

## Adecco Personnel

### *Emerging Diversity and Inclusion*

One in four New Zealanders is limited by a physical, sensory, learning, mental health or other impairment.

Leading staffing experts Adecco Personnel believe many of these 1.1 million people, currently unemployed through a disability, could be an untapped resource of candidates.

Adecco is one of the largest providers of employment placement and recruitment services in New Zealand. The company employs more than 100 people in its offices throughout the country.



In the past 10 years, Adecco has worked closely with Paralympics New Zealand as part of a global initiative to help para athletes with work opportunities.

It was this relationship that has given the business a unique insight into the world of disability. The company developed a greater awareness of the difficulties people with disabilities encountered in many aspects of daily life including how to secure meaningful employment.

Managing Director Mike Davies decided Adecco needed to consider this further and he began talks with ACC New Zealand about what Adecco could do. The focus was not just Adecco employing people with disabilities but to use its influence to get the message out to the wider business community and help remove the barriers associated with employment of people with disabilities.

To help launch the initiative in early 2017 Adecco employed two people with serious injury-related disabilities into its business, using the experience as a pilot to help launch the Employment for People with Disabilities Initiative.

"We didn't change any of the processes around their employment or how they were introduced to the company and fellow workers. We wanted them to be accepted and treated the same as any employee of Adecco," says Corporate Social Responsibility Manager Tracy Smith. "We did, however, remove any barriers in the application and recruitment process."

One of the employees, Mano, was an elite athlete who was injured during training and thought he would never walk again. After regaining the use of his legs, he struggled to get employment. Adecco employed Mano as a resource to find candidates for work and he has excelled. He has since been promoted internally and has a whole career mapped out for himself.

"The biggest impact on Mano is the feeling of worth. He is married and became a father last year. He feels he can support his family and has a career he can develop. He is open about his injury and the team make sure he is well supported as he truly is an integral part of not just the branch team but the wider team. We are proud of him and proud to have him as an employee," says Tracy.

Adecco Personnel has introduced a KPI for 2018 of putting three to five people with disabilities into external employment.

“This may appear insignificant, however, it’s important to note that the financial impact to New Zealand could be a saving of up to \$14 million over the lifetime of these people when you look at ACC projected costs,” says Tracy.

It is a proven fact that people with disabilities have a positive and genuine impact on any workplace. International research (provided by ACC NZ) shows that candidates with the experience of disability often have excellent problem-solving skills, take the same or fewer number of days off, often remain loyal to employers for very long periods, are extremely resilient and cost a similar amount to employ, and can have a positive impact on the culture of your organisation. Seventy per cent don’t need extra support at work.

One of Adecco’s placements is Jamie, an intelligent young man who wanted to be a journalist but could never get in front of the right person as he has a speech impediment and body tics. As a self-published author, he had the credentials and ability to do the work; he just needed the opportunity.

“We were able to secure work for Jamie with a print and online magazine. He has been with the company for nearly a year. Initially, he started full time but due to his head injury he suffered from fatigue and needed to cut down to three days a week. The employer valued his work and contribution to the company so much they were willing to accommodate this to keep Jamie,” says Tracy.

Adecco is also committed to creating awareness about the benefits of employing people with disabilities with its clients and other companies in the commercial sector.

To do this, ACC supported Adecco Personnel with two seminar sessions. The first was held in Auckland in September 2017 and the second one in Wellington in February 2018. More than 100 people attended each seminar.

Guest speakers were provided by Workbridge, Paralympics New Zealand and ACC. From these seminars, Adecco Personnel has been approached by not only some of its own clients but also outside businesses to see how the initiative could work for them. The next seminar will be held in the latter half of 2018.

ACC also invited Adecco Personnel to talk to more than 500 of its hiring managers about the initiative at its national in-house TIKA workshop session.

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