

# IWORK WE SUCCEED

**E**mployment First is a national movement encompassing the belief that community-based, integrated employment should be the primary activity for working-age youth and adults with disabilities.

Employment First is a national movement in more than 30 states. It means that employment in the general workforce is the first and preferred outcome for all working-age citizens with disabilities, regardless of level of disability.

In Oregon, Employment First works with the Office of Developmental Disabilities Services and Vocational Rehabilitation, as well as the Oregon Department of Education, to support services to improve job outcomes for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD).

## The Business Case for Hiring

Oregon employers are increasingly aware of the positive contribution people with intellectual and developmental disabilities can make to their businesses, and to their bottom line.

A national study from the Institute for Corporate Productivity found that large majority of companies that hire workers with I/DD report a positive experience, with one-third saying the experience exceeded expectations.

The businesses listed these benefits for hiring workers with I/DD:

- Inclusive, diverse workforce;
- Good talent matches for jobs;
- Motivated, dependable employees;
- Increased customer loyalty;
- Overall engagement.

Here are testimonials from Oregon employers and business owners discussing their experience employing a person with I/DD.



***"When Kirstin first started, reaction from customers was overwhelming."***

*- Mary Lucas, Manager, Kyra's Bake Shop,  
Lake Oswego.*

***"They recognized that our business was being more inclusive and responded very positively."***

*- Mary Lucas, Manager, Kyra's Bake Shop,  
Lake Oswego.*



***“He’s here on time and wants to work. In my world that goes a long way.”***

*– Damascus Hopes, Environmental Services Supervisor at Oregon Health and Science University, which has started a job carving program to hire people with disabilities, on hiring Paul.*

***“Susan is so happy and easygoing. We have received so many compliments from both staff and clients since she started.”***

*– Heather Robertson, manager of support services team, Davis Wright Tremaine, Portland, on employee Susan.*



***“Katie has a can-do attitude from the moment she walks in the door. Her positive attitude is infectious and makes everyone’s job easier.”***

*– Martha Hinman, Director of Student Services, Redmond School District, on employee Katie.*



***“Ax is a really hard worker. I don’t think our team would be complete without him.”***

*– Saresa Whitley, Manager, Blackstone Audio, Ashland, on employee Ax.*



***“Ethan is one of the most dependable workers we’ve got here.”***

*– Tom Sloan, Pallet Line Supervisor, Blue Mountain Lumber, Pendleton, on employee Ethan.*

**Interested in getting involved and learning more about hiring people with disabilities?**

Go to [iworkwesucceed.org](http://iworkwesucceed.org) or contact Donna Duff, [DONNA.M.DUFF@state.or.us](mailto:DONNA.M.DUFF@state.or.us) or Rebecca Sexton, [REBECCA.M.SEXTON@state.or.us](mailto:REBECCA.M.SEXTON@state.or.us)

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