Workplace Accommodations in Manufacturing – Attract and Retain a Quality Workforce
Presenters

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• The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) is a federal/state program designed to obtain, maintain, and advance employment for people with disabilities by working with DVR consumers, employers, and other partners.

• The Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute (SVRI) provides solutions to positively impact the future of people with disabilities through services, research and education programs that prepare VR professionals.
Acknowledgment & Disclaimer

The contents of this website were developed under a grant (H421C210018) from the Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. (Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1221e-3 and 3474).
Objectives

1. Define disability, universal design & accommodation
2. Explore accommodations tailored to the manufacturing industry
3. Discuss disability in relation to equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives
4. Building strong employer-employee partnerships
5. Learn about the Business Services Team at Wisconsin DVR and how to leverage their support
Definitions of Disability

*The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines disability within a legal context but is important to remember that disability is defined differently in other settings.

Part 1
Physical or mental impairment

Part 2
Substantially limiting

Part 3
One or more major life activity
What disabilities do you think may need accommodations in the workplace?
Common Disabilities

- Vision Impairment
  - Blindness or low vision
- Deaf or hard of hearing
  - Acquired hearing loss
- Mobility disabilities
  - Use of a wheelchair, walker, or cane
  - Chronic pain
- Epilepsy
- Diabetes
Common Invisible Disabilities

- Mental health conditions
  - Post-traumatic stress disorder
  - Major depressive disorder
  - Anxiety
- Traumatic brain injury
- Autism
- Chronic fatigue
- Attention-Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder
- Learning disabilities
1 in 4
Adults in the United States have some type of disability

1 in 6
Number of individuals worldwide that experience a significant disability

• CDC Disability & Health infographic
• World Health Organization
Disability and the Labor Force

- **Labor Force Participation Rate (16+)**
  - Persons with a Disability: 24.90%
  - Persons without a Disability: 68.40%

- **Unemployment Rate (16+)**
  - Persons with a Disability: 7.40%
  - Persons without a Disability: 3.80%

Statistics

U.S. Department of Labor – Disability Employment Statistics
Universal Design

- Universal Design (UD) is the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used by all people regardless of age, size, ability, or disability.

- Application of universal design principles minimizes the use of assistive technology, results in products compatible with AT, and makes products more usable by everyone, not just those with disabilities.

- If well designed with accessibility and usability, everyone will benefit.
Universal Design

“Specifically, universal designs, job accommodations, and assistive technology can play a significant role in enhancing a person’s ability to interact with his or her environment and to meaningfully participate in society” (Huang et al., 2016)

• UD is important to consider in the specialty areas of AT, vocational rehab, independent living & society

• Look at usability of space within the environment or workspace

• Could be within public buildings, walkways, in the home, etc.
What is an Accommodation?

• Any change to the work environment or job that enables a person with a disability to be successful or enjoy equal employment opportunities including promotions, raises and recognition.

• The employee must meet the skill level required and must be able to perform the essential functions of the job.

• Through an open dialogue between employer and employee, it is determined what is effective but ultimately, is the employer's choice.
Working Around Equipment

• High-Tech and Low-Tech Options

• Install flashing strobe lights on moving vehicles
• Set paths for travel
• Install a directional worker alert system that provides a visual warning of oncoming vehicles
• Install industrial mirrors around the work environment
Mobility

- Modified office equipment/workstations
  - Ergonomics
- Workstations that can be raised and lowered
- Wheelchair, walker or scooters
- Anti-fatigue matting
- Ramps, automatic door openers, close parking for easy accessibility
- Air ride seats for heavy equipment
- Anti-vibration seats
- Automatic garage door openers
- Elevators
• Adapted keyboards

• Auto retractable box cutters

• Alternative spray can

• Ergonomic and pneumatic tools
• Eye gaze and head-controlled systems for computers
• Grip aids for walkers, canes, utensils, steering wheels
Visual Impairments

- Magnifiers
- Large print materials
- Braille
- Color coded manuals, outlines
- Talking calculators, tape measures
- Readers
- Glare guards
- Accessible computer equipment/ software
  - Dragon naturally speaking/ speech to text
Hearing Impairments & Communication

- Assistive Listening Devices (ALD)
  - FM & Infrared systems
  - Personal amplifiers
  - Induction loop
  - Bluetooth
  - Hearing Aids
Hearing Impairments & Communication cont.

- Consult an audiologist when assisting an employee who uses hearing aids
- Closed captioning (telephones)
- Use interpreting services to accommodate sign language users
- Ensure good lighting and line of sight
- Also include written materials
- Noise cancelling headphones
- Alerting systems
**Stress, Pain, and Organization**

- Scheduled rest breaks/ longer breaks
- Allowing flexible work schedule/ work from home
- Ergonomic workstation
- Reduce repetitive tasks
- Allow phone calls for support
- Refer to counseling
- Have mentor/ mentee program
- Use calendars/ reminder systems
- Electric organizers
Examples of Accommodations

- Ramps
- Adaptive controls
- Bar Code Scanner
- Automatic Door Opener
Examples of Accommodations

- Electric Scissors
- Plug Puller
- Adjustable Desk/Workstation
- Universal Turning Handle
- Zero Lift and Tilt Table
U.S. Surgeon General's Framework for Mental-Health and Well-Being in the workplace

Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy stated this new framework gives us “an opportunity to rethink how we work”

“A healthy workforce is the foundation for thriving organizations and healthier communities”
Benefits of diversity in the workplace

- A competitive edge
- Perseverance
- Creativity
- Innovation
- Problem-solving skills
- Commitment to the workplace
- Improved productivity and morale

People with disabilities represent an underutilized pool of skilled talent.
The DVR Business Services Consultants (BSCs) are statewide and connect employers to a larger integrated business services team to assist in solving challenges in hiring and retaining qualified employees.

At no cost to the employer, we provide:
- recruitment assistance
- match candidates to business needs
- connect you to workforce partners and more.
• Engage in outreach to employers and build relationships

• Learn about the company culture as a whole and understand its workforce needs

• Deliver services identified in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

• Provide disability expertise

• Connect with partner agencies and services
DVR Business Services Consultant Contacts

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Resources

Accommodation Training Library

Job Accommodation Network
Resources

- U.S. Department of Labor – Accommodations
- U.S. Department of Labor – Disability Resources
- Office of Disability Rights
- Employer Assistance and Resource Network (EARN)
- What Can YOU Do – Campaign for Disability Employment
- National Alliance on Mental Illness – Wisconsin
- Disability: IN
- National Industry Liaison Group (NILG)
- Partnership on Employment and Accessible Technology (PEAT)