

# DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE CULTURE: BUILDING IT TO LAST

## Why Workplace Disability Inclusion Matters

Today, more companies are experiencing the benefits of an inclusive workforce, including a wider pool of talent, varying perspectives and increased employee satisfaction. Diversity and inclusion can also have a positive impact on workplace productivity. According to a [study](#) conducted by Deloitte, inclusive teams outperformed their peers by 80 percent in team-based assessments. And diversity matters at all levels, but especially when it comes to leadership. According to a [Harvard Business Review article](#), “Nearly 95% of [corporate] directors agree that diversity brings unique perspectives to the boardroom, while 84% believe it enhances board performance.”

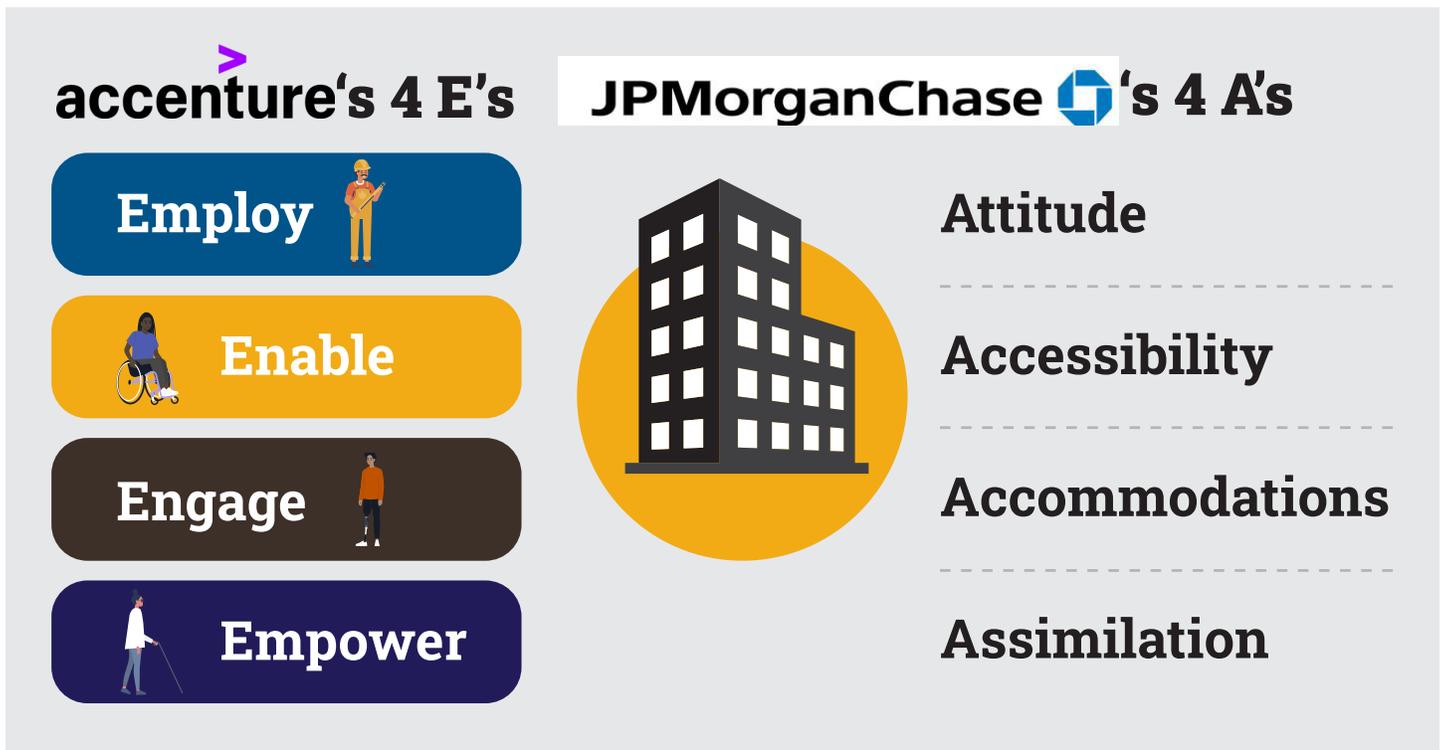
Inclusion of all types, including [cultural diversity](#), is important, and disability is also a crucial part of diversity. People with disabilities should be included in company diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) efforts as they can offer organizations a competitive edge, and help diversify and strengthen their workplaces through creativity, innovation, problem solving and commitment.

## Six Reasons to Embrace Disability Inclusion

- 1 Improve your company's bottom line.** A [report](#) conducted by Accenture, in partnership with [Disability:IN](#) and the [American Association of People with Disabilities](#), revealed that companies that embrace disability inclusion in their workforce significantly outperform their peers, experiencing, on average, 28 percent higher revenue, twice the net income and 30 percent better performance on economic profit margins.
- 2 Discover untapped potential.** Finding the right talent can be difficult, and if your organization is not hiring people with disabilities, it is missing out on a vast untapped talent pool. Workers with disabilities possess skills and experiences that can offer employers a competitive edge. For example, [research](#) shows that many adults with autism possess higher-than-average abilities in pattern recognition, memory and mathematics—highly sought after skills in the technology field and many other sectors. A [study](#) conducted by the Institute for Corporate Productivity also found that employees with developmental disabilities contributed to higher productivity, lower absenteeism and increased customer loyalty.
- 3 Reduce turnover.** Employers know that turnover can be costly. In fact, the Work Institute's [2017 Retention Report](#) found that the average cost to replace an employee is \$15,000 per worker. People with disabilities tend to seek stable and reliable work when searching for jobs, and therefore are more likely to have higher retention rates than those without disabilities.

- 4 Improve company morale and overall culture.** Hiring people with disabilities conveys and promotes an inclusive work environment. This encourages empathy in the workplace, a trait that is important to have when working with customers and clients, and can improve the perception of the company from the consumer point of view. Hiring people with disabilities also communicates social responsibility, demonstrating that the company is interested in broader social issues that impact the community and the people in it.
- 5 Expand your consumer market.** People with disabilities make up one of the [largest consumer market segments](#) in the U.S. One of the best ways to tap into this trillion-dollar market segment is through representation in the workplace—people want to support companies that can meet their needs. Hiring and promoting people with disabilities shows consumers with disabilities and their families and friends that they are valued, and therefore they are more likely to think favorably of the company and become or remain loyal customers.
- 6 Meet federal contractor requirements.** [Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#) requires that federal contractors and subcontractors take proactive steps to recruit and retain workers with disabilities. So, for businesses that work with the Federal Government, or want to do business with the government in the future, being disability-inclusive will help them meet their regulatory requirements.

## Workplace Disability Inclusion Models



EARN's webinar, "Disability-Inclusive Workplace Culture: Building it to Last," explores how two leading companies, JPMorgan Chase and Accenture, build and sustain disability-inclusive workplaces.

In 2018, Accenture conducted in-depth interviews with leaders from 45 companies that excel in disability inclusion. From these interviews, they identified four key actions for attracting, hiring, retaining and advancing diverse talent. Known as the “Four E’s”—Employ, Enable, Engage and Empower—they are explained in-depth in the report, “[Getting to Equal: The Disability Inclusion Advantage.](#)”

JPMorgan Chase & Co. focuses its [disability inclusion efforts](#) around the “Four A’s”—Attitude, Accessibility, Accommodations and Assimilation—which are explained in the [presentation slides](#) accompanying the webinar.

For more information about creating a disability-inclusive workplace, visit EARN’s [Inclusion@Work Framework](#).

## Resources

- [Forbes: The Benefits Of Cultural Diversity in the Workplace](#)
- [Deloitte: Uncovering Talent: A New Model of Inclusion](#)
- [Disability and Leadership: Engendering Visibility, Acceptance and Support](#)
- [Employing People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: A Report by the Institute for Corporate Productivity](#)
- [A Hidden Market: The Purchasing Power of Working-Age Adults with Disabilities](#)

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