

DISABILITY WORKSHOP & HR SENSITIZATION MEET
10TH Oct – 12TH Oct 07
Report

The Disability HR managers sensitization meet was a 3-day event held on the 10th, 11th & 12th of October 2007 at AADI and Tagore Hall Scope Complex respectively. The meet was organised by National Trust & BCF in partnership with Blind Relief Association, ITC Welcome group, FOD, Saburi, Anubhuti Consultants, Office of the Chief Commissioner Persons with Disability, NTPC, FICCI-SEDF & CII.

The objectives of the three day programme included:

- Understanding skillsets of the differently abled particularly those covered under NT disabilities.
- Training prerequisites, potential job, self employment opportunities for the differently abled
- Glimpse of success stories
- Employers perspective who have already employed the differently abled

This included intensive work related sessions with the differently abled candidates, trainers, NGO's and the HR of the corporate sector, addressing their work related attitudes, mindsets, general grooming, interview preparation, training skill prerequisites, identification of potential employment sources, how to approach and working opportunities.

Day 1 of the event concentrated on training the trainers from National Trust registered organisations, on improving the training and skills given to the differently abled for better employment opportunities. The event was inaugurated by National Trust chairperson Ms. Poonam Natarajan. This was followed by a short introduction by each of the National Trust registered organisations on their training, skills given, current livelihood opportunities tapped and challenges faced by them.

In order to address the concerns of NT organisations, Mr. Niranjan Khatri from ITC Welcome group made a presentation on ITC's nature of training, successes and potential employment opportunities. The ITC session was followed by a session from Ms. Anubhuti Mittal from Anubhuti Consultants, a consulting firm that works towards the employment of the differently abled. The session touched upon self-employment opportunities, job placements and specific training skills needed.

The following session by Madhumita Puri from Society for Child Development talked about training prerequisites and how to go about setting self-employment & marketing ventures for the products made by the differently abled individuals. This was followed by a session by Ms. Preeti Johar from Family of Disabled, where a slide show presentation was showed on their 'Apna Rozgar Scheme' which has so far facilitated self-employment ventures for more than 300 differently abled people from a poor socio economic background. Last but not the least was the much-awaited session by Ms. Shanti Raghavan

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from Enable India, Bangalore. The session touched on the main points of training of trainers, training on attitudes and roadmap for mobilizing employment – how to do it?

Day 2 of the event concentrated on training the differently abled candidates addressing their work related attitudes, mindsets, identification of potential employment sources and how to approach employers? The day started off with an energetic session by Ms. Shanti Raghavan, where a 9 point blue print was given to the candidates on things to do to get a job. These included Evaluation of the job; Evaluation of the person; Practice; Appropriate speed/ efficiency; Goal; Exposure Fact sheet / business case; Documents: acts, certificates, success stories recommendation letter; Solutions.

This was followed by a question answer session directed to Ms. Shanti Raghavan. To add a more personal touch to the event, Ms. Anubhuti Mittal undertook evaluations of each of the candidates, on what skills are needed, how their CV's should be prepared, attitude, behavior etc.

Day 3 of the event was an event, which brought together a number of HR officials from numerous corporate organisations like PWC, Kanoria Chemicals, Honeywell International, Tata Chemicals, Pantaloons etc. The day's event kick started with a welcome note by Mr. Atul Prasad, CEO of National Trust. Which was followed by a short introduction on the characteristics of the four NT disabilities: Cerebral Palsy, Autism, Multiple disabilities & Mental retardation, by Ms. Poonam Natarajan.

This was followed by a highly inspiring session on the success stories of differently abled, in their struggle for employment and an equal place in society. They included Mr Siddharth from ABN AMRO, Mr Zameer from Sense International, Mr Guha from Action for Autism, Mr Samuel Mani from Neutron Computers, Mr Manoj & Ms Punchika from Muskaan.

The sessions that followed this were of Ms. Shanti Raghavan from Enable India, Mr. Niranjan Khatri of ITC Welcome Group and Ms. Anubhuti Mittal of Anubhuti Consultants. They touched upon breaking myths on employment of the differently abled, best-case practices and how to employ the differently abled? Mr. S.P. Singh from NTPC spoke about their initiative to employ the differently abled and future prospects. The program was concluded by a vote of thanks by Mr. Mark Runacres on the Board of BCF.

The programme brought forth some of the critical areas that need attention:

- Marketing strategies, design inputs to keep up with competition.
- Preparedness of the organizations in their training programs to meet industry requirements.
- Connectedness, communication & net saviness of the disability NGOs to keep abreast of market requirements.
- Over protective attitude of the parents.
- Persistent and detailed preparation by candidates prior to approaching employers.
- Lack of networking between Disability organizations esp for lobbying, advocacy.

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