How to engage your executive board in the inclusive recruitment agenda

Why is it important?

Board-level colleagues are influential in making decisions across your organisation about resources and priorities. Gaining buy-in can help drive forward a specific change including improving awareness among staff and ensuring that the change is presented as one of strategic importance.

Below are some top tips on how to promote the recruitment and retention of disabled staff and those with learning disabilities and difficulties (LDD) with your executive board.

1. Understand board priorities

This is key to successfully engaging senior colleagues in your idea or suggestions for change. The board will be interested in:

- how your suggestions can support them in ensuring the organisation achieves high-quality patient care and successful operation, alongside financial sustainability.

Having a clear understanding of their priorities and outlook from the start is crucial. Tailor your presentation with this agenda in mind.

2. Communicate directly

There are different routes to engaging with your executive board. Here are some suggested actions.

- Circulate information which support your agenda, such as the equality and diversity steering group’s report.
- Secure a spot at a board meeting to deliver a presentation.
• Make use of our template presentation as a starting point. You don’t have to use slides, but they can help to present a data driven and clear business case.

Any presentation you give should:

➢ identify the benefits of recruiting a diverse workforce and the impact it can have on core organisational priorities and strategies
➢ acknowledge the ongoing good work in the organisation, but highlight what more could be done to recruit and support disabled staff
➢ convey that a diverse workforce and recruiting disabled people is essential to effective organisational operation rather than an optional added extra.

3. Show the impact of a diverse workforce

Senior colleagues will understand the needs of the organisation in terms of workforce, organisational and strategic priorities, but may be less aware of why a long-term approach to recruiting more disabled staff is needed.

Our template presentation demonstrates the specific ways the organisation could benefit, including the ways the board can support and drive the agenda.

You could make the presentation interactive by asking colleagues to consider how the organisation’s values or key strategic vision relate to the recruiting and supporting of disabled staff. You could use our template slide [number XX in our presentation] with a worked example of this to demonstrate.

4. Building and explaining the business case

The following are key areas to include in your business case.

Costs

Consider:

• cost of resources
• human costs, such as running inclusive recruitment training and time lost to attend the training
• the loss incurred from not taking action to improve the recruitment and support to disabled staff
• the return on investment.
Benefits and losses

Consider the immediate positive impact and potential losses that inclusive recruitment training will have on your organisation.

When describing the benefits, you could include:

- improved innovation
- supporting workforce supply challenges
- better patient care
- working towards your organisation’s Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) and Public Sector Equality Duty and improving disabled staff’s experiences at work.

Potential risks could include:

- ongoing workforce supply challenges – highlighted in vacancy rates and staff turnover
- continued poor staff experience for disabled staff
- large numbers of unemployed disabled people.

Use your data to show impact

- Use our Measuring up tool to establish the current representation in your workforce and the potential talent pool that the organisation could be tapping into locally.
- These statistics can highlight how recruiting more inclusively can be a solution to workforce supply issues.

Timeframes and actions

- Outline the actions you would like the board to take around this agenda and provide timescales on the work you are doing and what you are asking of them.