

# The Business Case for People with Disabilities

## People with Disabilities Are Able to Work

In a true, modern renaissance, artificial obstacles are falling away and technologies expand possibilities in a modern economy that is much less based on physical labor. Workers with disabilities are increasingly healthy, independent, educated, mobile, and career-oriented. They are a substantial, still emerging, and under-utilized human resource.

## They Are a Very Large, Growing, Under-Utilized Resource

There are 22 million working age people with disabilities in the United States. 62% of them are unemployed. Of those, a third say they can and want to work. That leaves **Five Million** people left untapped! And what of the other two-thirds who say they can't work? As our culture of independence for people with disabilities continues to unfold, much of this potential will also be unleashed.

## Employees Who Acquire Disabilities Can Adapt

Often, "disability management" means "going off on disability". Potential is wasted, resources get stretched. The core paradigm of Modern Disability is a creative spirit of adaptation, where the first line of thinking is how an employee can most effectively stay on the job or return to work if possible. This spirit of adaptation fosters a culture where everyone gets what they need to do their best.

## People with Disabilities Are Natural Problem Solvers

Living with a disability means facing—and solving—limitations. In this age of Modern Disability people continually seek practical and creative solutions to allow them to live to their full potential. They are not willing to accept anything less. People with disabilities bring their unique perspective and innate problem-solving skills with them into the workplace.

## People with Disabilities Are Consumers with Money to Spend

Study after study demonstrates that people with disabilities have **Twenty Billion** dollars of disposable income to spend! As they continue to emerge—education and employment rates on the increase—their spending power will also grow. Other consumers are influenced by accessibility, too. A group that includes a person with a disability will only choose disability-savvy products and services.

## The Missing Piece in the Diversity Mosaic

No longer simply the objects of programs to "Hire the Handicapped," workers with disabilities are full-fledged members of a truly diverse workforce. Any company which wants the cross-section of their employees to fully represent their customers will commit to getting up to speed with the story—and huge opportunities—of Modern Disability.

Gary Karp is a national disability awareness expert. He has used a wheelchair since 1973. In 2007 he was inducted into the Spinal Cord Injury Hall of Fame as a disability educator.

Four books, numerous articles and radio commentaries, and extensive work as a speaker and trainer make Gary an ideal partner to embrace the new truths of Modern Disability. Call or email him to discuss your needs—and potential.



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