



Accessful is an EnAbling Change Partnership project

October 2018

Dear Employer,

**Your organization is invited to take part in Accessful**, an exciting initiative to dramatically improve employment for youth with disabilities, to diversify the workforce and to grow a stronger culture of acceptance within the province, which exemplifies the goals of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. This pilot program is funded by an EnAbling Change grant through the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario and is supported by OSSTF and the Peel District School Board.

*Accessful* brings together five key audiences: students; education support workers and teachers; parents; **employers; and outside agencies**—with the goal of strengthening employability skills and accessing employment opportunities for students in Gr 10 to 12 with disabilities. **Your role is key.** Students need to develop the skills you are looking for and to learn how to advocate for their accessibility needs confidently. Of course, as employers, you too want to feel comfortable and confident about meeting these needs.

As of January 1, 2017, all organizations and businesses with more than one employee in Ontario were required to make their employment practices accessible to job applicants and staff with disabilities according to the Accessible Employment Standard. This can feel like an overwhelming practice for many employers without adequate resources and HR support.

The project gets underway in September 2018. A website is being developed to promote the project's activities which include symposia with all key stakeholders including **local social agencies and prospective employers in your area**. In addition to online resources and in-school programming for students and teachers, **we also want to create resources for you.**

Three videos will be produced to document the before, during and after stages of Accessful's progress and to celebrate how local businesses are actively shifting the landscape of our workforce while addressing growing job vacancy rates.

Imagine, in our very own region, people with disabilities are thriving in rewarding jobs and careers, and—**together, with employers like you**—are contributing to the province's overall prosperity and economic growth.

Our Employer/Community Agency Symposia will be held on **Tuesday, Oct. 30th and Thursday, Nov. 1st in Mississauga**. Please RSVP on the separate invitation attached.

We look forward to engaging the business community in this exciting program.

Richard Clewes  
Accessful Coordinator

## A few facts

New data from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) shows that the country doesn't have enough workers for all the jobs available. There were almost 400,000 vacant jobs in Canada in the fourth quarter of 2017, an increase of 38,000 vacancies, or 10.5 per cent, in just three months.

Job vacancy rates has Ontario in the top 3 provinces in Canada, and according to the BMO Labour Market Report Card 2017.

The CFIB report broke down job vacancies by broad occupational categories, and found that personal service workers and construction workers are in highest demand.

Handy work, general manufacturing labour, cleaning and loading tasks, will make general labourers the most sought-after employees in 2018.

Ontario was the first province in Canada to pass legislation that set out a clear goal and timeframe for accessibility. The landmark Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), has set an ambitious aim for the province—accessibility by 2025.

The unemployment rate for youth with disabilities in Ontario was reported to be about 30% in 2012. This is almost 2x higher than that of youth without disabilities.

Research indicates that having one paid job in high school is the number one predictor of future employment for people with disabilities. \*

*\*Predictors of Postschool Employment Outcomes for Young Adults With Severe Disabilities.* Journal of Disability Policy Studies. Hammill Institute on Disabilities. University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Tencer, Daniel. (2018, March.) *Canada's Labour Shortage Intensifies, With Nearly 400,000 Vacant Jobs* Retrieved from [https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2018/03/13/labour-shortage-canada-job-vacancies\\_a\\_23384818/](https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2018/03/13/labour-shortage-canada-job-vacancies_a_23384818/)