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Disability inclusion responsibilities for managers

As a manager you have an important role to play in ensuring your team feel a sense of belonging at work. This is especially important for any staff who have disability. You need to make sure you are intentional in creating an inclusive team environment, it's not enough for people with disability to be present at work, they must be able to participate and be enabled to contribute to the team.

All employees should feel that they can make a meaningful contribution to the team that's not tokenistic or spotlighted, that they have a valued role within the group, and are perceived as capable and valued like any colleague.

Rather than focusing on your own intentions ask people about their experience of things. This can include their experience of the onboarding process, team meetings, communication styles, development opportunities, and work social events.

Ask beforehand "What will work for you?" and during check-ins "What's working and not working for you?" and follow up with "What would work better for you in future?"

To achieve the goal of experiencing inclusion, and a feeling of belonging, managers need to take a broad view of what will enable and facilitate that to occur. This includes enabling at the individual, team, environment, and systems levels.

Things you can do to create an inclusive work environment:

- Continue to develop your knowledge about disability and keep a copy of the **Manager's disability inclusion toolkit** to access useful information about disability and inclusive practices.
- Understand individual needs and choices.
- Arrange workplace adjustments around workplace practices and work environments.
- Make adjustments to your recruitment practices.
- Ask the person instead of making assumptions about their needs.
- Address accessibility issues in your workplace.
- Use and understand assistive technology.

There are key things you can do to ensure you are meeting your responsibility of creating safe and inclusive work environments, including:

- using respectful inclusive language and imagery
- calling out inappropriate language and behaviour of others
- accommodating individual needs and making necessary workplace adjustments in a timely manner
- maintaining trust with individuals who choose to share their disability information
- proactively managing accessibility issues that arise
- advocating the need for accessibility to be built into all work practices and environment, including the procurement of goods and services
- developing disability awareness and confidence in your team.