


# Employers' behaviours around hiring people with learning disabilities



**Research by Inclusive Recruiting on employers' attitudes and behaviours in hiring and working with people with learning disabilities.**



## Background

This report looks at why some bosses are scared to hire people with learning disabilities. The Fraser of Allander Institute asked Inclusive Recruiting to find out more.



The research wanted to ask three things.

- First, what stops bosses from hiring people with learning disabilities.
- Second, why are bosses unsure about hiring people with learning disabilities?
- Third, do bosses from different types of companies think differently?



People from different jobs like HR, Recruitment, and Managers were asked to join.

They could do an interview or an online survey.

People from different types of companies and places were also asked.



The answers were studied using a method called Thematic Analysis.

This means looking for common ideas or patterns in what people said.



28 people joined:

- 20 did the survey and eight did interviews.
- They came from different size companies and sectors.
- Some were from really big companies.



## Findings

People do not know enough about learning disabilities. Many mix up learning disabilities with learning difficulties. Few know about specific learning disabilities like Williams Syndrome, Fragile X, or SYNGAP1.



Prejudice and assumptions can stop people with learning disabilities from getting jobs. Some think they need too much help or can only do simple jobs.

Others believe they cannot work in fast or complex places or in hybrid roles.



Many survey respondents have wrong ideas about hiring people with learning disabilities.

They think it might disrupt other workers. Some believe these workers need too much supervision. Many think only certain jobs are suitable, like cleaning or back-office roles.



Fear of others' prejudice also stops hiring. People worry that workers with learning disabilities might face unkindness or bias.



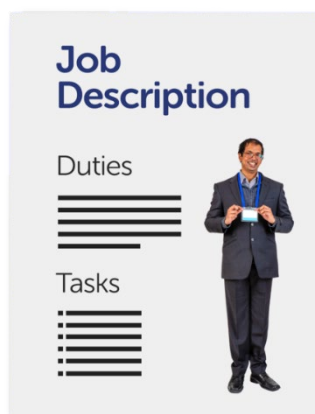
There is a big gap between what organisations say and what they do about hiring people with learning disabilities.

Lots of companies do not have anyone in charge of hiring more people with learning disabilities.

Both employers and the government need to work together to make real changes.



Hiring processes need to change to help people with learning disabilities apply for and get jobs.



Many bosses do not know how to change hiring steps.

A survey showed that people want to recruit people with learning disabilities. But:

- 70% do not promise an interview,
- 45% never change interviews to help.



When people with learning disabilities do get a job, some things like contracts can be hard to understand. They need to be in easy read formats. Training materials should also be easy to read.



Many people do not know how to hire someone with a learning disability. They are unsure where to start. Most do not know how to advertise jobs to attract people with learning disabilities.



People know about big charities for people with learning disabilities. But they do not know smaller ones that could offer local help.



Many people think it costs too much to hire someone with a learning disability. They worry about paying for extra training and support. Some think people with learning disabilities need more help and work slower.



Some costs are because people don't know about Access to Work. This is government help that pays for things like special travel arrangements or software.

### Ideas for improvement



Employers would find it helpful to have a resource bank. This could have toolkits, guides, and fact sheets. It would explain different learning disabilities and show how to make jobs easier to apply for.



Research found some good examples of how to help. These examples could be turned into case studies. Employers could learn from these case studies.



Many people want to learn more about hiring people with learning disabilities. A community or network could help with this. Employers and people with learning disabilities could work together.



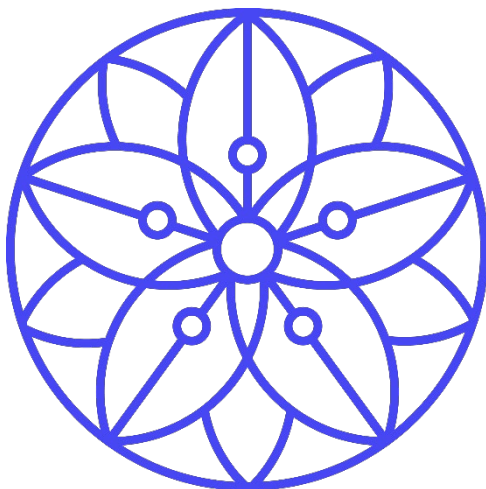
Volunteering schemes were also mentioned. These schemes could help employers get experience working with people with learning disabilities. It could help change how they think and feel.

## Thank you



Thank you to The Assembly who helped us shape our interview questions. You can find out more about The Assembly at:

**[www.viascotland.org.uk/project/the-assembly](http://www.viascotland.org.uk/project/the-assembly)**



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You can find out more about Acorns to Trees at:

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