

Employer Guide

Inclusive by Design: Simplifying hiring process of disabled talent

Designing a Hiring Processes That Works for Everyone

People with disabilities bring invaluable perspectives that help shape products and services that work for all. With over **1 billion people globally** identifying as having a disability, actively attracting this talent isn't just the right thing to do—it's a **strategic advantage**.

When you proactively support candidates during interviews, you're not just removing barriers—you're **inviting innovation**.

Why This Guide Matters

This guide provides **practical, scalable steps** to help you build a best-in-class hiring process to support candidates with disabilities. It's designed to guide employers in creating experiences that empower candidates and improve hiring outcomes.

Your How-To Checklist:



Use this checklist to build a high-impact hiring program that attracts and retains top talent. Remember, providing interview accommodations isn't just about compliance—it's about empowering candidates to perform at their best, so you can make the best hiring decisions.

- ✓ Centralize Accommodations Requests
- ✓ Set Clear Service Level Agreements
- ✓ Standardize Your Process and Documentation
- ✓ Train Your Recruiters and Interviewers
- ✓ Prioritize Transparency and Outreach
- ✓ Engage in an Interactive Process

The following pages provide step-by-step guidance for each item in the checklist—so you can confidently build a process that works for everyone.



Learn More

Visit the Microsoft Careers page to see how we support candidates with disabilities and communicate accommodations every step of the way. aka.ms/InterviewAccommodations

Checklist

Centralize Accommodation Requests

Centralizing accommodation requests ensures a consistent, standardized process and reduces the risk of missed or delayed responses while making it easier for candidates to know where and how to ask for support.

- ☐ **Create a single intake system:** Use a dedicated email, form, or team to intake all accommodation requests.
- ☐ **Assign ownership:** Designate a person or small team to manage and track all requests.

Set Clear SLAs (Service Level Agreements)

Clear SLAs ensure fast, consistent responses applied uniformly across all candidates—building trust, reducing anxiety, and promoting fairness and reliability.

- ☐ **Define response times:** Commit to acknowledging accommodation requests within a certain time frame (e.g. 1–2 business days).
- ☐ **Set fulfillment timelines:** Aim to provide accommodations (when feasible) within one week.
- ☐ **Communicate clearly:** Draft an auto response to let candidates know what to expect and when.

Standardize Your Process and Documentation

Standardizing your process and documentation keeps teams aligned and ensures scalability as hiring needs grow.

- ☐ **Create a consistent procedure:** Develop a standard workflow for handling requests.
- ☐ **Use templates/forms:** Capture key details like accommodation type, interview date, and point of contact.
- ☐ **Maintain a confidential log:** Track requests and outcomes securely to ensure accountability.
- ☐ **Ensure team alignment:** Make sure all team members follow the same steps for every request.
- ☐ **Build a knowledge base:** Document solutions to common requests to streamline future responses.

Train Your Recruiters and Interviewers

Training recruiters and interviewers ensures they understand the process, ask the right questions, and create a welcoming experience for every candidate.

- ☐ **Provide training/resources:** Offer sessions or materials on different disability types and how related barriers may affect candidates during interviews, along with practical ways to help remove those barriers.
- ☐ **Clarify roles and support:** Make sure recruiters and interviewers know what to do if a candidate requests support.
- ☐ **Share internal support systems:** Ensure you equip recruiting and hiring teams with a go-to person or team for guidance if/when needed.

Checklist

Prioritize Transparency and Outreach

Proactively sharing your process builds trust, sets clear expectations, and signals your commitment to hiring people with disabilities.

- ❑ **Make it visible:** Clearly share your accommodations process in job postings, career sites, and interview invitations.
- ❑ **Invite openness:** Encourage candidates to ask for what they need without hesitation or fear. Add a statement like: “We gladly provide reasonable accommodations upon request to make your interview process comfortable – here’s how to contact us...”
- ❑ **Set expectations:** Let candidates know what happens after they request accommodations—who will contact them, what questions may be asked, and what the timeline looks like.

Engage in an Interactive Process

Collaborating with candidates to identify the right accommodations ensures solutions are effective, personalized, and mutually agreed upon.

- ❑ **Start a dialogue:** Treat accommodation requests as the beginning of a collaborative conversation.
- ❑ **Understand individual needs:** Avoid assumptions—people with the same disability may need different accommodations.
- ❑ **Focus on support, not diagnosis:** Don’t require extensive medical documentation; prioritize understanding what will help the candidate succeed.
- ❑ **Keep it simple:** Often, a brief conversation about what would make the interview more accessible is enough.
- ❑ **Protect confidentiality:** Share accommodation details only with those who need to know (e.g., interviewers implementing the support).

“A great accommodations process ensures that candidates with disabilities can focus on their skills and qualifications – not on fighting for the tools or adjustments they need to interview.

The goal is to provide a consistent, fast, and confidential support system for candidates. When done right, this reduces candidate anxiety and helps your hiring team evaluate talent on a level playing field.”