



Good Practice Guide



Factory Improvement Programme

RECRUITING WORKERS WITH DISABILITIES

People with disabilities represent an untapped source of labour. Many people with disabilities have good work skills, and can become loyal effective workers. In addition, in some countries, national law requires all companies to hire a fixed percentage of their workforce as workers with disabilities. This Guide assists employers to know how to recruit disabled workers, and where to find qualified disabled jobseekers. It applies in particular to factories operating in Vietnam, but is a useful reference for factories operating anywhere.

PROSPECTIVE USERS:

Any company that would like to:

- reduce labour turnover, recruitment and training costs.
- comply with the Vietnamese Labour Law and buyer Codes of Practice;
- recruit workers with disabilities.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Recruiting workers with disabilities can help factories to address skills and labour shortages and reduce their labour turnover. Workers with disabilities tend to stay in jobs longer than non-disabled employees, so they can also help to reduce recruitment and training costs.

The Vietnamese government requires all employers to recruit 3% of their workforce as disabled workers otherwise companies are liable to a fine. Increasingly, multinational buyer companies also encourage their suppliers to hire workers with disabilities through their Codes of Practice.

PROCESS

Procedures to recruit workers with disabilities can be easily included in the normal recruitment processes of a company with a few simple adaptations to the recruitment policy and processes.

Recruiting workers with disabilities is the same as recruiting non-disabled workers; the employer needs to match the jobseeker's skills and abilities with the requirements of the job. People with disabilities will have some lack in abilities (for example, the inability to walk). However, every person with a disability also has many skills and abilities. The recruitment process for either disabled or non-disabled workers aims to match the necessary job requirements with the available skills of the jobseeker.

The main changes you will need to make to your recruitment process are in the job description and in the advertising of positions. For people with disabilities, job descriptions should be detailed, and include information about the physical abilities required to do the job.

Steps in implementation

The basic steps in a chronological sequence are:

1. Recruitment preparation: Develop detailed job descriptions for each type of job in the company. Include in the job description:
 - a. Essential qualifications required (certificates, degrees, etc)
 - b. Essential physical abilities required to do the job effectively.
 - c. Work experience required, if any.
2. The requirements you identify should be only those that are absolutely necessary to do the job successfully.
3. Advertising the position: The company should advertise positions as widely as possible. To attract jobseekers with disabilities you may need to contact organisations that know people with disabilities and can refer qualified people to your company.
4. If you advertise the position in the newspaper, or by placing a sign outside the company, make sure you add at the bottom 'people with disabilities are encouraged to apply'.
5. Selection procedures: Selection should focus on matching the skills of the jobseeker with the skills required for the job. You should try to not discriminate against any disabled jobseekers, but provide them an opportunity to explain or demonstrate their abilities.
6. On-the-job training: Education and vocational training opportunities for people with disabilities in Vietnam are quite limited, thus many people have not had skills training opportunities. Depending on the job, your company may be able to provide training on-the-job for disabled workers.

Other Possibilities to Consider:

Work trial: You may wish to give the jobseeker with a disability a chance to prove they can do the job by giving them a trial work period. This should be a short period of 1-2 weeks to provide an opportunity to see the jobseeker's skills in the real work situation. The company has no obligation to hire the person at the end of the job trial if they cannot do the job effectively.

Tips 1: Where to Find Qualified Disabled Jobseekers

There are a number of organisations and agencies that know jobseekers with disabilities and can refer them to your company:

- The local Organisation/Club of People with Disabilities. Check <http://forum.wso.net/> to find the closest organisation.
- Vocational Training Centres for People with Disabilities – ask DoLISA.
- Employment Service Centres
- DoLISA in your province.
- Social Protection Centres in your province.
- Schools and Colleges for people with disabilities.



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Tips for Communicating and Working with People with Disabilities

<p>General etiquette</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Speak directly to the person, not to any assistant or interpreter. ▪ Use a normal volume of voice and normal language, unless the person asks you to speak more loudly. ▪ Ask if the person needs assistance before you help them do something. ▪ Do not assume that the person cannot do something based on their appearance or equipment. Ask the person if you aren't sure. ▪ Do not assume that workers with disabilities are weaker or sicker than non-disabled workers. The impairment will affect one of more function, most impairments have no impact on the physical health of the individual.
<p>Person with mobility impairment or wheelchair user</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ask if the person needs assistance before helping them. ▪ Do not make assumptions about a person's mobility based on their appearance or equipment. For example, many people who use wheelchairs can walk short distances without assistance. ▪ Do not touch or lean on a person's wheelchair ▪ If you are speaking to a person in a wheelchair for more than a few minutes, sit down so you are at the same eye level as them.
<p>Person with vision impairment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Verbally introduce everyone in the conversation so that the person knows who is present. Don't just leave a conversation or room, tell the person you are leaving so they know. ▪ Consider how information is presented. It should be verbal as well as written. Offer to read out written information in an interview situation. ▪ Don't grab the arm of the person to guide them, ask if they need assistance then offer your arm for them to hold. ▪ Provide a verbal guided tour for new vision impaired employees so they know where everything is. As you walk, tell the person where you are going, make note of steps or slopes, and point-out opening doors or other obstacles. ▪ If changes in the physical layout of the workplace are made, inform the vision impaired worker and give them a tour so they can understand the new layout. ▪ Inform vision impaired workers of any new dangers in the workplace, such as construction, fallen branches, etc. ▪ Get the attention of the person by lightly touching them on the arm and introducing yourself before speaking to them. ▪ Ensure good lighting in all work areas.
<p>Person with hearing impairment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ People with hearing impairment use various ways of communicating, including sign language, lip reading, speaking and hearing. Ask the person how they would like to communicate. ▪ Do not assume that a person with hearing impairment cannot hear at all. Hearing impairment is different for every individual. ▪ Be aware of how information is presented, it should be written as well as verbal.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Speak slowly and clearly, but at normal volume and do not cover your mouth when talking to someone who has hearing impairment. ▪ Get the attention of the person by lightly touching them on the arm before speaking to them. ▪ Do not be afraid to tell a person with a speech impairment that you don't understand. It may be better to use written communication rather than not understanding someone. ▪ Do not finish sentences or words for the person if they have difficulties speaking. Allow time for them to express themselves.
<p>Person with intellectual disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do not assume that the person has below average intelligence. The individual may have above-average intelligence, but may have difficulty receiving, expressing, or processing information. ▪ Treat the person normally, try to avoid stereotypes or myths about intellectual disability. Ask the person if they need help before offering assistance. ▪ Ask the person how they would like to receive information; verbally, written or both. It can often be helpful to provide instructions and training verbally, and then follow up with an email or written information. ▪ Be patient, allow the individual time to receive information and express their thoughts. ▪ Respect personal space and do not touch the individual or his personal belongings ▪ Do not finish sentences or words for the person if they have difficulties speaking. Allow time for them to express themselves.
<p>Person with mental health problems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mental health issues affect different people in different ways, and at different times. Do not make any assumptions about how the person is affected. ▪ People with psychiatric impairments may behave differently than other individuals, may have trouble interpreting social cues, or may have different ways of coping with their impairment. Be patient and respect the person's way of coping with their illness. ▪ Treat the person normally; try to avoid stereotypes and myths about mental health problems. ▪ Respect personal space and do not touch the individual or his personal belongings. ▪ Ask before providing assistance ▪ Be patient, allow the individual time to receive information and express their thoughts.

RESOURCES REQUIRED

Making the modifications to your recruitment processes should not require additional resources, other than the time and commitment of staff.

You will need to develop networks with training centres and organisations of people with disabilities. They can help to refer appropriate workers with disabilities as well as provide advice and information about disability issues.

POSITIVE IMPACT

Many employers around the world have discovered business benefits of hiring people with disabilities. Impacts on companies include:

- Reduced recruitment and training costs because workers with disabilities tend to stay longer in jobs.
- A new source of labour for companies finding it difficult to recruit skilled labour.
- Improved relations with international customers who strongly support recruitment of disadvantaged groups.
- Improved reputation in the community because of demonstrated assistance to a disadvantaged group.

CHALLENGES AND PITFALLS

A possible challenge to the successful recruitment and incorporation of workers with disabilities is the attitude of other workers. It can be difficult for other workers to accept disabled workers. They may feel threatened or frightened by disabled workers. Education and awareness is the best way to avoid this. Ensure that all workers are aware of the company's decision to recruit disabled workers and why. Provide disability awareness training for workers to overcome fear.

Recruiting and incorporating people with disabilities into the workplace can be a challenging process if your company hasn't done it before. However, you will learn from experience, and also learn from the people with disabilities themselves. Be prepared to modify your procedures and training as you learn more about what is effective.

INDICATORS FOR MONITORING

- Number of workers with disabilities
- Range and level of jobs done by workers with disabilities
- Number of disabled trainees recruited at the completion of the training or work trial.

Further Information Available:

See FIP Sub-Module: Disability in the Workplace

The US Job Accommodation Network has fact sheets and detailed information about making modifications to the workplace for different kinds of impairments. See www.jan.wvu.edu (English only)

ILO Ability Asia Website. <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/asro/bangkok/ability/index.htm>

Vietnam Ministry of Construction has a Code and Standards for Accessible Construction. Contact ??? to get copies.

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