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What can we do to make business more inclusive?

Often, inclusion is seen as just a matter for HR departments or customer facing teams. In reality, inclusion is about developing organisation-wide cultures which recognise, and value diversity. Genuine culture change needs to have the buy-in of all teams and be driven and role modelled by senior leaders. It also needs to be reflected in everything your business does. Would a disabled person feel represented in the images that you use in your branding or marketing, for example? Or in the language used in your staff newsletter?

There is a growing body of evidence which shows that inclusive workforces are more productive, more innovative and better reflect an organisation's customer base, so it makes sense for all businesses to think about inclusion when looking to attract new talent. Businesses need to think about every stage of the recruitment process from advertising a role, through to interviewing and onboarding. If the process isn't inclusive and accessible, then the ideal candidate may simply give up and go look for a company that can better meet their needs.

Inclusion doesn't have to be difficult. It's simply a case of asking your employees and customers about their experience of your business and what they need to have the best experience possible.

Are there any businesses that are leading the way in inclusion and accessibility?

More and more businesses are seeing the benefits that inclusion and accessibility can bring. This is reflected in the way that they design products, deliver services, and in their workplace practices. Business Disability Forum's Disability Smart Awards recognise businesses that are leading the way in inclusion and accessibility practices. Our most recent awards recognised HSBC UK's CEO, Ian Stuart, for his work as a leader to role model and normalise the conversation around disability. GSK was honoured for their robust workplace adjustments process and making productivity tools available to all, and Skipton Building Society was recognised for their inclusive approach to customer service.



Creating a disability-smart world together

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