



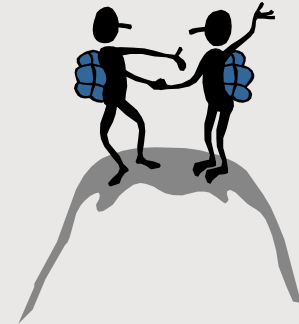
Planning For Success: Addressing Workplace Accommodation Needs During a Targeted Recruitment Initiative

**Melanie Weller
Gowan Consulting**

The Partnership

The employer

- BMO Financial Group
(Bank of Montreal)
- Canadian Chartered
Bank & leading Financial
Services institution
- Corporate Values
➡ Diversity



The Consultants

- Gowan Consulting
- Occupational therapists
- Over 30 years working
with employers

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The Pre Employment Training Program (PET)

- Targeted recruitment process
- Up to 15 participants
- 6 week work readiness training program
- Developed by a community agency
- Includes job specific training
- Academic score of 80%
- Real job upon successful completion of program



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Goals of PET



- Provide participants with the tools to be successful in gaining and maintaining employment
- Increased retention
- Creation of a workforce representative of the community the employer serves

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The Process



1. Accessibility Audit:
 - physical, cognitive and sensory demands of the location

2. Job Demands Analysis:
 - physical, cognitive and sensory demands of the job
 - potential accommodation strategies

Interview with Participants – Week 1

- Consent
- Abilities and limitations
- Previous accommodation strategies
- Demands of the PET program
- Demands of the job
- Identification of accommodation strategies during the PET and on the job

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Functional Screen – Week 3

- Screening of job related skills
- Standardized and non standardized assessment tools, including: Typing tests (keyboard and number pad), Purdue Pegboard, Progressive Isometric Lifting Evaluation, Hand and grip strength, Cognitive Assessment of Minnesota
- Functional tasks based on job demands

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Follow Up

- Implementation of accommodation strategies for PET program
- Implement accommodation strategies in workplace
- OT consults with participant once they are at their work location to address any outstanding issues.

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The logo for gowan consulting. It features a stylized purple 'g' icon above the word 'gowan' in a bold, lowercase sans-serif font, with 'consulting' in a smaller, lowercase sans-serif font below it. A dashed purple line curves under the text.

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Participants Type of Disability

- Mobility impairment = 13
- Motor impairment = 10
- Learning disability/Cognitive impairment = 11
- Mental health impairment = 10
- Sensory Impairment = 16
- Other (communication, medical management issues, environmental sensitivities) = 11
- Sample = 46

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Accommodation Strategies – Mental Health

During Training

- Quiet room availability
- Alternate evaluation methods : increased time, quiet room
- Provide written copy of presentation material

On The Job

- Minimize distracters:
Location of workstation, noise cancelling headset,
- Written and verbal instructions
- Deferral of sales targets
- Provide structure
- Breakdown tasks

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Learning Disabilities/Cognitive Impairments

During training

- Alternate evaluation strategies – quiet room, oral tests, extended time, computer based
- Provision of material in varying formats
- Use of time management software
- 1:1 coaching
- Note takers

On the job

- PDA or other organizational tool
- Noise blocking strategies
- Provision of material in varying formats
- 1:1 coaching
- Assistive software – screen readers, information management software, speech to text programs

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Accommodation Strategies - Musculoskeletal Conditions

- Selection of work location to meet participants abilities and limitations
- Selection of work station within locations
- Modification of work environment/station
- Stretch breaks
- Positioning tools in comfortable ranges
- Ergonomic devices – chairs, stools, input devices, anti fatigue matting, etc

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Accommodation Strategies – Sensory Deficits

- Large screen monitor
- Large key/colour contrast keyboard
- Software: screen magnification, screen reader, Kurzweil
- Portable magnifiers, page magnifiers
- Alternate communication devices: Ubi Duo
- Large font printed documents
- Environmental considerations

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Success of the Program

- Program inception – fall 2007
- 93% of participants successfully completed PET
- 70% of the participants have maintained active employment
- 9 have been promoted from their entry level positions
- 3% of BMO employees have self identified as having a disability

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The Key to Success

- Partnership and communication
- BMO corporate values and policy
- Understanding the participants abilities and limitations
- Understanding the job/environmental demands
- Timeliness
- Having a Whatever It Takes approach

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