

Marketing and Advertising Research Report

For the

Nevada Department of Employment, Training and
Rehabilitation

Nevada Vocational Rehabilitation Division

Submitted via email:

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Executive Summary

Effective marketing and advertising is based on relevant research understanding best practices, understanding the market, understanding local stakeholders, recognizing various perspectives, listening and communicating using language that educates, motivates/inspires, and calls people to action.

This report on our research, along with DETR's Vocational Rehabilitation Division (VR) feedback, and the creative minds of the DP Productions team will be utilized to develop a messaging framework to help carry out a comprehensive public relations campaign to promote VR workforce resources available to existing, new and potential businesses, and to educate businesses of all sizes about the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities.

Nationally, as of the end of September, unemployment is at a six year low at 5.9%¹ which indicates a favorable hiring climate, and we'll venture to state good timing for the Nevada campaign that focuses on assets of an inclusive employee base that has internal and external benefits that positively affect business bottom lines as Nevada continues to recover from the great recession of 2007. Nevada's unemployment rate continues to decline, and of August 2014 our state's overall unemployment rate was 7.6%.²

Our research was conducted between August 15th and October 3rd 2014, and represents a sampling of business sectors and related industries doing business in Nevada northern, southern and rural counties cities and towns.

In addition to traditional secondary and primary research, we depended heavily on relationships to obtain candid feedback through one-to-one interviews, an online survey, and a focus group. The greatest challenge was to obtain a response rate large enough to present as a 'statistically' representative sampling size.

The findings presented in this report represent only the opinions expressed by those in our sampling of 60+ individuals across private companies, nonprofit organizations and governmental entities. Although we cannot conclude that the opinions of the sample represent the opinions of those of the 300+ entities and individuals we contacted that elected not to participate in the interviews, survey, or focus group; we feel these opinions are relevant enough to inform a messaging campaign targeted to educate and inspire Nevada employers to hire persons with disabilities.

When we were able to connect and engage with employers and job developers (*largely through relationships*) respondents were candid and even eager to share their opinions, experiences and perspectives regarding the benefits of disability inclusion for both their business bottom lines and employee environments.

With this information we will craft a targeted messaging campaign, with a focus on building stronger relationships with employers across the state resulting in more high quality placements for persons with disabilities, taking into consideration valuable feedback and input gained during the nearly two month statewide research phase of the VR Employer Marketing and Advertising campaign.

¹ <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.nr0.htm>

² <http://www.bls.gov/web/laus/laumstrk.htm>

Overall Campaign Goals & Objectives

The overall goal of the VR marketing and advertising campaign is to generate more jobs for Nevadans with disabilities, increase the potential for Nevadans with disabilities to become self-sufficient; and, increase opportunities for Nevadans with disabilities to participate more meaningfully in their communities while contributing to the economy.

A key challenge facing VR is how to effectively engage key audiences in ways that positively impact the lives of individuals and families with disabilities across Nevada. Our goals and objectives for this project and the overall marketing and advertising campaign include developing and assisting in implementing strategies to educate and inspire employers to embrace persons with disabilities as employees and customers by:

- Effectively communicating with Nevada employers the significant positive impacts that hiring individuals with disabilities can have for their organizations including explaining the benefits of hiring people with disabilities (quality employees, social responsibility, workplace diversity, innovation incentive, and financial incentives)
- Assisting VR in communicating the extensive opportunities provided by VR, including obtaining and/or maintaining qualified employees, working one-on-one with VR counselors for training, job assistance, local education and additional resources available through the state
- Promoting the availability of VR services through focused marketing and community awareness campaigns tailored to business sector, size and locations utilizing relevant communications methods and materials
- Creating and implementing a multidimensional approach to VR services promotions that combine “traditional” marketing and communications methods (print, television, mail pieces, etc.) with interactive, mobile and online media
- Assisting VR by developing and implementing systems for measuring the impact of marketing, advertising and outreach campaigns on employer hiring practices and persons with disabilities experience in workplaces
- Analyze results and work with the VR to construct solutions

Research Goals & Objectives

Secondary Research Objectives (*Environmental Scan of Existing Campaigns, Surveys and Literature*)

Many organizations across the country, including universities, think tanks, non-profits and state departments are focused on improving the outcomes for individuals with disabilities by increasing their ability to work, find quality jobs and job placements, and to successfully sustain employment.

There was a wealth of information available to DP Productions researchers from which to build, in terms of beginning to understand what motivates employers to hire persons with disabilities, and what barriers exist to successful placement and employment for this population of workers. We have listed (in footnotes) a few of the resources we accessed while building our surveys, interview discussion guides, and overall project plan for the marketing research.

Answering the question, “why do employers employ people with disabilities?” is a critical question and one that must be answered in order to craft a strong messaging campaign.

We appreciate the information and findings of *The Institute for Community Inclusion and Boston College Center for Work and Family*, where they held focus group discussions with employers and identified three (3) categories of benefits that employers receive when they knowingly hire people with disabilities. Although this is just one sample of the kind of secondary research we utilized when conducting research for this project, we include this content because it speaks directly to the conversations we had with VR before we began the interviews, and informed some of our thinking before we interviewed Nevada employers. Their findings and conclusions are presented in the following three categories:³

1. **Benefits Directly Related to Business Objectives:** Hiring people with disabilities meets the organizations personnel needs by filling vacancies.
2. **Benefits Indirectly Related to Business Objectives:** Hiring individuals with disabilities benefits a company's long-term viability and profitability by enhancing the corporate image and demonstrating a commitment to the community.
3. **Benefits Related to Organizational Values:** Hiring people with disabilities reflects the organizations' commitment to corporate social responsibility, and is viewed as the right thing to do; the benefits to the company are of secondary importance in comparison to the outcomes expected for the employee with a disability, and for the community at large

If an employer is strictly motivated by Category 1, One-Stop staff and the job seeker will have to demonstrate that hiring the individual will provide direct economic benefit. There will probably be less flexibility around how the job is designed and the individual is supported.

On the other hand, if the employer is motivated by Categories 2 and 3, the company will likely be more committed to making it work. This presents the opportunity for greater flexibility and more creative solutions.

However, these categories should never be viewed as hiring as an act of charity. It is simply that the decision to hire is based on criteria other than straight-forward economic return. It is still paramount for the long-term success of the individual and for people with disabilities in general that the job be performed competently in a socially inclusive work environment.

What has been interesting in the experience of those who have spent significant time assisting people with disabilities to find employment is the number of employers who initially hire a person with a disability for Categories 2 and 3 who were pleasantly surprised that the person turned out to be a great employee. These experiences show that much work needs to be done to change the misperception that many people with disabilities cannot be fully productive participants in the labor force.⁴

Primary Qualitative Research (*Approach to the DP Video Nevada Research*)

In order to elicit quality feedback and input from private sector, during the months of August and September through the first week of October 2014, DP Productions researchers conducted public sector

³ National Center on Workforce and Disability, http://www.onestops.info/article.php?article_id=67

⁴ Based in part on material from: Pitt-Catsoupes, M., Butterworth, J. (1995). *Different Perspectives: Workplace Experience with the Employment of Individuals with Disabilities*. Boston College

and state and local government employers we conducted in person and phone interviews, an online survey, and a focus group in Las Vegas.

Participants were selected to ensure we covered as many Nevada industry sectors as possible (see chart on page 20 for sectors represented in our research).

An online survey was emailed to 207 business leaders with one reminder email, mostly based in Clark County, with 14 individuals responding, representing a 6.7% response rate.

On three separate occasions, emails and phone calls were made to potential participants of focus groups in Clark County, with 6 participants attending one focus group meeting.

Forty two (42) individual phone interviews were conducted with employers across the state including those in urban and rural Nevada in sectors and industries ranging from education to mining, healthcare to manufacturing, to technology and small business; and real estate to nonprofit community development, including four job developers. Each interview ranged from 30 - 60 minutes. As we designed and structured discussion guide we worked through the following:

- An overview of the issues that were included in this research
- Why these issues were salient and relevant to the overall goals of the campaign
- A description of the participants (anonymous but descriptive)
- Discussion of the information collected (using quotes to highlight important points)
- Conclusions based on the information we gathered over the life of the interview project
- Clear explanation of how the conclusions are based on the research we conducted
- How these conclusions will contribute to the rest of the overall campaign

Telephone and In Person Interviews

We have separated out gaming and non-gaming employers not due to the difference in sectors, but because many gaming properties have public and enterprise wide diversity initiatives, and we found that those initiatives markedly changed the tone and tenor of the conversation around hiring persons with disabilities.

Summary of Participant Responses (non gaming)

Question	Response	Sector/Industry
As an employer, what is/would be your incentive to hire persons with disabilities?	• “When people see someone with a disability helping them, the client receives great hope from this.”	Non Profit
	• “I am only going to hire a person who can do the job. If I am being honest, I would be happy to hire someone with disabilities, but I need someone who can do the job completely.”	Financial Services
	• “The loyalty factor is huge. These are individuals who have been many times passed over for jobs. Once they get that opportunity they are extremely loyal and hardworking.”	Insurance
	• “If hiring people with disabilities caused our company to be positioned in a way for others to want to do business with us, and because of it	Real Estate

Question	Response	Sector/Industry
	<p>there were co-marketing opportunities, we would be interested.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “One of the biggest benefits to the company is that when you do hear about disabled people who have obtained jobs and are doing well, you think that is a good company. There is some sort of impression or reverberation through the community about what a good company that is. I think more companies need to recognize what kind of payback that can be for them. We need to show them the statistics and studies on this.” • “It’s not really a market decision, but a personal one that is based on wanting to see someone have a chance, the chance to give someone an opportunity.” • “For me it would be about the person, the heart strings, and the idea that this made a difference. The idea that was business play was not really it. The concept of creating community, of working together to improve someone’s life is what motivates me.” • “There is no incentive one way or another really, but the State has the new rule where there is a list that you need to go through and there are incentives offered through VR. There are also equal employment opportunity rules and regulations. This makes everything more complicated, and harder.” • “At the end of the day they want to hire someone to sustain in their culture, make a difference for their clientele, and connect with their employees.” 	<p>Health Services</p> <p>Nonprofit</p> <p>Small Business</p> <p>HR Director</p> <p>Health Care</p>
<p>Have you had any success hiring persons with disabilities before? Please tell us about that experience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Once a company has had a positive experience, then you can capitalize on that. The first one or two are hard as hell. But once you get a success, it is better. But even when you have had success, it is not easy. You need to dedicate some time to train the rest of the staff on the fact that this is a normal person and to treat them as normally as possible. It fails if you try to overcompensate for this.” • “It says something about the caliber of the people employed at our organization to see the relationships they develop with the Opportunity Village clients. They are very good to them, even 	<p>Health Care</p> <p>Local Government</p>

Question	Response	Sector/Industry
<p>If you are motivated to hire someone with disabilities, is it a market/business decision or motivated out of corporate responsibility or personal experience?</p>	<p>the high level people. It has really become a very accepted part of the organization. There is a benefit to the people that work there too. This is something to try to highlight in this campaign.”</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Spending time on the concept that employers will get a good and reliable employee is critical, along with the business aspect. If they were having a hard time being employed AND could do the job, and be productive, I would be motivated. And if I thought I could create loyalty out of the employee that would be highly motivating.” 	Mining
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “When I was in gaming we had initiatives with veterans and we talked about the fact that it was good business. It was also a chance for our employees to realize that these people are just people, and they look like you and me. Whether they were on the other side of the table or the cash register, hiring people with disabilities and differences provides alignment and inclusiveness in what we do. Everyone that comes in our business is welcome. It’s good businesses to show that our staff looks like what our customer looks like.” 	Nonprofit
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “It is a good business decision and it creates diversity and inclusion, and it is a good thing that gives back to the community. I have always been skeptical of corporate social responsibility as a term. Some could be patronized by that. Instead I say it is good business, these are folks that look like you and me, and good for community. It’s the right thing to do on a lot of fronts.” 	Nonprofit
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “With people with physical disabilities, we often think how we can make this accommodation reasonable. It will cost too much? What if we have a fire? So, we can’t do this. We say that we are colorblind to disabilities, but we are not.” 	Mining
	<p>What are your perceptions about hiring people with mental health disabilities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It’s very hard to accommodate a stress related mental health disability. And with the ADA now a reasonable accommodation, mental health issues could include additional leave time, which puts a lot of strain on the workplace and staff.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “There is a perception that it would be its easier to accommodate a physical disability. It’s a known quality and you know what to do. Cognitive and mental are not known. Obscure. 		Healthcare

Question	Response	Sector/Industry
What are your perceptions about cognitive disabilities, such as learning disabilities, autism, intellectual disabilities, Down Syndrome, etc.?	<p>Unpredictable. But then again, I have seen stories where it has worked out.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Yes, there are differences. We tend to stereotype people. If they have a cognitive disability, or mental disability, will there be a lack of stability? What will prevent him from going off in front of someone and causing problems?” 	Mining
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Some employers are open and others feel it’s too much of a burden and a risk to the agency. If you don’t understand it, it seems like a risk if they interface with guests or other employees behaviorally.” 	Nonprofit
Where do you get your information regarding persons with disabilities and their ability to work and/or add to your workplace?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “There is not a lot of communication around where these programs are, and not a lot of messaging around the state about working with people with disabilities.” 	Local Government
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Not now, but I used to see it. The State does not do a good job advertising its services. People just don’t know where to go and how to access these things. They are a large organization but they aren’t doing enough”. 	Insurance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I have never even heard of Voc Rehab before, or never even knew about the services community providers provided. But I saw a news story a few months ago about a cupcake shop that hired 90% of their staff as people with disabilities and thought, man, this is really neat, I should look into doing something like this. But I did not know where to go.” 	Small Business
Are you aware of the supports available from Vocational Rehabilitation and other community providers to support your organization as you hire and place workers with disabilities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The only time we get information is from recruiters representing veterans.” • “There are too many agencies. This is confusing to an employer. Often times they have competing interests and they may not even know it. And, often it seems like they are not really even vetting the candidates. It’s about trust. If I don’t trust you to really vet the candidate, and send me the right fit, I won’t call you again.” 	Mining Healthcare

Question	Response	Sector/Industry
Do you know there are financial benefits to hiring persons with disabilities such as tax incentives, the ability to have supported on-the-job training provided for the employee, etc.?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Yes. But I would like to have a feedback loop. I would like to know how many people VR sent over and how many I hired. How can I be proactive and post jobs with your candidates? Where is the retention data on my organization? I’m less inclined to continue to invest in that if I don’t know the return. The government sites are pretty clunky. How can I post jobs easily? The private sites make it so easy that I can post in two seconds. Not so for the State. It hinders the process. They need to up their game on the screening. Then the trust will be there and I don’t have to worry about that part.” 	Healthcare
Do you think about hiring someone with a disability as a means of diversifying your workplace?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The motivation is less driven by material issues like training reimbursement or taxes, it’s the sense of doing something right for the business culture and giving someone a chance to find a job that might not otherwise have that chance.” 	Small Business
Given your role, what do you think an effective campaign would look like that would increase the number of employers willing to hire persons with disabilities, or request more information from Voc Rehab about hiring?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Sometimes you talk about diversity and it means drawing a line in the center. When you use the word inclusion you draw a circle. If you are disingenuous, then the value of it goes away. Just hire people who can do the job, and who look like the people we serve. It’s the right thing to do.” • “Absolutely. Is a key diversity component.” • “I look at hiring someone with a disability as enhancing our workforce. They’re not a statistic, they’re a team member.” 	Nonprofit Nonprofit Local Government Mining

Question	Response	Sector/Industry
	<p>is not that hard. It makes business sense. For what this employee may be doing, the job is still just right. These people represent a pretty decent labor source, and it is like getting a dog from the pound. They know where they come from and will be loyal. You hire someone with a disability and treat them as if they don't have a disability, and they will be loyal and stay with you. There are some benefits to the company when customers see that, and then you get a sense that the company is taking care of its own."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "It is the trisect of all of this - it's all the plays; it's good business, it's a community benefit, and it's heart strings. You can solve a retention issue and you can also impact the culture of your organization, and its diversity, and also there are financial incentives. You really have to touch on all of them. The bigger question is how do you then do with that? How do you get it in front of the right people and who are the right people?" • "Success stories would be powerful. I would like to see success stories and see people working. I'd like to see the range of people, and that not all people are high need." • "My personal opinion is one that the hardest walls to break down are that people don't understand what disabled people are capable of doing." • "For me, I don't have a preference on messaging one way or another. If you are qualified and can do the job, it doesn't matter if you are disabled. Education is the best way to approach state employers in my mind. Are there videos or a site where they can go? Maybe the state personnel office can provide direction to state agencies around how to make this happen, because I know of VR, but I don't know how to interface with them or to prioritize their clients over any other state applicants." • "Testimonials are critical. Include videos and photographs that have people with all kinds of disabilities, and some that might obviously be veterans. Include a different array in the background, and include employers who have worked with people speaking to what this population brings to them. Show the 	<p>Real Estate</p> <p>Real Estate</p> <p>Healthcare</p> <p>HR Director</p> <p>Nonprofit</p>

Question	Response	Sector/Industry
	<p>contribution of people with disabilities to their organization. Show what resources are available, because they need to know the services and supports are ready. Testimonials from employers as well as clients are critical.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “While it being the right thing to do should be enough to encourage employers to hire people with disabilities, I’m sure highlighting the financial benefits would provide more tangible appeal.” • “Until you know something like that is possible, you actually don’t know what is possible. You have to see it in action. What employers don’t know is attainable and can be done is the wall. Look over the wall.” 	Nonprofit
		Healthcare

Representative Statements

“When people see someone with a disability helping them, the client receives great hope from this.”
– Nonprofit

“I am only going to hire a person who can do the job. If I am being honest, I would be happy to hire someone with disabilities, but I need someone who can do the job completely.” **– Financial Services**

“The loyalty factor is huge. These are individuals who have been many times passed over for jobs. Once they get that opportunity they are extremely loyal and hardworking.” **- Insurance**

“If hiring people with disabilities caused our company to be positioned in a way for others to want to do business with us, and because of it there were co-marketing opportunities, we would be interested.”
- Real Estate

“For me it would be about the person, the heart strings, and the idea that this made a difference. The idea that was business play was not really it. The concept of creating community, of working together to improve someone’s life is what motivates me.” **– Small Business**

“Once a company has had a positive experience, then you can capitalize on that. The first one or two are hard as hell. But once you get a success, it is better. But even when you have had success, it is not easy. You need to dedicate some time to train the rest of the staff on the fact that this is a normal person and to treat them as normally as possible. It fails if you try to overcompensate for this.” **- Healthcare**

“It says something about the caliber of the people employed at our organization to see the relationships they develop with the Opportunity Village clients. They are very good to them, even the high level people. It has really become a very accepted part of the organization. There is a benefit to the people that work there too. This is something to try to highlight in this campaign.” **– HR Director**

“It is a good business decision and it creates diversity and inclusion, and it is a good thing that gives back to the community. I have always been skeptical of corporate social responsibility as a term. Some could be patronized by that. Instead I say it is good business, these are folks that look like you and me, and good for community. It’s the right thing to do on a lot of fronts.” – **Nonprofit**

“With people with physical disabilities, we often think can we make this accommodation reasonable. It will cost too much. What if we have a fire? So, we can’t do this. We say that we are colorblind to disabilities but we are not.” - **Mining**

“It’s very hard to accommodate a stress related mental health disability. And with the ADA now a reasonable accommodation could include additional leave time, which puts a lot of strain on the workplace and staff.” – **Healthcare**

“Some employers are open and others feel it’s too much of a burden and a risk to the agency. If you don’t understand it, it seems like a risk if they interface with guests or other employees behaviorally.” – **Former Gaming**

“Not now, but used to see it. The State does not do a good job advertising its services. People just don’t know where to go and how to access these things. They are a large organization but they aren’t doing enough.” – **Insurance**

“I have never even heard of Voc Rehab before, or never even knew about the services community providers provided. But I saw a news story a few months ago about a cupcake shop that hired 90% of their staff as people with disabilities and thought, man, this is really neat, I should look into doing something like this. But I did not know where to go.” - **Small Business**

“There are too many agencies. This is confusing to an employer. Often time they have competing interests and may not even know it. And, often it seems like they are not really even vetting the candidates. It’s about trust. If I don’t trust you to really vet the candidate, and send me the right fit. I won’t call you again.” – **HR Director**

“Yes. But I would like to have a feedback loop. I would like to know how many people VR sent over and how many I hired. How can I be proactive and post jobs with your candidates? Where is the retention data on my organization? I’m less inclined to continue to invest in that if I don’t know the return. The government sites are pretty clunky. How can I post jobs easily? The private sites make it so easy that I can post in two seconds. Not so for the State. It hinders the process. They need to up their game on the screening. Then the trust is there and I don’t have to worry about that part.” – **HR Director**

“The motivation is less driven by material issues like training reimbursement or taxes but the sense of doing something right for the culture and giving someone a chance to find a job that might not otherwise have that chance.” – **Small Business**

“Until you know something like that is possible, you actually don’t know what is possible. You have to see it in action. What employers don’t know is attainable and can be done is the wall. Look over the wall.” - **HR Director**

Summary of Participant Responses (Current Gaming)

Question	Response	Sector/Industry
Does your company have goals for hiring persons with disabilities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have diversity initiatives and goals which include persons with disabilities • For us it's about shareholder value and how we can improve our bottom line • We don't track it • We contract for business services offered by Opportunity Village, I like what Opportunity Village does, those types of programs need to be expanded to meet employer needs 	Gaming
Do tax benefits and other incentives make a difference in your hiring practices regarding hiring persons with disabilities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not specifically for hiring persons with disabilities – there are federal incentives to offset costs in several areas • VR tax breaks affect the bottom line, so yes 	Gaming
Does your company have recruitment efforts especially geared toward hiring persons with disabilities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have identified jobs throughout the company where we feel persons with disabilities can thrive, and have trained our hiring managers on how to identify those opportunities 	Gaming
Is your company aware of supports available from VR?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am not aware of VR, explain what they do and how their services can positively affect our bottom line • Our company used VR for employment outreach efforts, but over the years I feel they have lost that link to community initiatives and how VR can help companies achieve their community goals 	Gaming
Does your company partner, volunteer, donate or do business with nonprofits that serve persons with disabilities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have a partnership with Best Buddies where we match our MAP members (Management Associate Program) with a Best Buddy 	Gaming
Any comments or thoughts about marketing and advertising to employers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid the standard mental picture of a person with disabilities • Try to address the mindset of resistance, we need to make sure employers understand how persons with disabilities are also resources that positively impact our community and economy • Persons with disabilities make up the largest diverse population in the United States 	Gaming

Question	Response	Sector/Industry
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Representative Statements

“First of all we are all differently-abled, I wear glasses” – **Gaming**

“When we excel at hospitality for all groups, it helps build our brand identity, creates a loyal market and results in repeat customers which makes our shareholders happy” - **Gaming**

“People say what you don’t know *won’t* hurt you – in reality what you don’t know *will* hurt you. This especially applies to working with, hiring, and providing customer service to persons with disabilities and their families” – **Gaming**

“We work every day to be the destination of choice and employer of choice embracing persons with disabilities help accomplish both goals” – **Gaming**

On Line Survey

Understanding the key target group for the VR Marketing and Advertising campaign includes business and community leaders, on line confidential surveys were sent to 207 individuals with a response rate of 6%.

The survey questions were based on the questions developed by DP Video Productions and VR staff, along questions from a ‘nationwide disabilities quality index survey’ being launched this month by the American Association of People with Disabilities (DEI) and the US Business leadership Network. This first annual DEI survey will ask Fortune 1000 companies and certain other large companies to self report on a wide variety of criteria within four categories: Culture and Leadership, Enterprise-wide Access, Employment Practices, and Community Engagement & Support Services. Responses and a best practices report will be available in April 2015.⁵

Summary of Participant Responses

The following is a summary of online survey responses. Please refer to a summary in graphs in the appendix of this report.

- 64% of survey respondents said their company has hiring goals for people with disabilities
 - 36% said they don’t know
- 93% of respondents said their companies has members that are publically open about being a person with a disability, have a family member with a disability, or is an ally/supporter for people with disabilities
 - 7% said they don’t know
- If motivated to hire persons with disabilities the following influence choices rated as follows
 - Corporate and social responsibility
 - 36% doesn’t apply
 - 21% agree
 - 21% neutral

⁵ <https://disabilityequalityindex.org/deisurvey>

- 21% strongly agree
- Has your company had success in hiring persons with disabilities?
 - 57% yes
 - 28% don't know
 - 7% haven't tried
 - 7% no
- Does your company have recruitment efforts specifically geared toward hiring persons with disabilities?
 - 64% no
 - 29% don't know
 - 7% yes
- Where do you obtain information regarding persons with disabilities and their ability to work/add to your company? (*Responses per suggested categories, could select more than one*):
 - 38% relatives, friends, business associates
 - 31% other (submitted employment applications, if they apply)
 - 23% professional trade magazines
 - 23% television
 - 8% radio
- Is your company aware of supports available from VR to assist employers to hire and place workers with disabilities?
 - 29% yes
 - 31% no
 - 31% don't know
- Does your company partner or volunteer with non-profit organizations that serve persons with disabilities?
 - 36% no
 - 29% don't know
 - 29% yes
- Does your company have expenditures with disability owned (and/or) services disabled veterans?
 - 29% don't know
 - 29% no
 - 29% yes
- Does your company market directly to the disability community by depicting people with disabilities in your marketing and advertising?
 - 21% no
 - 50% yes
 - 29% don't know
- Industry (*Responses per suggested categories, could select more than one*):
 - 7% construction
 - 21% education
 - 14% health service
 - 14% government services
 - 7% technology
 - 7% manufacturing
 - 14% professional & business services
 - 31% other (*nonprofits, distribution of goods, research*)

Company size:

- 29% less than 20
- 21% 20 – 99
- 7% 100 - 249
- 14% , 500 – 999
- 14%, 2500 – 4,999
- 7% 10,000 – 24,999
- 14% 25,000 or more
- 7% 25,000+

Areas doing business:

- Nevada
- Nevada and other states
- Clark County
- Washoe County
- Nevada Rural Counties

Representative Statements

“I hire based on perceived ability to do the job. If all else is equal, I’d give preference to a person with a disability as it is my perception that discrimination still exists. Again, if a candidate can do the job, I’m fine with it being done from a wheelchair or a missing limb, etc.” - **Small Business**

“Aware, yes, but with only a dozen employees, have not taken advantage of it. We do all hiring on a temp-to-perm basis, so I suggest developing strong connections with employment agencies to assist folks with all abilities. Get rid of the term ‘disability’. People who are disinterested have no interest. Does that mean that disabled people have not ability? Of course not, so get rid of that misleading term” - **Small Business**

“Don’t actively seek any profiling. Always look for the best candidate for the role”. – **Construction**

“They not only NEED the job, they WANT the job and become some of your most loyal, trustworthy and reliable employees”. – **Distribution**

“If they are the most qualified for the position, I would hire them in an instant. Disability really doesn’t have any influence over my decision to hire”. – **Education small business**

Focus Group

The following focus group was conducted on October 3rd in Las Vegas. The consultant had previously scheduled 3 focus groups for the month of September and due to a lack of adequate confirmations from invited attendees, rescheduled until responses were adequate to conduct a valid focus group.

Participants in attendance included one job developer, one employment agency, and four nonprofit organization representatives focused on serving persons with disabilities.

Summary of Participant Responses

Question	Response	Sector/Industry
What motivated or inspired you to work with persons with disabilities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have a child with a disability • I have a physical disability 	Nonprofit
Do you feel employers know or value tax credits?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, they are not going to hire someone for a tax credit, especially if you are a small business and the tax credit is only \$2400, that is not an 	Job Developer

Question	Response	Sector/Industry
	incentive	
Does your company partner, volunteer, donate or do business with nonprofits that serve persons with disabilities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We partner with a gaming company to add diversity to their workforce We have partnered in the past with another gaming company 	Nonprofit
What are some of your experiences in trying to secure fair wages and good jobs for people with disabilities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We don't discriminate against people with any other different trait – we look at skills and best fit for the job We have positive experiences because our agency teaches young people know what they need to tell employers "how" they are going to be able to get the job during the interview 	Employment Services Nonprofit
What do you think about VR's goals to utilize marketing and advertising to encourage employers to hire persons with disabilities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have employers address employers in your advertising, talk about success stories Make sure VR job developers have the skills to support and deliver on the messaging campaigns VR should also say – let me connect you to employers and potential employees 	Employment Services Job Developer Job Developer
Any comments or thoughts about marketing and advertising to employers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a picture of self sufficiency to take the pressure off the employer It starts in schools, educate students when they are young Implement an in person education campaign that targets employers and recruit companies to lead peer to peer discussions demonstrating business successes Use humor, or do parodies to dispel myths 	Employment Services Nonprofit, educator Job Developer Nonprofit

Representative Statements

“My job as a job developer is to educate the employer and make them feel comfortable making the decision to hire, so I need to know about different types of disabilities and also know about new technologies, so I can dispel myths and provide solutions on first contact with potential employers”.

– **Job developer**

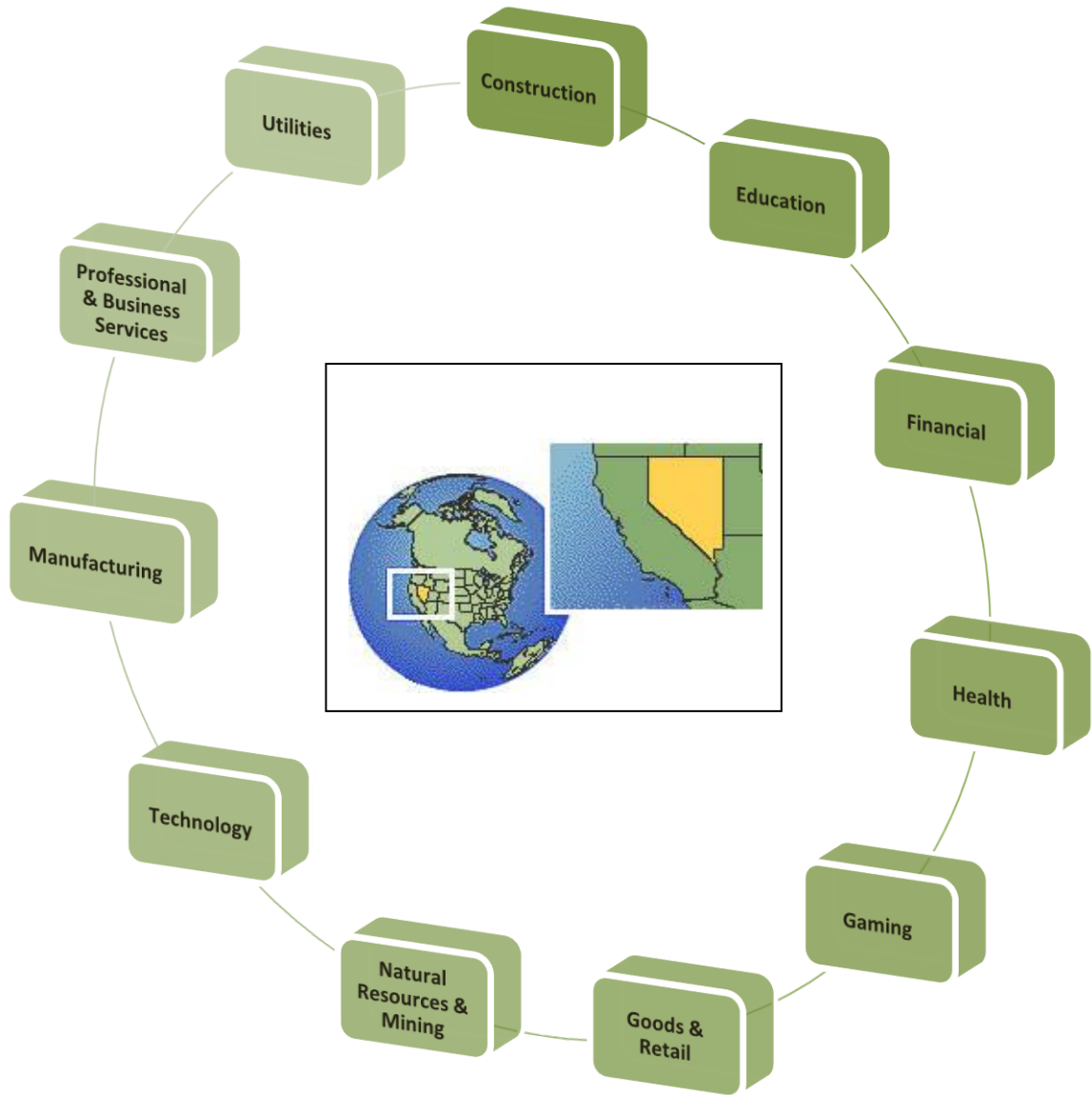
“My job as an educator is to teach my students how to advocate for themselves and show up with solutions because the job market is tough and no one is going to do anyone a favor by hiring them”.

– **Nonprofit & Educator**

“Most of my clients are interested in securing a position that can pay a decent salary so they can have and support a family and there is no reason why they can’t”. – **Nonprofit & Educator**

“Employers want to hire people that are going to be with them for the long run. People that in reality or perception have been discriminated against are going to be exceptionally dedicated employees, they are going to be there early, work late and work extra hard because they have to constantly prove themselves over and over”. – **Staffing Agency**

Industry Sectors Surveyed



Major Themes & Findings *(not in priority order)*

Major Finding 1

The majority of the employers we interviewed are not incentivized by tax credits or other financial incentives to hire someone with a disability. They are motivated by corporate image, their customers, and/or personal experiences of the CEO and management.

Major Finding 2

Business imperatives drive business decisions. Business is business.

Major Finding 3

Companies that embrace the benefits of hiring persons with disabilities say that their decision to do so is either driven from the personal experiences of management or leadership, OR, the desire on the part of the company to ensure that they are relevant to their customers at the end of the day.

Major Finding 4

The core message of an effective marketing and advertising campaign must address business value and employee fit.

Major Finding 5

When marketing VR services and supports, we MUST be talking to the right people in a company in order to advance our marketing and advertising initiative.

Major Finding 6

VR staff and the job seeker should try to determine upfront why the business is potentially interested in hiring an individual with a disability.

Major Finding 7

Many of these employers are not specifically thinking about hiring persons with disabilities. They see hiring someone with a disability as part of their overall culture of diversity and inclusion.

Major Finding 8

Any successful campaign MUST show people being of value to the business they work in, and illuminate their latent potential to add value to business bottom lines. Testimonials of employers; first and foremost, and of successful employees are going to be critical.

Major Finding 9

We will have to address stereotypes and perspectives of employers who do not yet embrace the business benefits of including people with disabilities on their staff in and their decision making.

Major Finding 10

Even when companies are open to hiring persons with disabilities, most were not aware of Vocational Rehabilitation's services or supports.

Major Finding 11

Trust between VR and the companies is an issue. Job developers must be well trained and perceived to be highly educated on the issues surrounding placing people with disabilities in addition to the needs of the business in order for trust in the process to be ensured.

Conclusions and Recommendations

After conducting primary and secondary research on the challenge of how to develop and sustain more high quality employment opportunities and placements for persons with disabilities in Nevada, the DP Video Productions team recommends ***there is incredible opportunity for VR to improve its outcomes in this space.***

Our research represents a sampling of employers across the Nevada which includes diversity of employers and their perspectives, the sectors and types of companies they represent, leading us to recommend the following:

1. First and foremost, base the VR Marketing and Advertising campaign off research findings, in addition to existing VR and national knowledge on this topic, with special attention paid to what Nevada employers interviewed said about this issue.
2. Focus VR efforts on extending the conversation started with your job developers, and our research, and deepen relationships with employers through one-on-one meetings and educational sessions (*capacity*).
3. Design and implement a structured feedback loop and outcomes driven evaluation process with employers to determine the health and strength of relationships and placement protocols.
4. Test our marketing and advertising strategies with employers contacted through this research.

Appendices

Interview Questions

The following questions, developed by the DP Productions team (Deborah Campbell, Cyndy Ortiz Gustafson and Dr. Chris Stream) with input from Nevada Vocational Rehabilitation Division staff, were included in one-to-one interviews. In some cases questions were modified to encourage candid conversations:

We are working with the State Department of Vocational Rehabilitation to design and implement a statewide campaign targeted to employers to increase the number of quality employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. We would like to get your input and feedback on this issue so we can put together an effective messaging campaign. Your answers will be anonymous and will inform our work. Thank you for taking the time to talk with us!

1. What are your perceptions about hiring people with disabilities?
2. What is/would be your incentive to hire persons with disabilities?
3. Have you had any success hiring persons with disabilities before? Please tell us about that experience.
4. If you are motivated to hire someone with disabilities, is it a market/business decision or motivated out of corporate responsibility or personal experience?
5. Where do you get your information regarding persons with disabilities and their ability to work and/or add to your workplace?
6. What are your perceptions about hiring people with mental health disabilities?
7. What are your perceptions about cognitive disabilities, such as learning disabilities, autism, intellectual disabilities, Down Syndrome, etc.?
8. Are you aware of the supports available from Vocational Rehabilitation and other community providers to support your organization as you hire and place workers with disabilities?
9. What supports or services would help with your decision to hire persons with disabilities?
10. Do you know there are financial or other benefits to hiring persons with disabilities? (tax incentives, etc)
11. Do you think about disabilities as a means of diversifying your workplace?
12. What additional questions or information would be helpful to you as you think about employing people/more people with disabilities in your workplace?
13. Where do you get your information regarding persons with disabilities and their ability to work and/or add to your workplace?
14. Given your role, what do you think an effective campaign would look like that would increase the number of employers willing to hire persons with disabilities, or request more information from Voc Rehab about hiring?

Survey Template



Employing Persons with Disabilities Confidential Employer/Employee Perspectives

Dear Colleague,

We are conducting research that will help design and launch an **employer focused marketing and advertising campaign**. The goal of the campaign is **to educate and inspire Nevada employers to hire, retain and promote individuals with disabilities**.

Please consider investing **15 minutes** of your time to complete this **CONFIDENTIAL SURVEY**. Results will help **develop messaging strategies** that will result in **increased employment and economic self-sufficiency of individuals with disabilities**.

Please respond by this Friday 5PM, October 3, 2014. To ensure ease of completing this survey, most questions and answers are either single or multiple choice. Click submit at the end of this survey.

Thank you in advance for your valuable input!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Deborah Campbell'.

702.845.4393 | dcampbell54@cox.net

Quick Facts: People with Disabilities U.S. Working-age (ages 21 - 64)

source: [2012 Cornell University Disability Status Report](#)

Types of Disability:

Ambulatory Disability | Cognitive Disability | Hearing Disability
Independent Living Disability | Self-Care Disability | Visual Disability

2012 Statistics

Prevalence of disability:	10.4%	High School diploma or equivalent:	34.4%
Employment rate:	33.5%	Some college or associate degree:	31.0%
Full time/full year:	20.9%	Bachelor's degree or more:	12.4%
Annual earnings:	\$36,400	Veterans service-connected disability:	20.2%
Annual household:	\$37,300	Health insurance coverage:	82.8%
Poverty rate:	28.2%	Overall Nevada working-age disability prevalence rate: 10.6%	

If you are motivated to hire persons with disabilities, **what influences your decisions?**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Doesn't Apply
Corporate Social Responsibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personal Experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increases Business Profitability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you know there are **tax benefits and other incentives** for hiring persons with disabilities?

- Yes
- No

Additional motivations to hire persons with disabilities:

Please describe here:

Do **tax benefits and other incentives** make a **difference** in your hiring practices regarding persons with disabilities?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Recruitment

Has your company had **success hiring persons** with disabilities?

- Yes
- No
- Haven't Tried
- Don't Know

Does your company have **recruitment efforts specifically geared toward hiring persons with disabilities?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Where do you obtain information regarding persons with disabilities and their ability to work/add to your work place?

- Radio
- Television
- Billboards and other media
- Internet
- Professional Trade Magazines
- Social Media
- Relatives, Friends, Business Associates
- Other, please list

Is your company **aware of supports available from the Nevada Vocational Rehabilitation Division** to assist employers to hire and place workers with disabilities?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- If applicable, please list what you know about services provided

Community Engagement & Support Services

Does your company **partner or volunteer with non-profit organizations** that serve persons with disabilities?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- if applicable, please list:

Does your company **donate funds to nonprofit organizations** that serve persons with disabilities?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Does your company **have expenditures with** disability-owned (and/or) service-disabled veteran owned businesses?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Does your company **market directly to the disability community** by depicting people with disabilities in your marketing and advertising?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Confidential Company Profile Information

Industry - Please select all that apply:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Construction | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Gaming | <input type="checkbox"/> Government & Government Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retail | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Warehousing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities | <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Resources & Mining | <input type="checkbox"/> Media & Information Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Technology | <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional & Business Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please describe <input type="text"/> | | |

Company Size

- Less than 20
- 20 to 99
- 100 - 249
- 250 - 499
- 500 - 999
- 1000 - 2499
- 2500 - 4,999
- 5000 - 9,999
- 10,000 - 24,999
- 25,000 or more

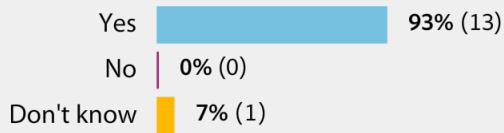
Areas doing business

- Nevada
- Nevada and other states
- Clark County
- Washoe County
- Nevada Rural Counties
- If applicable, please list:

Thank you for completing this confidential questionnaire - your input and perspectives will will help develop messaging strategies that will result in increased employment and economic self-sufficiency of individuals with disabilities.

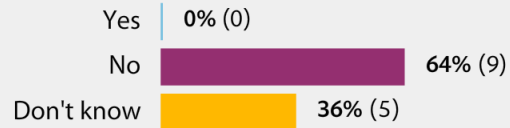
Survey Results

Does your company have members who are publicly open about being a person with a disability, have a family member with a disability, (and/or) is an ally/supporter for people with disabilities?



* 14 total responses, 100% of submissions

Does your company have a hiring goal(s) for hiring people with disabilities?



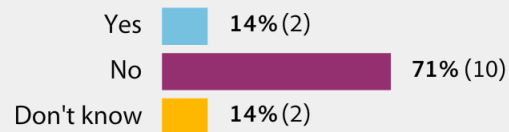
* 14 total responses, 100% of submissions

Do you know there are tax benefits and other incentives for hiring persons with disabilities?



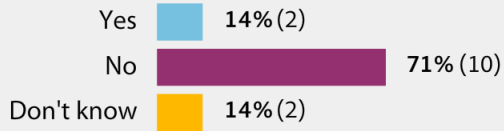
* 14 total responses, 100% of submissions

Do tax benefits and other incentives make a difference in your hiring practices regarding persons with disabilities?



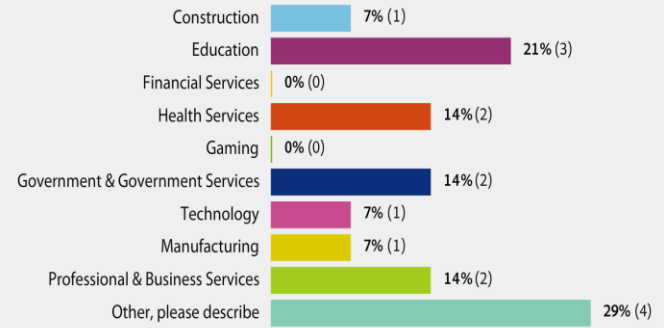
* 14 total responses, 100% of submissions

Does your company market directly to the disability community by depicting people with disabilities in your marketing and advertising?



* 14 total responses, 100% of submissions

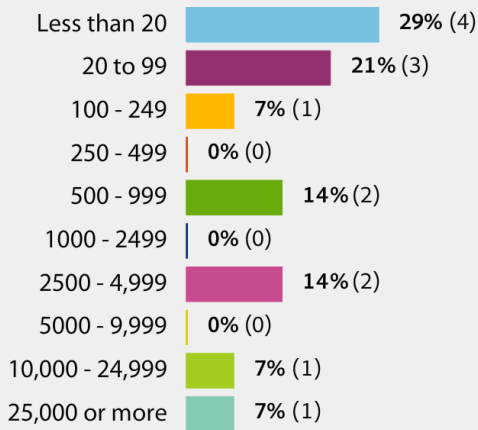
Industry - Please select all that apply:



6 additional choices not shown

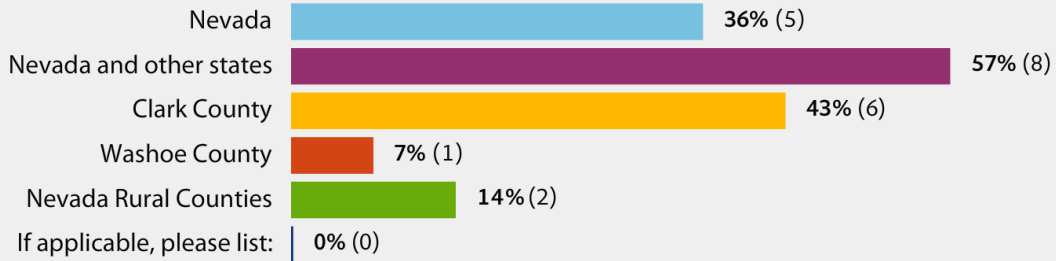
* 14 total responses, 100% of submissions

Company Size



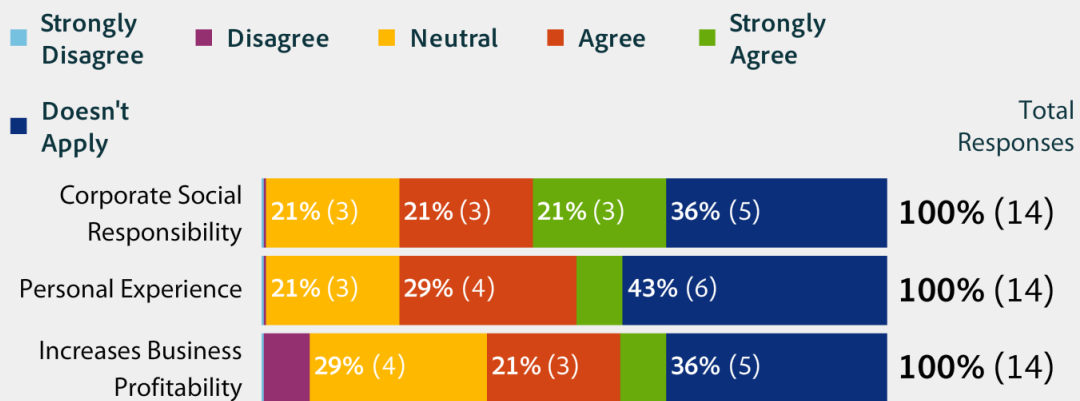
* 14 total responses, 100% of submissions

Areas doing business

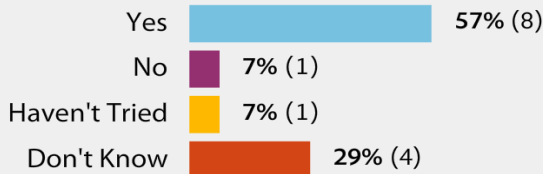


* 14 total responses, 100% of submissions

If you are motivated to hire persons with disabilities, what influences your decisions?

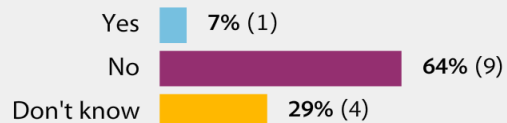


Has your company had success hiring persons with disabilities?



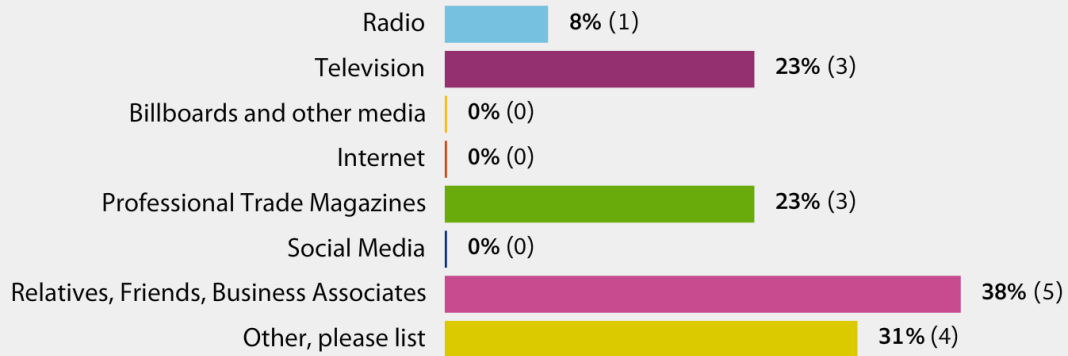
* 14 total responses, 100% of submissions

Does your company have recruitment efforts specifically geared toward hiring persons with disabilities?



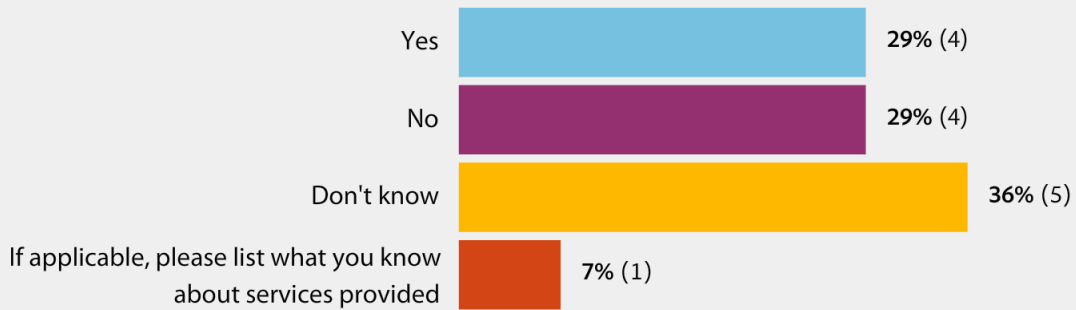
* 14 total responses, 100% of submissions

Where do you obtain information regarding persons with disabilities and their ability to work/add to your work place?



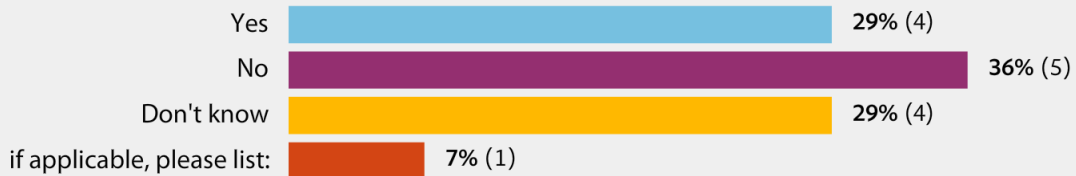
* 13 total responses, 93% of submissions

Is your company aware of supports available from the Nevada Vocational Rehabilitation Division to assist employers to hire and place workers with disabilities?



* 14 total responses, 100% of submissions

Does your company partner or volunteer with non-profit organizations that serve persons with disabilities?



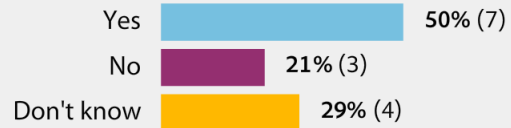
* 14 total responses, 100% of submissions

Does your company have expenditures with disability-owned (and/or) service-disabled veteran owned businesses?



* 14 total responses, 100% of submissions

Does your company donate funds to nonprofit organizations that serve persons with disabilities?



* 14 total responses, 100% of submissions

Focus Group Questions

1. Do you feel employers know or value tax credits?
2. Does your company partner, volunteer, donate or do business with nonprofits that serve persons with disabilities?
3. What are some of your experiences in trying to secure fair wages and good jobs for people with disabilities?
4. What do you think about VR's goals to utilize marketing and advertising to encourage employers to hire persons with disabilities?
5. Do you have any comments or thoughts about marketing and advertising to employers?