

DSAW + Engauge

Diversifying your workforce through
community partnerships



dsaw

Down Syndrome

Association of Wisconsin, Inc.

awareness · acceptance · assistance



AGENDA



1. Employer Value Proposition
2. Partnership Origin
3. How it Works
4. How to Get Started!

Employer Value Proposition



Leveraging a neurodivergent workforce isn't just the right thing for employers to do, it's the smart thing to do. Consider...

- There are currently 2 open positions for every 1 job seeker in Wisconsin. A significant number of these open positions only require a high school education.
- WDA plans project nearly 600,000 jobs in manufacturing and hospitality in the next 2-4 years, increasing 5% on average.
- Manufacturers report that finding the right talent is now 36% harder than in 2018.



Continued....

- Executives report they cannot even fill higher paying entry-level production positions, let alone find and retain skilled workers for specialized roles.
- **A long-term challenge:** 77% of manufacturers say they will have ongoing difficulties in attracting and retaining workers in 2021 and beyond.
- **A bright spot:** Studies have found that diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) initiatives exert a growing influence on workforce trends and can help manufacturers fill these empty jobs.

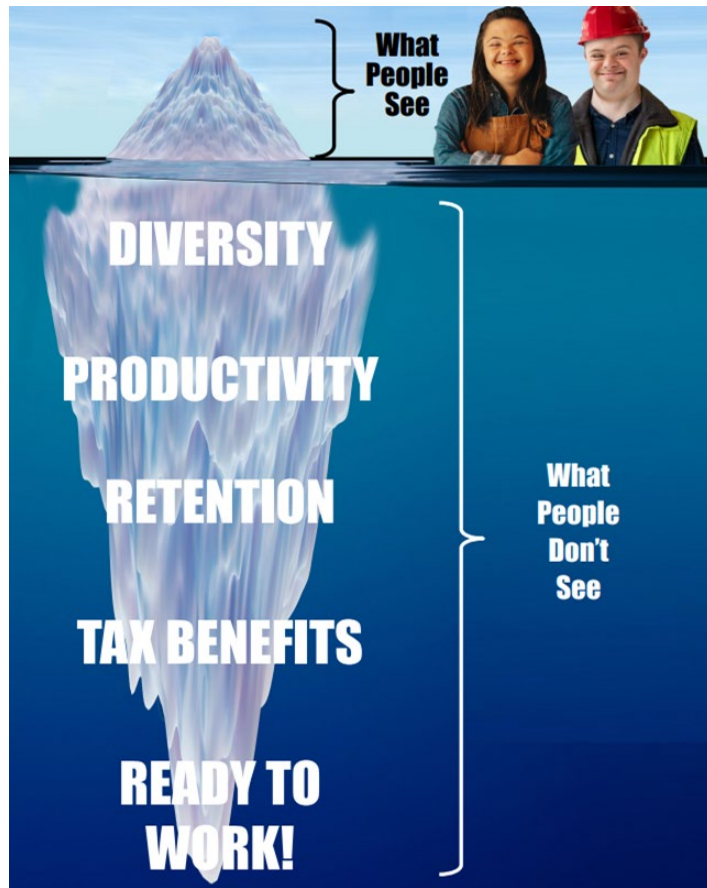
Deloitte says: “Given the foundational role the manufacturing sector plays in our nation’s economy, it is deeply concerning that at a time when jobs are in such high demand nationwide, the number of vacant entry-level manufacturing positions continues to grow,” said Paul Wellener, Deloitte vice chairman and U.S. industrial products and construction leader. “**Attracting and retaining diverse talent presents both a challenge and solution to bridging the talent gap.** To attract a new generation of workers, the industry should work together to change the perception of work in manufacturing and expand and diversify its talent pipeline.”



It's a smart decision for the economy and people with neurodiversities too!

- In 2021, people with disabilities accounted for 11.9 percent of the civilian population. However, only 19.1 percent of all people with disabilities are employed.
- There are some 172,000 Wisconsinites with disabilities who are not attached to the labor market, even though many want to work. Hundreds of thousands more are underemployed.
- There are about 4M people in DSAW's regions, and around 421,200 eligible people that could be reached to fill immediate job openings.
- Employers who consistently hire people with disabilities have on average 28 percent higher revenue, double the net income, and 30 percent higher economic profit margins than their peers.
- GDP could be boosted up to \$25 billion dollars if just 1% more people with disabilities joined the labor force.





It makes good sense all the way around!

1

Widen the candidate funnel;
fill hard-to-fill positions

2

Improve attendance; reduce turnover and job abandonment

3

Improve outcomes for people with disabilities

The Power of Community Partners

- Community partners work alongside employers to help navigate complexity, provide support, and increase employment outcomes for people with disabilities
 - Ex. Think Ability Wisconsin
 - Serving all people with disabilities in WI
 - Creating a wraparound, transition and employment “system of care”
 - Uniting government systems, community-based systems, employers, educators, self-advocates, and families
 - Driving toward long-term societal change
- Community partners have the information and the support
 - Ex. DSAW can provide funding, employer support, job coaching, instruction of core competencies, on-the-job training programs, and support very boots on the ground tasks



Partnership Origin



DSAW + Engauge: Partnership Background and Origin

- Katie at Techniplas was experiencing all of the same issues you are experiencing:
 - Turnover, retention, job abandonment
 - Their location was pretty far out, not leading the pack in pay. Looking to broaden recruiting funnel.
 - Enter Wendy from DSAW and the community partnership begins.
- Katie saw neurodivergant associates help stabilize their workforce...but knew how daunting this solution can seem to other manufacturers...
 - Most have the same backbone of grumpy old employees who have been doing this forever and are extremely resistant to change.
- Engauge and DSAW unite to begin bringing creative solutions to a broader audience.



How it Works



Manufacturing Basics (MB1)



- Employer-embedded within Rely Contract Manufacturing
- 12-week integrated, on-the-job training program
- MB1 teaches the basic information necessary to start working in manufacturing, as well as soft skills such as communication, team work, problem solving, etc.
- Topics include: all aspects of safety, warehousing/distribution, production numbers and what they mean, assembly, kitting, packaging, materials handling, rulers and tape measures, calipers, quality control, attention to detail, incident reporting, hazardous materials, hand tools, power tools, interest and aptitude for technology, time management, critical thinking, dependability, and more!
- Exposes students to many different environments and industries; finding the right match for the employer and the worker with neurodiversities.
- Opportunities for advanced training or employment placement at completion.
- Manufacturers can provide specifics on their industry, embed MB1 within their business, or outsource work to us.



How Do I Get Started?



Taking the First Step



- Find a community partner like DSAW.
- Identify internal champions.
- Review your internal training programs (support/needs).
- Bring on a few folks! Don't be afraid to fail. Not everyone will be a good fit.
- Want to start slow?
 - In partnership with DVR, a service provider can provide a no-cost, no-risk temporary work experience or job shadow opportunity.
- Learn more about the ROI on disability inclusion and tap into employer resources from Disability:In Wisconsin.
- Think about workforce sensitivity training for your employees.
- Want to support the initiative but aren't ready yet? We can help! Some options to consider:
 - Tour Rely Contract Manufacturing facility
 - Outsource work to support the mission
 - Fulfill your diversity goals
 - Train your future employees. Hire them at our site



How Can You Partner With Us?

- Hire your company's next quality employee/s!
- Create no-risk, no-expense temporary work experiences at your company!
- Learn more about hiring people with neurodiversities!
- Outsource your manufacturing work (to us!) and we will help you reach your company's diversity goals!
- Access our job retention support services!



Scan for more information!



Self Advocate Spotlight!



Questions?

- Handout summarizes a lot of the information we just covered
- Also includes many of the questions and concerns we hear most frequently from employers

SEE HANDOUT! The most common pushbacks we hear come from safety and/or operations. So let's talk about both safety and operations and how we address!

Common Employer Concerns and Pushbacks/FAQ

Q: What kinds of jobs are good for these folks?

A: Not just janitorial! Warehousing, distribution, packaging, assembly, inventory control, machine operators, material handler, pick/pack, quality control/auditor. Ex. De-burring. Ex. UPSIDE

Q: A lot of my workforce doesn't speak English...could this still work? How?

A: YES! Engauge's experience.

Q: How much hand holding is going to be required? Am I going to have to 100% quality check each part?

A: Not at all. Employees with diverse abilities are actually very quality oriented and have a higher quality expectation than some other associates. Once trained, just like anyone else, they should be able to meet quality standards. Job Coaches can be provided for as long or as little as needed.

Q: Our workplace has a lot of strict standards around safety – how can I ensure that people with disabilities can maintain these safety standards?

A: Just like any other candidate, it is all about finding a good match and providing the proper training. There are many individuals that would have no problem working around pieces of equipment without posing a safety risk. Job Coaches can be provided for as long or as little as needed to support and teach participants safety protocols specific to your company and the industry.



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 [DSA](#) 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