

Determining Job Design and Job Requirements

Often, employers don't spend a lot of time analyzing and writing job requirements. One of the most common accommodations required by persons with disabilities is some flexibility around job requirements. Often a person with a disability can perform all of the most important job requirements, but may have to work in an alternate way, on a different schedule or perhaps with some assistance. With some flexibility and understanding from the employer, that person can do the job. For instance, job design and requirements are often based on "the way it's always been done." Assessing and writing inclusive job requirements is not about compromising on what needs to be done, but about considering how something needs to be done and who needs to do it.

- Job Analysis
- Alternate Work Arrangements
- Job Carving
- Part-Time Employment

Job Analysis

Job analysis is a process of assessing the essential components of any job prior to writing an inclusive or non-discriminatory job description, and then interviewing and selecting a good candidate for the job.

Often agencies that work with persons with disabilities have expertise and experience in doing job analysis. As this step will ultimately impact the other steps in successfully recruiting a person with a disability, it is worth taking some time to do this and involving others who can help you with the process.

First, describe in detail the tasks that are considered to be part of the job in question. The next step is to assess each task by asking a number of questions about the job tasks. See www.workablesolutionsbc.ca for details.

This kind of analysis helps show where job duties could be altered to accommodate a person with a disability. It is important to focus on the desired outcome of the job — not the methods traditionally used to accomplish the outcome. Job analysis also helps you think beyond convenient "credentials" or standard — but not necessary — requirements. Credentials such as "university degree required" can result in fully-qualified candidates being screened out too soon. Assessing the true requirements of the job and keeping an open mind about how those requirements are fulfilled is a necessary first step in eliminating barriers in your recruitment process.

"You learn from having employees with disabilities. Most of us without disabilities take things for granted and don't have a clue about some of the obstacles faced by others." *BC small business owner*

Alternate Work Arrangements

Alternate work arrangements such as job sharing can improve the productivity of the shared position by utilizing the talents of two individuals and by ensuring that there is always coverage (no lost time due to vacation or illness as the job share partner is available to cover these periods). For job sharing to be successful, both individuals need to be well organized and communicate well. There should be a clear written agreement on what the arrangement will be.

Numerous studies have shown that telework or telecommuting allows employees to work from home and can improve their productivity by 15-25 percent. It is most commonly used for:

- professional and management employees who have an agreement to work at home one or two days a week
- research and programming jobs
- contract work such as telemarketing or call centre work.

"Modifying the worksite wasn't expensive in terms of what we've got back from it." *BC employer*

Employers benefit from not having to maintain workstations for employees. Workers benefit from not having to commute. In addition to supporting your diverse workplace, alternative work arrangements can also result in reduced absenteeism, improved recruitment and retention, and improved job satisfaction.

Job Carving

Job carving involves melding job seeker and employer needs through systematic workplace analysis and individualized career planning. Job carving begins with the concept of using a person's unique contributions and matching those to an employment setting. An individual's contribution to the workplace can be the specific sets of skills, personality traits, or other assets.

Job carving is generally reserved for individuals who are not likely to succeed, even with support, when going through a typical competitive employment application and interview process.

Part-time Employment

Sometimes, persons with disabilities are not able to work full-time due to the nature of their disabilities. For some, part-time employment is the best work arrangement. Part-time workers have regular hours of less than 30 hours a week and pro-rated benefits (as required by BC Employment Standards). Part-time employment allows companies to staff for the busier times, without having unnecessary staffing at other times. In particular, this flexibility is extremely important to service industries.