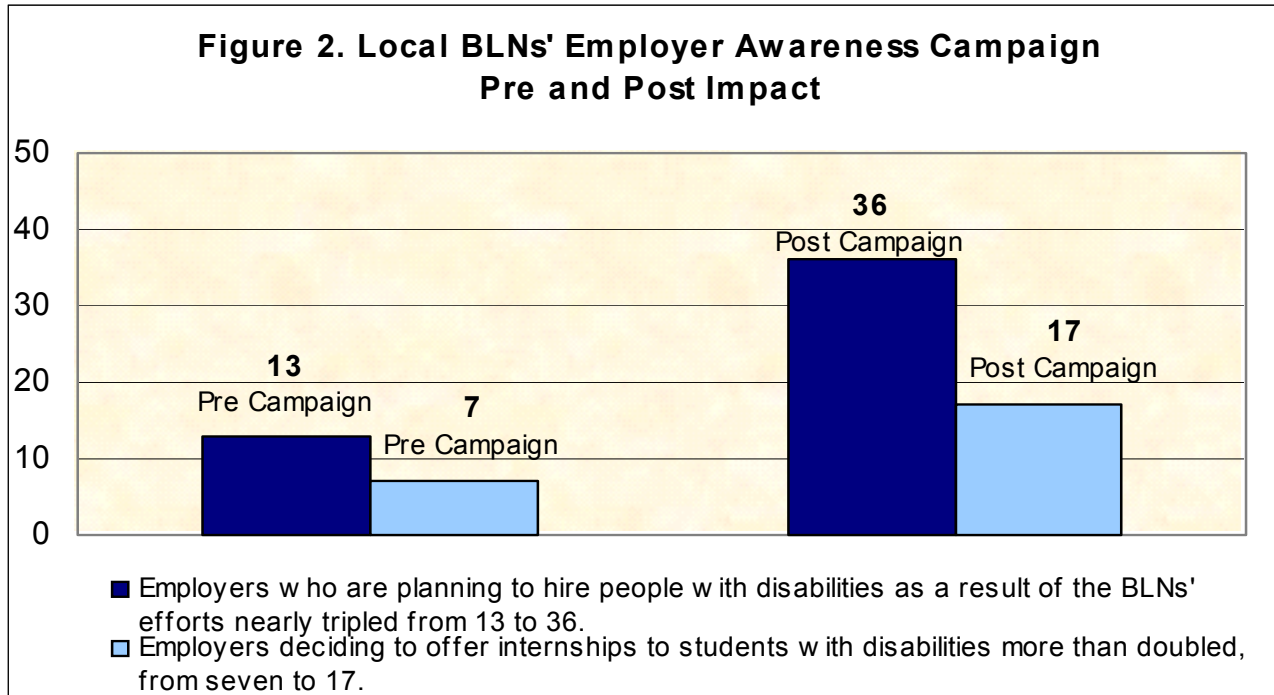
How can you Involve Employers in Your MIG Leadership Councils?

- Keep employers and others separate
- Invitation should come from someone considered important
- Invite champions
- Make the meetings interesting and business oriented (avoid the jargon)
- Give them a purpose – no meetings for meeting's sake

Evaluation

Are people getting jobs?

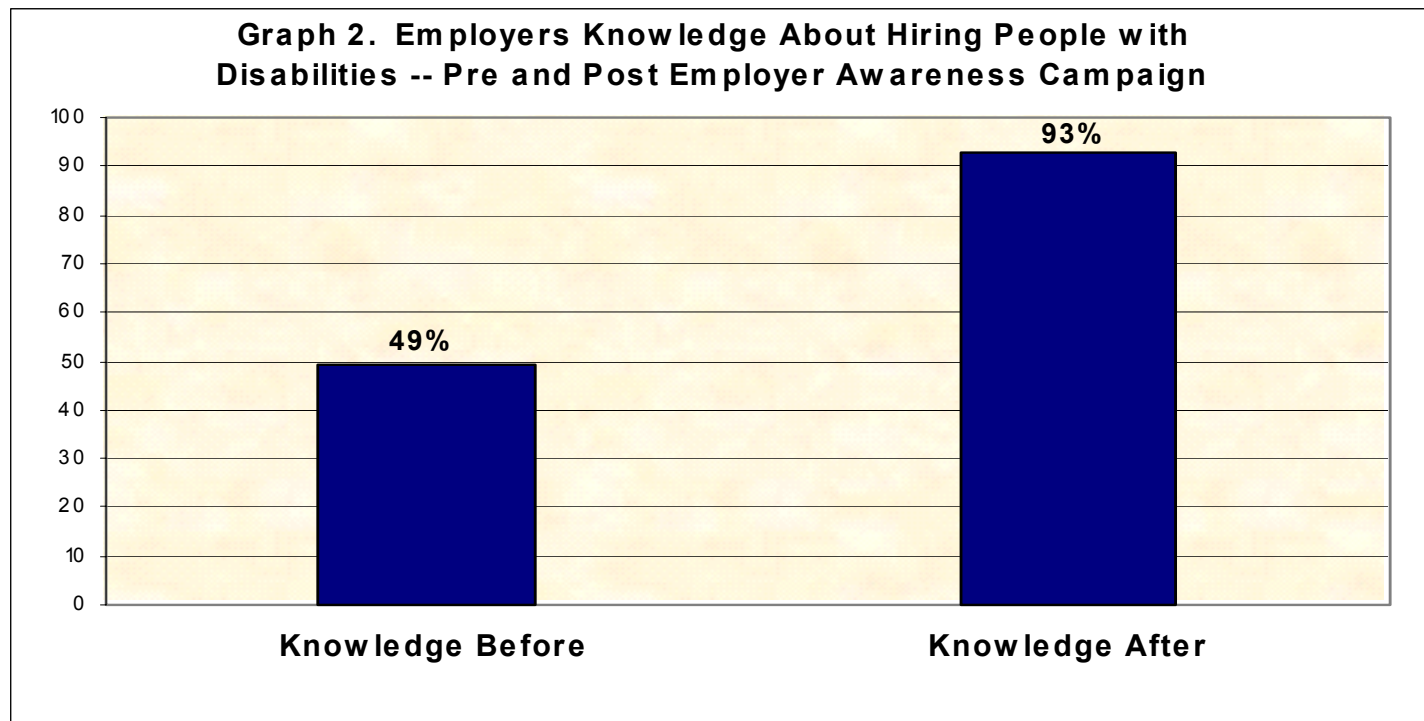
In a 2006 pre and post survey of 54 BLN members, it was discovered:



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Evaluation

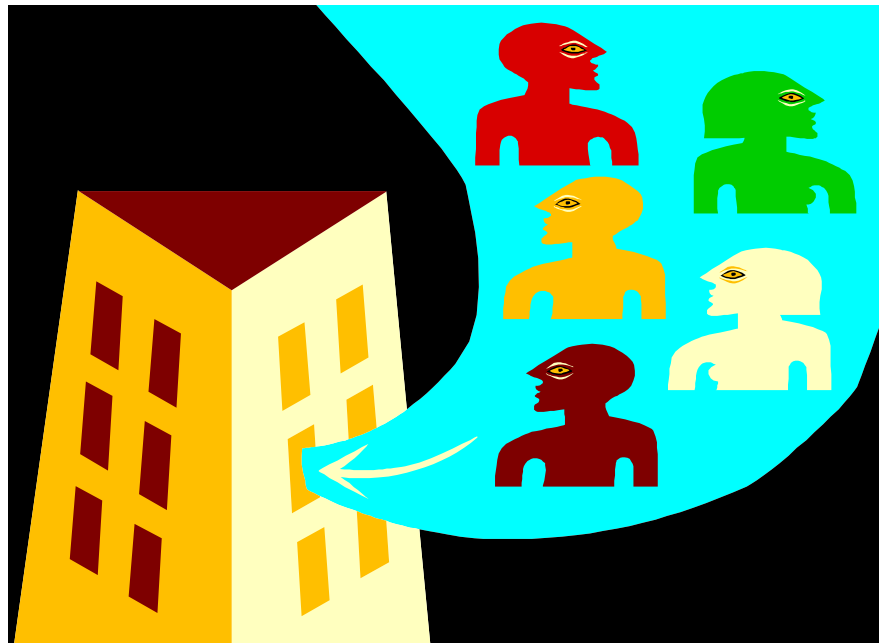
The survey also found:



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Conclusion

People with Disabilities Want to Work



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Conclusion

**The Involvement and Support of the
Business Community is Critical to
Decreasing the Unemployment of People
with Disabilities –
And Everybody Wins!**








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Don't look at my disability.

www.MyAbilities.org

Hire Me. I want to work.
I'm one of 6,000 qualified people in our community.

 FLORIDA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL, INC.
 south Florida Workforce
 Baptist Health South Florida
 apd agency for persons with disabilities
 BRIDGE [HOUSE]

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