

# Selecting a Disability Employment Service Organization for Your Business

For some employers, partnering with a disability employment service organization (DESO) is a great option for recruiting candidates with disabilities. Employment focused services may be different depending on the service organization, though many are able to generally provide support to employers to source, hire, engage, and retain people with disabilities.

The following are some items to consider when selecting a disability employment service organization to work with your business. DESO's often specialize in working with a particular segment of the disability community, so these considerations will help you make an informed decision that is good for you and your business.

## A DESO should work to understand your organization

To recommend the right candidates for your organization, a DESO needs to understand what your business does, what services you offer, how you are structured and what your workplace or service culture is.

It's also important for a DESO to understand where on the inclusive hiring journey your organization is—is this your first intentional hire of someone with a disability?

Lastly, a DESO needs to understand the role(s) you have available to ensure their recommended candidates have the appropriate skills and qualities needed for the job. It's all about the right fit!

## Questions to ask a DESO about their organization

In order to ensure a DESO is the right fit for you, you may also want to understand their organization, to ensure there is alignment with your company.

Some questions to consider:

- What is their mission and vision?
- What is their job matcher/developer's relationship like with their clients?
- How do they source clients?
- Do they represent a specific segment of the disability community? If so, who is their demographic?
- Is there a cost for you to utilize them? In many cases DESO's are funded through grants and partnerships, but this is important to understand before you agree to partner.
- Have they worked with any organizations similar to yours? If the answer is yes, you might be able to talk to a colleague at a different organization to understand their experience.
- Does the DESO view you as their client, as well? If they value the relationship with employers, similar to the relationship they have with job seekers, you should be able to expect an employment service that also meets your needs.

## Understanding the support you will receive

In any relationship, it is important to be on the same page about accountabilities and responsibilities – and your partnership with a DESO is no different. The following are five recommendations of what to find out about the DESO you are going to work with.

1. **Post-Hire:** Depending on the candidate and their previous work experience, you may need support from a DESO after the candidate has been hired. Ensure your DESO will be available to provide advice or support for at least 3-6 months (as needed). It's also important to understand what support is may be needed, what's offered to you, as an organization, and what support is available for the employee.

2. **Job Coaching:** Some people with disabilities (not all) may need initial assistance from a job coach who can help them become familiar with the duties of the role. If this is the case, confirm that your DESO is able to provide job coaching.
3. **Workplace Readiness:** Does the DESO support candidates through interviews and workplace readiness? Understanding what supports are in place will help you assess what your responsibilities are.
4. **Commitment to Hire:** While the mutual objective is for the DESO to find you a new employee, it is important that any hiring decision makes business sense for your organization. It can be helpful to clarify that you will only hire a candidate if you find the right fit.
5. **Communication:** Establishing expectations for future communication can also be beneficial. Sometimes DESOs will come across candidates that might be a fit for a previously open role in your organization. Do you want them to contact you if they find individuals that they think would work well within your organization in the future? Or do you prefer to contact them when you have roles available. Being clear about this can help manage expectations on both sides.

## Quick Checklist

Questions to ask your DESO about support you'll receive:

- What resources do you offer employers?
- What support will we receive from your organization once the candidate is placed?
- How long do you offer support after the hire?
- What support do you offer candidates for interview and workplace readiness?
- What do you expect from us as a company?

## Understanding employment related terms

When working with DESO's, it's important to understand the following frequently used terms.

**Job Carve:** Job carving is the act of analyzing work duties performed in a given job and identifying specific tasks that might be assigned to another employee. This may involve creating, modifying, or customizing a job so that it accommodates to a persons abilities or capacity while simultaneously meeting the needs of an employer.

**Job Developer:** A job developer is a human resources and marketing professional. Found within social service agencies both in the private and public sectors, they are responsible for creating job opportunities for clients of their organization by researching, identifying and soliciting commitments from possible sources of employment. Additionally, they may also provide clients with soft skills training.

**Job Coach:** A job coach is an individual who helps people with career development, professional goals and long-term workplace success strategies.