

Celebrating and Recognizing Disability in Your Organization

Disability Employment Month in BC takes place during September every year. International Day for Persons with Disabilities is on December 3rd. The first weeks of May and October are Mental Health Awareness Week, and World Mental Health Day is October 10th. These are excellent opportunities to celebrate and recognize diversity in your organization. Below are some suggestions of what other organizations have done to help you brainstorm.

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

	Internal	External
I have 15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite an employee of yours to share their story of (or a story of family member) struggling with mental illness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow @AccessEmployers on Twitter and retweet content that aligns with your vision. Look Presidents Group up on LinkedIn – and share a post with your network.
I have just under an hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote your organization’s commitment to mental wellness by having your President/CEO write an email or blog on your intranet recognizing Disability Employment Month. Watch the TED Talk “Guy Winch: Why We All Need to Practice Emotional First aid” and have a discussion with your team afterwards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote your organization’s commitment to accessible, inclusive employment through social media and tag @AccessEmployers on Twitter. Feature a short article on your customer-facing website about why mental health matters to your organization.
I have half a day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold a Lunch and Learn for your staff on a topic connected to mental health. Use your internal channels (intranet, staff room signage, email, hallway monitors) to create awareness about mental health. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a colleague has struggled with mental health, invite the individual to develop a story and send it to your local newspaper to encourage other organizations to consider diverse hiring.
I have more than a day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider hosting a staff book/article club with a book/article focused on mental health. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend a community event about mental health awareness – potentially through the Canadian Mental Health Association.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider hosting a mindful meditation hour for your employees during lunch. • Create some spaces for mental health conversation – Chat Cafes – over a lunch hour. 	
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DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS

	Internal	External
I have 15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite an employee of yours to share their story of (or a story of family member) struggling with mental illness Share a short video (all under 5 min) from www.accessibleemployers.ca with your staff during a team meeting, and have a short discussion about the content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow @AccessEmployers on Twitter and retweet content that aligns with your vision. • Look Presidents Group up on LinkedIn and share a post with your network.
I have just under an hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share www.accessibleemployers.ca with your team and ask them a few questions to about disabilities in the workplace encourage them to look around the site. • Promote your organization’s commitment to accessible, inclusive employment by having your President/CEO write an email or blog on your intranet recognizing Disability Employment Month. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote your organization’s commitment to accessible, inclusive employment through social media and tag @AccessEmployers on Twitter. • Feature a short article on your customer-facing website about why Disability Employment Month matters to your organization.
I have half a day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold a Lunch and Learn for your staff on a topic connected to disability employment. • Use your internal channels (intranet, staff room signage, email, hallway monitors) to create awareness about disability employment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you work with a colleague who has experience within the disability community, invite the individual to develop a story and submit it to your local newspaper to encourage other organizations to consider diverse hiring.
I have more than a day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider hosting a staff book/article club with a book/article featuring information about disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend a hiring fair for people with disabilities to meet future employees.