Disability Employment in the UK

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About MAXIMUS

– MAXIMUS has worked with governments around the world for more than forty years to provide a full range of social benefit program support services to a diverse set of populations.

– Our subsidiary, Remploy, is the largest provider of disability employment services in the UK. Its mission is to transform society and the lives of disabled people by creating equality in employment.

– Our largest contract in the UK is to deliver the Health Assessment Advisory Service (HAAS). Our role is to carry out Work Capability Assessments which determine the level of state support available for people out of work.
Focus for today

Context:
The Disability Employment Gap in the UK

What are the barriers to closing the gap
a) For employees
b) For employers

Initiatives and policies that help to close the gap

What more can and should happen?
Disability Employment Gap

- 32% of disabled people were born with their disabilities. The majority of disabled people acquire their disability in later life.
- 17% of disabled people become disabled every year.
- Two percent of the working age population become disabled every year.

One in six of those who become disabled whilst in work will lose their job during the first year after becoming disabled.
UK Government position

- The 2015 Conservative manifesto pledged to halve the disability employment gap

- The policy was restated by the government in the pre-legislative Green Paper, published in November 2016

- Damian Green (Secretary of State) has set an ambition for helping at least one million people with disabilities into work, but has not set a formal target, or deadline

“Halving the disability employment gap is central to our social reform agenda by building a country and economy that works for everyone, whether or not they have a long-term health condition or disability.”
Barriers to finding and returning to work

- Lack of confidence
- A culture of low or no aspiration, too often instilled from a young age
- Poor communication skills
Barriers for employers

- Attitudinal change is just as important as policy and regulatory reform
- Want to employ individuals with disabilities but are ill-informed and often scared off
- Perceived costs of workplace adjustments
- Myths regarding staff attendance and turnover
- Lack of creativity and knowledge on how to carve jobs, or re-engineer working processes

Benefits of hiring employees with disabilities

- Greater loyalty
- Lower absence rates
- Lower turnover
Closing the gap: what works for employers

Work with employers to introduce alternative recruitment practices, including work trials and pre-employment training

“Place, train and fade” approach for people with more complex disabilities

Job coaching for people with more complex disabilities, especially for people with learning disabilities or severe mental health issues

What Doesn’t Work
Short term wage subsidies. Only serve to create temporary employment solutions that are not sustainable.
What could and should happen next?

Our challenge no less than to transform attitudes in society and among employers about disability and employment.

We still have a long way to go. The stigma around disability is starting to be challenged, but the view that people with disabilities are unsuitable for certain roles is still deeply embedded.
What could and should happen next?

If we get this right, we can do anything...
Consider taking action…

• Use the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to help address the disability employment gap

  ▪ Allows for more innovative Pay for Performance models where embedded outcomes based strategies are at the core of formula funded programs

  ▪ States can choose to utilize all of its 10% WIOA formula funding for Pay for Performance – This funding could go to expand services and drive innovative pilot projects that could set the foundation for new programs