# SCREENING & REVIEWS

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"Our employees with disabilities are incredible workers — willing and eager to learn, and focused on productivity and meeting team goals. It didn't take me long to realize that I wasn't hiring people with disabilities, I was hiring the best people for the job."

— Julio Padilla, Manager, PepsiCo Las Vegas Certified Center

## In This Chapter

Screening and interviewing candidates

Onboarding new hires, along with training and performance review best practices

Providing on-the-job accommodations and support

## Screening and Interviewing Candidates

Depending on your use of partner agencies and the way that they operate, some or all of the pre-screening process may occur within the agency. Generally speaking, screening should focus on three broad categories:

- Consideration of the requirements of the job
- Physical ability of the candidates to perform specific functions
- Social and communication requirements for the position and working with others

We suggest you review your application and interview process to understand where people with disabilities might be getting lost in the system, and consider whether any adjustments are warranted. AskJAN has compiled some best practices for accessibility in applicant tracking systems and pre-hire tests.

### **Click to view the Application and Interview Process Assessment Form**

- Is your online application process accessible, and can individuals with disabilities easily access it?
- How are you integrating any partner agencies into your application and interview process? What are their comments about your application and interview process?
- Have the employees who manage this process at your site had access to disability awareness and etiquette training, and do they understand the goals for this program?
- Do applicants have the opportunity to self-identify as an individual with a disability at every step of the application and interview process?

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## Onboarding New Hires and Training Best Practices

Onboarding and training new hires with disabilities follows the same rules as onboarding and training any new employee. Each organization approaches this slightly differently, but may include:

### Onboarding New Hires

- Introduce yourself and make the person feel welcome
- Introduce new employees to other coworkers
- Help the person learn about the culture of the workplace
- Stress the importance of performance, safety and quality
- Provide pointers about informal rules such as breaks, dress code, and keep food and drink out of the work area
- Teach specific work terminology
- Check to make sure the person understands; ask them to repeat instructions
- Show the individual where things are located and review policies and procedures
- Invite the person to join you and others for breaks and lunch

### Training and Ways to Improve the Experience of Work

- Ensure clear and specific job tasks
- Provide gradual introduction into the work situation, with support
- Create written, diagrammatic or pictorial instructions
- Employ a structured work pattern which enables the team member to complete one task before starting another
- Ensure clear line of management and an informed supervisor or mentor who can be available to give advice
- Create checklists and timetables for work to be done
- Provide initial close supervision
- Provide explicit rules of behavior and advice about unwritten rules in the workplace
- Strive for consistency from you and your colleagues
- Help employees to discriminate between good-natured teasing and when someone is angry or upset
- Explain expectations for jobs or routines
- Ask the person what you can do to help them, should they ask for assistance
- Give criticism and feedback privately and concretely

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## On-the-Job Accommodations and Support

Once an employee with a disability comes to work for your company, there may be "accommodations" or "job supports" that need to be in place for the employee to fulfill job requirements. The Americans with Disabilities Act codified into law the legal requirement for providing these accommodations, but the real incentive is the increased value employees with disabilities provide when properly accommodated.

A reasonable accommodation is any change in the work environment (or in the way things are usually done) to help people with disabilities apply for a job, perform the duties of a job or enjoy the benefits and privileges of employment.

### Examples of Accommodations

- Schematics or visual tools, rather than text-based instruction
- Voice input or speech recognition aids
- Computer screen magnifiers
- Written instructions in addition to spoken instructions
- Camelbacks (water packs) for employees who easily become dehydrated due to medication
- Job coaches — individuals provided by the state or other organization to help orient and train a new employee with disabilities

As you can see from these examples, accommodations in the workplace do not need to be expensive or complicated. Let your new employees with disabilities and your agency partners guide you as to what might be beneficial in your workplace. Be creative, be flexible, and be open to new ways of doing things.

Natural supports are a process for linking individuals to existing social supports in the work environment that are either informal, from coworkers and peers, or formal, from supervisors and company-sponsored training programs.

### Examples of Natural Supports

- Help employees learn informal rules that will support their success in the workplace
- Give clear feedback
- Give clear directions
- Ensure that employees know how to ask for help
- Model (demonstrate how to do tasks)
- Use silence — after providing information, give time to process and come up with questions
- Use visual supports
- Help employees know where to go and who to contact with questions or concerns
- Ensure involvement in formal/informal company activities
- Use standard processes such as standard training programs, standard mentoring or coaching programs, etc.

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## Defining the Process for Receiving an Accommodation

While you will provide many accommodations before your employees with disabilities arrive on site, they also need to understand the process for requesting and obtaining any additional accommodation(s).

### Best Practices In Accommodation Process

- Provide contact information for the individual(s) responsible for implementation of accommodations
- Make sure the process for requesting accommodations is clear — it should be possible to make requests orally or in writing, and a third party should be able to make such requests on behalf of the employee
- Identify the timeline for processing accommodation requests
- Identify the process for securing any funding or other support needed to accommodate a request
- Communicate often with the employee as the accommodation is being implemented
- Have an appeal process

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## Employee Reviews

Since employees with disabilities are treated no differently than other employees, they will go through a regular review process in order to execute their responsibilities and develop as employees. If any of the below guidelines are in conflict with your company's/site's policies, make sure you follow the company/site guidelines.

### Best Practices In Employee Reviews

- Give immediate, clear and open feedback about the standard of work done and where the employee's or candidate's current performance is in relation to standard
- Present information in forms that work best for the employee — for example, provide both written and oral feedback
- Set aside time for the employee to receive feedback and process the information presented
- Ensure that all accommodations needed in the workplace are also present during reviews
- Consider contingency plans for dealing with stressful situations and plans for contact with someone (parent, guardian, job coach) who will give support
- Depending on the individual arrangement with the site and with the employee, consider engaging a job coach in the review process, but ensure that feedback is given to the employee directly
- Be prepared for disability disclosure and a request for an accommodation

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## Application and Interview Process Assessment

Is your online application process easily accessible for individuals with disabilities?

☐ Yes    ☐ No

If you are working with partner agencies, how are you integrating them into your application and interview process? What are their comments about your application and interview process?

Have the employees who manage this process at your site had access to disability awareness and etiquette training, and do they understand the goals of this program?

Do you allow a job coach or guardian to assist with the application process?

☐ Yes    ☐ No

Can they be at the interview for support?

☐ Yes    ☐ No