



Hi, my name is Jason. I'm 28 years old. I'm from Windsor, Nova Scotia.

Like everybody else, I have a dream.

With MOBILA 1 I have an opportunity to achieve that dream.

MOBILA 1 is a concept which links social aspects with good business practices.

MOBILA 1 creates jobs for people with disabilities and adds value for employers.

It's Win-Win situation for everyone.

My name is Jason. This is MOBILA1

Think about the possibilities, not the disabilities.

MOBILA 1 Ability Program

Advertisers are advised to employ people with physical disabilities to operate the MOBILA1 units in shopping malls, etc. The advertisers, as well as their clients, will enhance their corporate image by visually demonstrating their commitment to social responsibility through employing this demographic. This will be a special feature of MOBILA in Canada and USA where society has placed a high value upon helping the disadvantaged.

AKAS, together with appropriate partners, have established the MOBILA1 Ability Program to assist with hiring persons with disabilities (optional but recommended) and to help ensure that benefits are accrued from that decision.

Program includes:

- ✍* **Hiring assistance**
- ✍* **Training (Management and MOBILA1 operators)**
- ✍* **PR media kits for companies that support MOBILA1 operators with disabilities**
- ✍* **Information on available benefits for companies who hire persons with disabilities**

Consider this:

- Some studies show that people with disabilities have higher job retention rates, thereby lowering recruiting and training costs (see following numbers).
- Companies that hire people with disabilities can receive a number of tax benefits. (most assistive devices used by persons with disabilities are GST exempt)
- People with disabilities possess excellent creative problem solving skills, and can inspire team performance;
- Wage subsidies (50%) may be available to hire persons with disabilities;
- Special equipment (MOBILA1 ?) costs may be covered under some programs; (Workers Compensation, private insurance, Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities or the Opportunities Fund, to name a few)
- Modifications for accessibility might be eligible for funding through Service Canada. Also, please note that if you are unable to access funding from Service Canada, the costs of modifications are tax deductible.

An extensive survey of managers conducted by Harris and Associates in the late eighties examined some of these concerns. The findings revealed that employees with disabilities:

- ✍ have job performance evaluations of good (64%) or excellent (24%);
- ✍ are as reliable (42%) or more reliable (39%) than employees without disabilities;
- ✍ have about the same (57%) or a better (20%) record of productivity than employees without disabilities; and
- ✍ were defined by 82% of the managers as easier or no more difficult to supervise than employees without disabilities.

About three years later the DuPont Corporation similarly surveyed managers at many of its locations on the work of employees with known disabilities. Once again the results indicated that:

- ✍ About 97% were rated average or above average in safety;
- ✍ 90% were rated average or above average in performance of job duties; and
- ✍ 86% were rated average or above average in attendance.

Source: *The Nova Scotia Disability Employment Toolkit*

A Business Case for Hiring People with Disabilities

Hiring people with disabilities is not a matter of charity. It is good business practice. In a study released on April 3, 2000 the Royal Bank suggested that hiring more persons with disabilities is good economic sense. The report estimated that Canadians with disabilities have control over twenty to twenty-five billion dollars in disposable income. This level of purchasing power will grow substantially over the next decade. In fact, baby boomers born between 1947 and 1966 will add a further 1.4 million to the population of working age Canadians with disabilities. The report concluded that the reputational risks associated with short selling the needs and interests of this large segment of the Canadian population are real and will only intensify in the years ahead.

The Royal Bank is not the first corporate entity to conclude that hiring people with disabilities and members of other marginalized groups is important to the bottom line. A projected 50% increase in the number of seniors with disabilities by 2005, a high proportion of whom will have one or another type of disability, has persuaded many employers of the need to hire staff who understand and can respond sensitively and effectively to their needs and wants. Indeed, the public is increasingly demanding socially responsible business practices. Even global corporations are being exposed to new public scrutiny. The Seattle protests of December 1999 give ample indication of the potential for damage to corporate reputations and impact on the bottom line.

Market research carried out by Environics International Limited in 1999 revealed in its Millennium Poll on Corporate Social Responsibility that 20% of citizens worldwide have avoided the product of a company or spoken out to others against a company not seen as socially responsible. The 1999 Cone/Roper Cause Related Trends Report similarly concluded that the influence that consumers now have on driving business success shouldn't be underestimated. It found that 54% of consumers consider labour practices, business ethics, social role and environmental impact when formulating their impressions of companies. In addition, when price and quality are equal, 75% of consumers say that they would patronize the company with a socially responsible record, even if this means switching from a previously valued brand. Both reports concluded that a commitment to corporate social responsibility must be communicated effectively to a widening group of stakeholders that includes customers, vendors, employees, government and the community.

Corporations that have succeeded in mounting successful diversity strategies point to a number of tangible benefits potentially important to the bottom line:

- a vastly enhanced public image based on increased responsiveness to the needs and expectations of a broader range of important stakeholder groups such as shareholders or tax payers, customers or clients, employees and communities;
- increased profitability from developing and marketing a broader range of products and services needed by the more diversified customer base the strategy has attracted;
- ability to attract and retain, motivate and use effectively human assets in an era of critical skill shortages;
- reduction of costly worker turnover and absenteeism based on the improved morale that flows from planned and effective diversity management in the workplace; and
- a better and more secure foothold in the increasingly competitive global economy.

Clearly any organization, public or private, needs to be concerned about the bottom line. As conviction about the relationship between workforce diversity and improving the bottom line mounts among corporate opinion-makers throughout Canada, so does the attractiveness of adopting a diversity strategy. Making a place in your workforce for qualified individuals with disabilities is just plain smart business.

Source: The Nova Scotia Disability Employment Toolkit

The Federal Contractors Program

If you have or want to bid on a contract to supply goods or services to the federal government amounting to \$200,000 or more and have 100 or more employees, you will be subject to the requirements of the Federal Contractors Program. This means that you will need to commit yourself to implementing employment equity as a condition of your bid. Failure to follow through on your commitment may result in the loss of opportunity to compete for future government business.

Source: The Nova Scotia Disability Employment Toolkit

AKAS Virtual Design

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