

# A Practical Guide for Getting Started with a Neurodivergent Workforce



Wherever you're starting, there is a path to follow:

Test a fully-funded  
12-week internship

**Makes Sense For:**

Organizations who want to get involved but want to make sure the person is a good culture fit

**Biggest Advantages:**

- Wages and workers' comp costs are fully paid by the state of WI
- Dedicated support from a DSAW job coach

**Key Selling Point:**

A nearly no-risk option that can be a great first step to show your organization how valuable these team members could be

Hire one person  
with disabilities

**Makes Sense For:**

Organizations ready to start building a diverse workforce but who want to start slowly and build momentum

**Biggest Advantages:**

- Allows you to ease your organization into diversifying your workforce
- Helps you start with a "win" to demonstrate the positive impact these individuals can have

**Key Selling Point:**

A solution to current labor shortages that can help stabilize your workforce while also increasing your diversity initiatives

Partner with Rely to support  
neurodivergent talent in a  
controlled environment

**Makes Sense For:**

Organizations who want to support the mission but are concerned about impact to production, existing training structure, etc.

**Biggest Advantages:**

- Fulfill diversity goals and leverage neurodivergent talent without impacting your facility or operations
- Give positive exposure and hands-on experience prior to hiring

**Key Selling Point:**

Allows you to train future employees in a controlled environment to ensure they're ready to hit the ground running before you hire them at your facility

Build a pipeline to  
hire multiple employees  
over time

**Makes Sense For:**

Organizations ready to fully leverage neurodivergent talent as a sustainable competitive advantage

**Biggest Advantages:**

- Can provide a comprehensive solution to labor challenges / shortages
- Is a sustainable solution your competitors can't easily replicate or copy

**Key Selling Point:**

Allows you to stabilize your workforce while reducing the likelihood your fully trained talent will be poached or leave for \$1 more per hour

Connect with us to learn more.

Scan for more information:



Or email us: [info@dsaw.org](mailto:info@dsaw.org)

# Frequently Asked Questions



## Organizational Readiness / Support:

### Q: Will our staff embrace working with someone with a disability?

In our experience, most organizations actually see a positive cultural impact with their staff proactively wanting to support the individual with a disability. Additionally, DSAW provides a job coach when a person with a disability first starts, which significantly reduces the need for your staff to provide training support.

### Q: How do we prepare our team to hire employees with disabilities?

As with any employee, you are learning their strengths and their struggles. Knowing who they are as a person will help you to successfully support any individual. DSAW can also provide support for the staff who will be working most closely with the individual. This allows your staff to get answers to questions they may have and leave them feeling prepared to support their new team member.

### Q: Our workplace has strict safety standards – how do I ensure folks with disabilities maintain these standards?

Training is key when it comes to preventing accidents. DSAW's job coaches help reinforce your normal safety training by providing hands on reminders until the person with a disability gets comfortable with the new work environment.

## Employer Incentives:

### Q: What tax incentives are there for hiring employees with disabilities?

Work Opportunity Tax Credit - This credit provides employers incentives to hire qualified individuals from target groups. The maximum tax credit ranges from \$1,200 to \$9,600, depending on the employee hired and the length of employment. Disabled Access Credit and Barrier Removal Tax Deduction can also be explored. <https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/tax-benefits-for-businesses-who-have-employees-with-disabilities>

### Q: What are the overall benefits of hiring people with disabilities?

A large body of research shows that disability inclusion efforts are a boon to employers, specifically across six key areas of "inclusion incentives:" Increased Innovation, Improved Shareholder Value, Improved Productivity, Access to Supplier Ecosystem, Improved Market Share, and Enhanced Reputation. Disability Champions achieve - on average - 28 percent higher revenue, double the net income, and 30 percent higher economic profit margins. [https://www.accenture.com/\\_acnmedia/pdf-89/accenture-disability-inclusion-research-report.pdf](https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/pdf-89/accenture-disability-inclusion-research-report.pdf)

## Job Alignment / Growth:

### Q: Can I provide traditional opportunities for growth and advancement?

Just like your neurotypical employees, each individual has their own unique talents and skills. By identifying those talents, you are helping staff, disability or no disability, to recognize their full potential. For example, Rely uses some of these individuals as trainers for new individuals.

### Q: What kinds of jobs would be a good fit for these folks?

Not just janitorial! We encourage you to think about neurodivergent talent just like you would any other group of employees – like everyone, they have strengths and weaknesses and certain jobs will be better fits than others. Don't fall into the trap of putting these individuals on the easiest, most highly repetitive job in your facility. Any job that is detail-oriented and/or has a high level of quality tend to be very good fits for these individuals as they will maintain a high eye for quality when others might get bored and lose focus. Jobs like sortation, quality testing, pick/pack, detailed assembly, etc. are all good fits.

### Q: How can I find an employee with the right skillset?

It's important for your community partner to understand the type of work the person will be doing so they can find an Associate who will be a good match. If you provide job samples, DSAW can test Associates out of the Rely facility before they are placed at your facility to ensure it is a good job-to-Associate fit.

## Production Impact:

### Q: Will I have to make accommodations for employees who are difficult to manage / maintain?

No more than you would with a normal Associate. Each person is an individual - there will be some people who don't end up being a good fit for the job or your company's culture, and that's ok! The most important thing is to find the right fit. This is why utilizing the 12-week work experiences or partnering with someone like Rely can be helpful to finding the right fit before you hire them on.

### Q: Am I going to have to have one of my really skilled operators focused on these individuals? Will that lower the overall efficiency of my operators?

An employee with a diverse ability can be paired with a Job Coach to ensure tasks are completed correctly and efficiently. Job Coaches will also help identify any modifications to ensure success on the job. Modifications could include step by step instructions printed out or a timer set on the individual's watch to make sure they return from a break on time.

### Q: Will the employee be successful once the job coach fades?

We encourage you to think about these individuals just like you would any other employee. As is the case with everyone, it takes a while for someone to get used to the type of work they're doing. But, once they do, they are self-sufficient. This is the same case with neurodivergent employees.