

WebEx Forum Series on Workplace Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities presented by Employment and Social Development Canada in collaboration with Canadian Business SenseAbility

WebEx Forum 1

Topic: Best practices in accommodating employees in the workplace

When? Thursday, February 18, 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. (ET)

Where? Online (WebEx)

What? This forum session provides an opportunity for participants to share knowledge and gain useful insights on such issues as: resources that employers are using to appropriately accommodate persons with disabilities, and strategies and approaches, including return-to-work practices, in workplace accommodation, and the inclusion of persons with disabilities.

Presenters:

- **Maureen Haan, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work**, on "Successful accommodations based on the understanding of why employers hire people with disabilities in the first place".
- **Debbie Pawelczyk, Senior Advisor in Workplace Accommodation at the Royal Bank of Canada**, on "A collaborative approach to workplace accommodation and inclusion at RBC".
- **Marie-José Durand, Occupational Therapist and Professor at the Université de Sherbrooke**, on "Return-to-work practices for workers with musculoskeletal or common mental disorders".

Facilitator: Joan Turner, Chief Executive Officer, Canadian Business SenseAbility.

About the Presenters:

Maureen Haan has been the President and Chief Executive Officer of The Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW) for over 3 years. Under Maureen's leadership, CCRW has seen an increase in direct program service throughout Canada, as well as a more transparent, stream-lining of understanding the business case of hiring a person with a disability. Through CCRW history of best practices and proven results, Maureen provides insight to employer engagement and is very active in the cross-disability sector, currently focusing on employment issues. Maureen has been involved with numerous committees and groups that increase awareness of and access for the disability sector and the Deaf community. She started her career in the Deaf community, and is fluent in American Sign Language.

Debbie Pawelczyk has over 28 years of experience in various positions across RBC, including sourcing and recruitment of individuals with disabilities. She now holds the position of Senior Advisor, Workplace Accommodation in Employee Relations. She is the Center of Expertise in Workplace Accommodation for RBC, providing guidance to managers across the globe in creating an inclusive workplace for employees with disabilities. Debbie attended

McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, where she received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Psychology and a degree in Human Resources Management. She has also achieved her Canadian Human Resources Leadership accreditation.

Marie José Durand is an occupational therapist and professor and researcher at the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences of the University of Sherbrooke, in Quebec. Professor Durand has carried out extensive research on improving the management and return to work of persons with various disabilities in the workplace, including musculoskeletal disorders, mental health disorders and cancer. She is interested in best practices of employers to foster the continued employment of persons who lived long absences from work. She is also the author of a book on mental health and work, as well as many other publications.

WebEx Forum 2

Topic: Accommodating employees in the workplace is expensive: Myth or reality?

When? Thursday, February 25, 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. (ET)

Where? Online (WebEx)

What? This forum session provides an opportunity for participants to share knowledge and gain useful insights on such issues as: the cost of current technological advances in accommodations, direct and indirect workplace accommodation costs, and myths and realities about the costs of workplace accommodation. The goal is to present a more realistic picture of this issue and identify areas where more work should be done.

Presenters:

- **Emile Tompa, M.B.A., Ph.D., Health and Labour Economist, Senior Scientist at the Institute of Work & Health and Co-Director of the Centre for Research on Work Disability Policy**, on "Employer costs and benefits of accommodation: What evidence is available and what evidence would be ideal for informed decision making?"
- **Gary Birch, O.C., Ph.D., P.Eng. and Executive Director, Neil Squire Society**, on "Cost of Assistive Technology and Related Ergonomic Interventions: A Case Study from the Neil Squire Society Solutions Department".

Facilitator: Joan Turner, Chief Executive Officer, Canadian Business SenseAbility.

About the Presenters:

Emile Tompa is a Senior Scientist at the Institute for Work & Health and co-director of the Centre for Research on Work Disability Policy. He has a status appointment as Associate Professor in the Department of Economics at McMaster University. His research interests include: the consequences of health and safety system design features and other labour-market policies, programs and practices for the health and well-being of individuals and

populations; workplace interventions directed at improving the health and well-being of workers, specifically the economic evaluation of such interventions; and labour-market experiences and their health and human development consequences, with a particular focus on precarious employment.

Gary Birch was appointed Director of Research and Development at the Neil Squire Society in 1988 and then in 1994 was appointed Executive Director. Gary earned his B.A. Sc. in Electrical Engineering in 1983, and in 1988 received a Doctorate in Electrical Engineering (Biomedical Signal Processing), both from the University of British Columbia. His specific areas of expertise are assistive technologies, accessibility of new emerging technologies, EEG signal processing, direct brain-computer interface, human-machine interface systems, environmental control systems and service delivery programs for persons with disabilities. Dr. Birch was appointed an Officer in the order of Canada in December 2008.

Who should attend these sessions?

Employers from the private and public sectors, human resources professionals, diversity and inclusion managers, employees responsible for corporate accommodations, policy makers, representatives from non-profit organizations, researchers, and academics.

How to register?

Register for the first session by sending an e-mail to bojana.vukosavljevic@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca no later than **Friday, February 5, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. (ET)** and for the second session no later than **Friday, February 12, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. (ET)**.

Please state clearly for which session(s) you are registering. You will then receive an official invitation with the information to join the meeting on WebEx.

Registration for these sessions is on a first come, first served basis.