



A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR EMPLOYERS HIRING DEAF EMPLOYEES

**A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO
HIRING AND SUPPORTING DEAF
EMPLOYEES IN YOUR WORKPLACE**

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INTRODUCTION

EMBRACING INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY

Hiring a deaf employee is an excellent opportunity to enhance workplace diversity and foster a culture of inclusion. Deaf individuals bring a unique perspective and valuable skills to the table.

Deaf employees are actually average or above average in performance, quality and quantity of work, flexibility and attendance.

However, ensuring a smooth transition for your new employee requires thoughtful planning and the right support.

This guide will take you through the steps necessary to create a truly accessible environment for your deaf employees, ensuring that they can thrive and contribute meaningfully to your team.

STEP 1

PREPARING FOR RECRUITMENT

Understanding the Role of Deaf Employees

Before posting your job advertisement, it's important to understand the strengths that a deaf employee can bring to your organisation:

1. Enhanced Problem-Solving Skills:

Deaf people often develop unique approaches to overcome communication barriers.

2. Increased Diversity: A diverse workforce leads to more innovative and creative solutions.

3. Improved Customer Service: Deaf employees can better serve Deaf and Hard of Hearing customers.

4. Loyalty and Retention: Deaf employees often show high levels of loyalty to inclusive employers.

5. Enhanced Team Communication: Teams learn to communicate more clearly and effectively.

Ensure that your job postings and recruitment materials are fully accessible. This includes offering the advert in clear written formats and providing sign language options for both the application process and interviews where appropriate.

Creating an Inclusive Job Posting

✔ Use clear and concise language in job descriptions and avoid jargon.

✔ Be sure to mention that your organisation is committed to equal opportunities and is willing to make reasonable adjustments.

✔ If possible, include a statement that highlights the willingness to accommodate British Sign Language (BSL) users, for example, by stating: "BSL users welcome."

Deaf Umbrella will review and update job descriptions to ensure they are inclusive and do not have unnecessary barriers for disabled/Deaf people.

STEP 2

CONDUCTING ACCESSIBLE INTERVIEWS

To ensure smooth communication with a Deaf candidate, avoid phone calls and voicemails, as they may not be accessible. Instead, contact them via email or other written methods of communication that suit their needs.

Providing Support During Interviews

During interviews, ensure that communication is accessible. This might mean hiring a qualified BSL interpreter or providing written transcripts if preferred. Deaf Umbrella can assist in arranging BSL Communication Support Workers (CSWs) to facilitate clear communication.

Making Reasonable Adjustments

The call for reasonable accommodations is not just a legal requirement but a fundamental aspect of acknowledging and respecting each other's humanity.

Reasonable adjustments ensure that deaf candidates have a fair opportunity to showcase their skills. These adjustments could involve

- ✓ using a well-lit room away from lots of external noise or visual disruptions,
- ✓ allowing more time for communication through interpreters,
- ✓ using visual aids (charts, diagrams, or written notes) to enhance understanding.

WHAT ARE ACCOMMODATIONS?

<p>✗</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- ACCOMMODATIONS DON'T OFFER SPECIAL PRIVILEGES- ACCOMMODATIONS NEED NOT BE COSTLY- ACCOMMODATIONS DON'T CREATE AN UNFAIR ADVANTAGE- ACCOMMODATIONS DON'T COMPROMISE PERFORMANCE LEVELS	<p>✓</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- THEY ENSURE FAIRNESS- THEY CAN BE COVERED WITH ACCESS TO WORK (ATW) GRANT- THEY PROVIDE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES- THEY EMPOWER INDIVIDUALS TO REACH THEIR FULLEST POTENTIAL
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STEP 3

CREATING AN ACCESSIBLE WORKPLACE

If the deaf candidate is qualified for the role, then you will need to ask them about which accommodations would help them succeed in their role. They might need assistive technology, apps and online tools to carry out their job responsibilities without impediments.

Deaf Umbrella can help you auditing your work environment.

Deaf Awareness Training for Your Team

Before your new employee starts, it's essential to train your team on deaf awareness. Deaf Umbrella will deliver tailored Deaf Awareness Training, helping colleagues understand how best to communicate with the new starter and creating an inclusive workplace.

This training will cover basic etiquette, BSL introductions, and advice on clear communication.

It really has a positive impact on both the business as a whole and the Deaf employee.

Ensuring Effective Communication

Once your deaf employee is onboard, communication is key to their success. Ensure regular meetings are inclusive by providing interpreters or using tools like speech-to-text software. Open channels for feedback to ensure that any communication barriers are addressed quickly.

Accessible Technology and Equipment

Equip your office with technology that enhances accessibility, such as visual alarms, video relay services, and messaging platforms. This ensures that your deaf employee can participate fully in both day-to-day tasks and emergencies.

STEP 4

SETTING UP ACCESS TO WORK (ATW)

Access to Work (AtW) is a UK Government's commitment to equal opportunities, that provides **practical and financial support** to individuals with disabilities or health conditions, removing the barriers and ensuring they perform their jobs effectively.

How much will this cost you?

As an employer, you may have to share the cost with AtW if the person has been working for you for more than six weeks when they apply for AtW.

How much will the grant be for?

The value of the grant that the employee receives depends how long they have been in their job and the type of help required. As an employer, you may also have to cover some of the costs, depending on factors such as the size of your organisation.

AtW grants are capped at an annual limit of £57,200 per person.

How someone can claim?

Your employee can apply for AtW if they need help and support to get them back to work.

Applications for AtW can be made through the AtW Business Centers via online at www.gov.uk/access-to-work.

Completing the AtW process can be time-consuming. At Deaf Umbrella, we offer expert guidance to streamline the application and setup, ensuring that your new employee receives all necessary support from day one, without unnecessary delays or complications.

We will ensure that you obtain the correct budget allocation for your employee.

Access our comprehensive guide featuring answers to the 10 most frequently asked questions by both employers and employees. [Click Here](#).

STEP 5

ONGOING SUPPORT AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Promoting Growth and Development

Encourage career development by providing ongoing support. Regular check-ins, opportunities for additional training, and offering avenues for professional growth will ensure your employee remains engaged and valued.

Evaluating and Improving Accessibility

Periodically review your workplace practices to ensure they remain accessible. Solicit feedback from your deaf employee and make adjustments as needed. Continuous improvement will foster an environment where everyone can thrive.

If there are any issues months or years later Deaf Umbrella is always with you to support you with training, supervision, appraisals, away days, and the like. We are there as long as you want us to be.



CONCLUSION

By taking these steps, your organisation will not only meet accessibility standards but will also become a more diverse and inclusive workplace. Deaf employees can bring a wealth of experience and a fresh perspective, and by providing the right support, you're paving the way for success.

Deaf Umbrella is here to support you every step of the way making this transition seamless and rewarding. From helping you prepare your workplace, arranging Deaf Awareness Training, to setting up Access to Work, our team is committed to ensuring that both you and your deaf employee have the resources you need for success.

As your deaf employee begins their journey with your organisation, ensuring consistent and clear communication is essential. Deaf Umbrella offers British Sign Language (BSL) Communication Support Worker services to assist in meetings, training sessions, and daily communication. Our professional team will ensure your employee has the support they need, allowing your organisation to excel with inclusivity at its core.

For more information on how Deaf Umbrella can help your organisation or to book our services, visit www.deafumbrella.com

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