Advancing Employment for Persons with Disabilities: The Role of Technology

Advancements in AI-Based Tools

- AI has the potential to empower...
- In the classroom...
- In the community...
- At work...

2021: AI for Access Program: Awards grants to build accessible tech!

Looking to the future... Like Meta: Using data to classify & build tailored experiences.

Disabilities are outliers, but AI looks for statistical norms!

- I worry about recruitment!
- How can we help?
- Captions
- Reading tools
- PPT descriptions

We have accomplished so much, but there is more to do!

Zoom people use Microsoft 365—let's make office content accessible to more!

- Spell check, Access tracker...
- Seeing AI app: Intelligent camera tells you descriptions of people, environment around you!

When you are intentional, you can build inclusive experiences!

Grant to Ontario College of Art to study bias in AI against disabilities!

Disability is a strength!

Future solutions will affect my kids!

Start with training... Eg: IBM

We need access to experts in this!

Design w/ requirements up front!

1. Build & buy software w/ a universal design approach.

Open

- Maximize access features on our current platforms
- This is an opportunity to teach the why!
- Inclusion mentality is a core value at the UN!
- But 2 blind translators could not use it!

We have to socialize them!

Access

- Design w/ requirements up front!
- We must include community in development & testing!

We want our tools to be a universal experience! They are used globally!

Disability is a strength!

It is a catalyst to open doors!

We have momentum!!

Moderator: Rodger DeRose
Speakers: Suzanne Shanahan, Cecilia Elizalde Bulanti, Danielle Ditalia, Sunday Parker, Thomas Frants
ADVANCING EMPLOYMENT for PERSONS w/DISABILITIES:

THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY

Tech Solution Success Stories

We had to pivot our mindset!

Just like cybersecurity—An accessible workplace is a non-negotiable.

We educate our technologists!

We have control frameworks!

We have a dedicated support desk!

IT takes more than just tech!

Technology is central to our work.

We must mitigate risk & become more resilient!

Lessons: Geography is not a barrier! This should open employment!

How we: G'th work • Commsunicate • handle remote work!

We know there are gaps but platforms have unique value adds!

We need to make resources more specific & inviting!

The role is to amplify human rights!

Data Privacy

We must protect people w/disabilities—globally!

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The whole world got a crash course!

Over 1B. people in the world live w/disabilities.

This impacts employment!
ADVANCING EMPLOYMENT for PERSONS w/DISABILITIES:

POST-COVID RETURN-TO-WORK

BEST PRACTICES for a MORE INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE

INCLUSION BEGINS at the FRONT DOOR!...AND SO DOES ENFORCEMENT!

MANAGERS MUST DRIVE THIS!

AN INCLUSIVE CULTURE MUST BE LIVED!

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES NEED TO FEEL SUPPORTED to ASK for ACCOMMODATIONS!

PROMOTE VISIBILITY AROUND FLEXIBLE SCHEDULES & ENCOURAGE CLEAR CONVERSATIONS!

MODERATOR: JIM SINOCCHI
PANELISTS: ELAINE KATZ, TABITHA HALLY, THERESÉ FITZPATRICK, LYKKE ANDERSON, SHIRIN KIANI, LUCIANO COSTANTINO

WE MUST BE MINDFUL & ADDRESS STRESSORS FOR PEOPLE w/MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES!

STRATEGIES to ADDRESS MENTAL HEALTH in the WORKPLACE

WE MUST CONSIDER 3 KEY ELEMENTS in OUR STRATEGY

IN OUR JORDAN UNICEF OFFICE...1/3 NOT SLEEPING 1/3 TAKING MED. 1/3 SEEKING OUT A THERAPIST.

1. ACCESS to CARE
   ▶ People FEEL BETTER knowing they have SOMEONE to TALK TO!
   ▶ OFFER FLEXIBLE WORK OPTIONS!

2. WELL-BEING SELF-ASSESSMENTS
   ▶ HELP KEEP PEOPLE AWARE of HOW THEY ARE FEELING!

3. TRAIN MANAGERS on HOW to TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH in the WORKPLACE!

STIGMA: PEOPLE ARE FEELING ALOT of GUILT!

BE MINDFUL of LANGUAGE

1. END STIGMA THIS TAKES A SYSTEM-WIDE APPROACH!
   ▶ POLICIES
   ▶ ACCOMMODATIONS
   ▶ TRAINING & MANGERS

2. SUPPORT WE MUST SUPPORT OUR TEAMS via TRAINING!

3. PREVENTION
   ▶ FLEXIBLE WORK CONDITIONS
   ▶ AUTONOMIZE SCHEDULING
   ▶ WORK LIFE BALANCE
   ▶ TOP-DOWN CULTURE CHANGES!

IMPORTANCE of MENTAL HEALTH

THERE is a MENTAL HEALTH PANDEMIC FOLLOWING the COVID PANDEMIC...

ESPECIALLY for PEOPLE with DISABILITIES

BE MINDFUL of LANGUAGE

THERE is NO SHAME!
ADVANCING EMPLOYMENT FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: POST-COVID RETURN-TO-WORK

MODERATOR: Jim Sinocchi
Panelists: Elaine Katz, Tabitha Haly, Therese Fitzpatrick, Lykke Anderson, Shiri Kiani, Luciano Costantino

This conversation is not going away!

Critical issues to ensure a safe return:
- Employees have multiple concerns...
  1. Safety: Protocols, point person, clear plan, clear & safe transportation...
  2. Flexibility: Can I make my role hybrid?
  3. My career: Are there gains to being in person? Same access to tech?

Employees are managing multiple risks!
- A smooth transition
- A clean workspace
- The changing business expectations
- Covid has changed everything in our lives!

Supporting recruitment & retention:
- UNDP: Talent program for young people w/disabilities
- Channels new talent, offers exposure & develops leadership skills
- We want to attract persons w/disabilities to our talent pipeline!
- We want to truly cultivate people, not leaders!

Persons w/disabilities have huge talents!
- Drivers of change & innovation based on personal experiences!

Initiatives to remove barriers:
- Targeted outreach
- Social media campaigns
- Partnerships
- Accessibility checklist & guidelines for offices
- Remote working allows for more inclusion for persons with disabilities

WE MAP: Initiative to help reasonable accommodation
- Focus: Empower people in 360°!

Tips for providing effective accommodation:
- Workspace
- Transportation
- Travel

UNFPA measures:
- Tools & resources
- Accountability framework
- Physical & attitudinal information

This is a human rights imperative!

Need to follow human rights approach.

Focus: Empower people in 360°!