



Image Description: Young woman being taught how to make espresso.

REIMAGINE TO SUCCEED:

**Bringing Diversity to the
Tourism and Hospitality Sector**

March 2024



Reimagine to Succeed equips tourism and hospitality employers with the training, advice and confidence they need to hire and retain people with disabilities and build more inclusive workplaces.

Funded by the Ontario Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility from April 2023 through March 2024, this pilot program was designed to encourage and support tourism and hospitality employers to recruit, hire and retain people with disabilities. The program reinforced the business advantages of diverse hiring, including increased staff retention, productivity, and growth.

Program Overview

- **Awareness Building:** Local and provincial outreach about the business case for inclusive hiring.
- **Training for Employers:** Ontario Disability Employment Network's Disability Awareness and Confidence Training for employers, a self-paced online course on how to hire and onboard employees who have a disability.
- **Supportive Network:** Connect business leaders with like-minded employers to share experiences and exchange best practices.
- **1:1 Consulting Support:** Business needs and capacity assessment to help employers develop recruitment and retention plans for people with disabilities.



Image Description: Smiling business woman in a wheelchair with arms crossed.

Inclusive Hiring is Good for People

Empowerment: Meaningful employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Financial Independence: Foster self-sufficiency and reduced reliance on social supports.

Social Inclusion: Contribute to personal development, confidence, and a sense of belonging.



Image Description: Smiling woman with Down Syndrome taking someone's order in a restaurant.

Inclusive Hiring is Good for Business

- Businesses that hire people with a disability experience a 72% increase in productivity.
- Inclusive businesses grow profits up to 3x faster than their competitors.
- Businesses with inclusive cultures are 8x more likely to achieve better business outcomes.
- 78% of Canadians are more likely to buy a product or service from a business that hires people who have a disability.

Source: Ontario Disability Employment Network (ODEN)



I attended and really enjoyed the LinkedIn live-stream chat last week. Very cool format! ...I left your chat having learned some new things myself, and wanting to learn more! ...Our tourism industry stakeholders would so benefit from hearing from you, having lived experience with an invisible disability, and the real-life cases you can speak to where employers made some simple adjustments to their workplaces to accommodate their employees. I'm sure many can relate to feeling like they aren't in a financial position to be more accommodating, but really, it's not always super costly to do so!

- **Adriana Barbary**, Director of Industry Development for Central Counties Tourism (RTO-6)

Engagement & Outreach



Thank you, Abby and OTEC for your timely help for Rabi's Group whose vision is to empower vulnerable people through economic resilience programs.

- **Rabiyah Azeez**, Owner and operator of Rabi's Group

Key Learnings & Opportunities

Relmagine to Succeed received positive feedback and strong audience engagement during 29 events, presentations, and virtual workshops. Strong collaborative support from employment service providers and tourism and hospitality alliances enabled OTEC to reach a broad audience. OTEC was successful in leveraging its relationships to extend program reach through the Tourism SkillsNet Ontario alliance, ODEN and social media amplification.

Despite positive feedback and engagement from employers, there were numerous challenges due to the 12-month program timeframe. There was insufficient time for employers to engage in all aspects of the program, particularly the consulting phase. Many businesses that expressed interest were unable to participate due to staff turnover, seasonal pressures, a cyberattack and the program's short duration.



As the Project Manager for TIAO's Tourism Workforce Sustainability Program, we were thrilled to see this much-needed program from OTEC. It complemented our efforts at expanding and diversifying the tourism workforce in Ontario by providing direct, hands-on support to employers to help them hire Ontarians with disabilities.

- **Leni Brem**, Project Manager,
Tourism Workforce Sustainability Program, TIAO

Going forward, there is an opportunity to create a network to align and organize programs in a unified approach to maximize impact. For example, the Employment Accessibility Resource Network (EARN) hosts job match calls every month to leverage its network of employers and employment service providers. This type of coordination maximizes the number of candidates for available jobs in a community. Employers would also benefit from more program flexibility, longer lead times to engage consultants, and incentives like an accreditation program for businesses as leaders in accessible employment.

The Campaign in Action



Reimagine to Succeed

This program is FREE for businesses in Ontario.

Reimagine to Succeed equips employers with the training, advice and confidence they need to hire and retain people with disabilities and build more inclusive workplaces.

By 2025, there will be over **45,000 unfilled jobs in the tourism and hospitality sector.** Inclusive hiring will be critical to helping employers compete for talent and fill those roles.

This program is FREE for businesses in Ontario.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

- 1:1 Consulting Support:** OTEC's Disability Inclusion Business Advisor works with businesses to assess their needs and capacity to recruit and retain people with disabilities.
- Training:** Access to the Ontario Disability Employment Network's Disability Awareness and Confidence Training for employers, a one-hour online course on how to hire and onboard employees who have a disability.
- Supportive Network:** OTEC connects you with like-minded employers to share experiences and exchange best practices.

INCLUSIVE HIRING IS GOOD FOR BUSINESS.

- 22%** of Canadians have a disability.
- Businesses that hire people with a disability experience a **72% increase** in productivity.
- Inclusive businesses grow profits up to **3x faster** than their competitors.

Source: Ontario Disability Employment Network (ODEN)

Register today! Contact: **Abby Aldoroty**, Disability Inclusion Business Advisor
aaldoroty@otec.org
 416-622-1975
 1-800-557-6832 ext. 232

OTEC
www.otec.org

Ontario  Funded by the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility



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Flysheet

Image Description: Program overview flyer and post card used to promote the project.



Reimagine to Succeed

Empower. Embrace. Succeed.

OTEC

September, 2023



Reimagine to Succeed

Funded by Enabling Change (MSAA)

An innovative program designed to empower small businesses with resources and knowledge to thrive in today's business landscape. By embracing diversity and understanding the benefits of hiring people with disabilities, businesses can foster innovation, increase retention of staff, and drive exponential growth.

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Impact on Individuals

- Empowerment:** Providing meaningful employment opportunities to individuals with disabilities.
- Financial Independence:** Fostering self-sufficiency and reducing reliance on social support.
- Confidence and Growth:** Contributing to personal development, confidence, and a sense of belonging.

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Presentation

Image Description: Three slides from a presentation featuring the program.



October is DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

OTEC



78% of consumers are more likely to buy a product or service from a business that hires persons experiencing disability

Reimagine to Succeed

BRINGING DIVERSITY TO HOSPITALITY & TOURISM

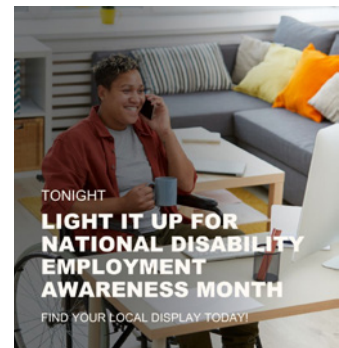
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MYTH
People with disabilities have poor attendance and productivity

FACT
88% of workers experiencing disability earn performance ratings of good or excellent

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TONIGHT LIGHT IT UP FOR NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

FIND YOUR LOCAL DISPLAY TODAY!

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Social Media

Images taken from social media campaign featuring workers with disabilities.

Learn more about Reimagine to Succeed and other OTEC innovative training solutions at info@otec.org

