

Five steps to attract more staff with disabilities that every business can take

Diverse workplaces that bring together experience from all areas of life tend to perform better.

If this is something that employers know instinctively, then there is substantial research to back it up.

This [report by the World Economic Forum](#) show that diversity increases profitability and creativity, promotes stronger governance and better problem-solving abilities.

Employees with diverse backgrounds help to create organisations that are resilient and effective, and which outperform those that do not invest in diversity.

To mark the UN's [International Day of Persons with Disabilities](#) on December 3, we are taking a look at what every business can do to boost diversity in the workplace.

Businesses must make [reasonable adjustments by law](#) to remove or reduce a disadvantage related to a disability.

This can include:

- making changes to the workplace
- changing someone's working arrangements
- finding a different way to do something
- providing equipment, services or support

Beyond that, businesses can work to create an environment where staff feel comfortable asking for what they need to be able to perform at their best.

Oxford-based Pearn Kandola, a business psychology consultancy

that specialises in diversity and inclusion has undertaken [research](#) that has found that two in five UK workers living with a disability reported not receiving the reasonable adjustments (RAs) that they need from their current employer.

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Among the most [common reasonable adjustments that respondents](#) said they were missing were more control over their work schedule, more patience and understanding from others, clearer communication and additional time for some tasks.

Business Psychologist Binna Kandola is Senior Partner and Co-Founder of Pearn Kandola. Here he gives advice on key things businesses can do to support inclusivity.

Ask about RA (Reasonable Adjustments) from the start

Checking whether anyone needs RAs should become a standard process – whether this is in recruitment, onboarding, or day-to-day management. By asking everyone, the process becomes embedded and makes it easier for anyone, including disabled colleagues, to request what they need.

Provide the right equipment and services

There are a number of RAs that employers can make to give those with a disability more flexibility in their job and to ensure they are not at a disadvantage.

Do things differently

Finding a different way to do something brings an increased level of flexibility. RAs can offer people with a disability a greater sense of control over the working day, which in turn allows them to have more management over their condition and

creates more inclusivity in our organisations.

Training and awareness

We also need to do a lot better around training and awareness of disabilities in the workplace. This comes down to creating an environment of psychological safety so that employees feel comfortable discussing their disability, if they want to.

Remove stigma

Creating awareness is one step to removing any stigma associated with disability, and means colleagues with a disability will be more prepared to request reasonable adjustments. Everyone can thrive in an environment where they feel safe and comfortable to express themselves.

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