

Deaf Employees

**Employers guide to
attracting, hiring,
and retaining
quality employees**

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Donna works as a cashier at Canada Safeway

listen up!

**Hiring a Deaf employee
can be rewarding.**



Reaching E-Quality Employment Services (REES)

Promoting Employment of People with Disabilities or Health Conditions

get the best working for you

THIS BOOKLET PROVIDES potential employers with information on how to find, attract, hire and keep valuable Deaf employees.

Why Hire A Deaf Employee?

Manitoba companies have recognized that their Deaf employees are just like their other employees - hardworking, dedicated and loyal.



"Donna has been a terrific asset to the team at our store. Donna's positive can-do spirit makes her a pleasure to work with."

Jan Jackson,
Manager of Canada Safeway

What About Communication And Safety?

Many misconceptions about communication barriers and safety risks involved when hiring a Deaf person are unfounded. Deaf employees have a lifetime of experience communicating effectively in the hearing world. Deaf individuals typically have a greater awareness of their surroundings, resulting in a heightened sense of safety.

"Deaf people are not the exception; like all groups of human beings, they have individual abilities and skills."

Canadian Cultural Society of the Deaf



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DID YOU KNOW? The huddle formation by football teams originated at Gallaudet University, a liberal arts college for Deaf people in Washington, DC, to prevent other schools from reading their sign language.
- www.deaf.net

the search is on

Good Employees Are Hard To Find

A company's greatest asset is its employees. Like everyone else, Deaf workers can meet the requirements of your company.

It Makes Sense

Here are just some of the advantages to hiring a Deaf worker:

- Your commitment identifies you as a leader.
- Deaf employees help diversify your workforce by exposing your staff to a unique language and rich culture.
- Deaf employees are often distinguished by being more focused on the job.
- Employers often find they retain Deaf staff members longer than other employees.

The Application Process

Like other applicants, Deaf job seekers complete applications and submit resumes in response to your company's advertisements and job postings.

How can you contact a Deaf applicant?

Manitoba Relay Service (MRS) is a means for employers to communicate over the telephone directly with Deaf job applicants. MRS provides message relay service to persons with a hearing loss who use a teletypewriter (TTY).

MRS provides a specialized operator available to assist in text correspondence over the telephone line. Customers with a hearing impairment receive a 70 per cent discount on all long distance rates (within Canada) when using the MRS. There is a 50 per cent discount on cellular airtime for customers who use a cell phone in combination with a TTY to make and receive wireless calls.

To make a call to someone who has a hearing loss and has a TTY. Deaf Access Line TTY: 1 (800) 855-0511

To make a call if you have a hearing loss or a speech disability and have a TTY. TTY Toll-free call (must have a TTY): 711

Many Deaf individuals carry smart phones or tablets. Texting is a convenient method of communications.

"Since hiring our Deaf employee, we have had many positive comments from customers and staff on what a breath of fresh air it is to see a company hire people for their abilities. We are also learning a new culture and a new language."

Dave Holstead, Manager,
Giant Tiger, Regent Avenue West



Connie, Deli Associate, Giant Tiger

Common MISCONCEPTIONS

Potential employers may have concerns about hiring Deaf individuals. These concerns are often unfounded and can be easily cleared up with education. Some of these misconceptions include:

- It's hard to communicate with Deaf people.

FACT Many Deaf people are very experienced and comfortable initiating communication with the public.

- There may be communication issues with co-workers and the public.

FACT Co-workers often enjoy the opportunity to interact with Deaf individuals.

- Deaf employees are safety risks.

FACT In many instances, they are more safety conscious and have a greater awareness of their surroundings.

- Deaf workers are not as productive.

FACT Deaf workers tend to be more focused as they are not distracted by noise or conversation.

- Most businesses cannot afford the assisted technology and interpreters a Deaf employee may require.

FACT Dollars spent on assisted technology and interpreter fees are a tax deductible expense for employers.

DID YOU KNOW?

Deaf people have safer driving records than hearing people nationally.

- www.deaf.net

interviewing

Interview Tips

The process of interviewing and hiring someone who is Deaf is really not that different from interviewing anyone else.

- Focus on the potential employee's skills and abilities.
- Invite the Deaf job candidate to bring their preferred sign language interpreter to the interview.
- Seating arrangements may need to accommodate the candidate and an interpreter.
- Direct your questions to the potential employee rather than the interpreter.
- To avoid miscommunication, you may need to repeat or rephrase information.

"We have a number of people working at our facilities who are Deaf. These employees make valuable contributions to our company."

John Cherry, Employee Relations Officer
Canada Post

How can you communicate with a Deaf applicant during an interview?

American Sign Language (ASL) is the first language of many Deaf people in North America. It may be necessary for the applicant to bring an ASL interpreter to the interview.

"Deaf People are just like you but... they are a distinctive, unique group of people who share a beautiful culture that clearly sets them apart."

Canadian Cultural Society of the Deaf



Len, Supervisor, Special Services at Manitoba School for the Deaf

Lifestyles of the Deaf and Famous

Nick Bochinsky - Baseball Umpire

Beverley Boudreau - Artist

Dr. Clifton F. Carbin - Author

Joanne Cripps - Author and Activist

Dr. Maureen Donald - Teacher and Leader

I. King Jordan - President, Gallaudet University

Charmain Letourneau - Recipient of the Order of Canada

Gary Malkowski - Former Ontario MPP

Dr. David Mason - Professor, York University

Angela Stratiy - Performer

Henry Vlug - Lawyer



Vanecia, being interviewed for a job

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DID YOU KNOW?

Deaf people in (North America) use a language known as American Sign Language (ASL) which has been linguistically defined as a separate language such as English, French, and German.
- www.deaf.net

orientation

Bring A Deaf Employee On Board

The easiest way to orient a Deaf employee into the workplace is to treat them like any other employee.

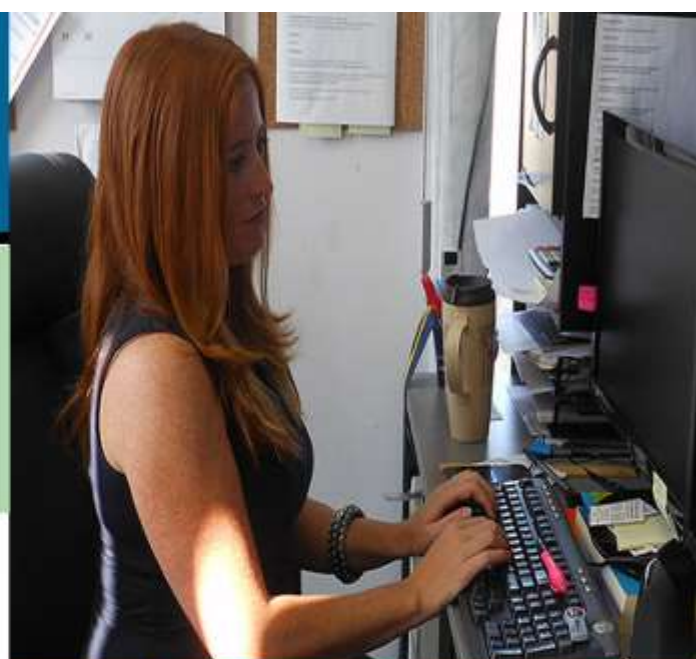
The Deaf employee can identify the most effective communication strategies for the position. Once these are in place, means of communication will continue to evolve.

For some Deaf employees it may prove helpful to use ASL interpreters during the initial training period and in meetings. This can be an effective training strategy that saves time for the employer.

Investing time orienting your new employee will pay big dividends in personal productivity and job satisfaction.

"Sue has broadened our horizons as a team in terms of diversity, culture and language. She has taught us that effort is universal."

Heather Korol, Programs Manager
Reaching E-Quality Employment Services



Heather Korol, Programs Manager Reaching E-Quality Employment Services

Making A Smooth Transition

- Familiarize the employee with the job and workplace.
- Use of an interpreter is preferred for most Deaf employees in situations such as orientation and staff meetings.
- Provide an organizational chart and company policies.
- Set measurable goals for the new employee.
- Allow time for training.

"Norma, our Deaf employee takes pride in her work and is a shining example to everyone and for some, a silent reminder of what we could/should be doing! She has proven that Deafness is not a barrier to employment or to doing a job well."

Kevin Young, Manager
Giant Tiger, Pembina Hwy



Sarah, A.S.L.(American Sign Language)
Specialist/Teacher at Manitoba School for the Deaf



Norma, Dell Associate at Giant Tiger
Kevin Young Manager & Derek Assistant Manager

DID YOU KNOW? Scuba divers often use sign language under water. Deaf people can sign/talk at great distances without the use of amplification through the use of sign language. - www.deaf.net

retention

WHAT STEPS CAN you take to keep this valued employee?

When given similar challenges and responsibilities your new employee will develop professionally just like any other staff member.

In some cases a Deaf worker may require some accommodations or supports to do their job.

Any expense incurred on behalf of a Deaf employee can be used as a business expense.

"Technology Devices help bridge the communication gap between Deaf/Hard of Hearing individuals and their Employer."

Len Mitchell,
Supervisor, Special Services
Manitoba School for the Deaf



Disability Related Employment Supports

Deaf Centre Manitoba Inc. provides information on communication devices for Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals.

These are the following supports provided:

- Workplace Supports
- Assistive Technology

For more information on the above supports, contact:

Jill McGregor-Savoie
Community Resource Coordinator
Deaf Centre Manitoba Inc
Ph: 204-284-9373
Fax: 204-474-0073
crc@shawbiz.ca

"I remember when I first started working at REES, Sue was the first Deaf person I ever worked with. I took ASL not because I had to, but because I wanted to communicate with her. ASL is quicker than a pen and paper."

Joey Ste. Marie, Colleague of Deaf Employee

Workplace Accommodations

Examples of workplace accommodations and the devices and technology that can benefit Deaf employees include:

- Teletypewriter (TTY)
- Smart Phones
- Vibrating Timers
- Flashing alarm systems
- Qualified interpreters as needed



Sue, Employment Counselor, Reaching E-Quality Employment Services uses an iPad to communicate with some of her consumers via Facetime or SKYPE

resources

Where To Go For More information

Resources

SMD Services for Deaf & Hard of Hearing Adults
SMD Deaf Services
Voice (204) 975-3107
TTY (204) 975-3083
www.smd.mb.ca/smd-services/adult-services/aural-services

ECCOE (Interpreting Services)
200-1 Forks Market Rd.
ASL Services Direct Line
Voice (204) 475-6332
TTY (204) 452-0687
www.eccoe.ca
email candy.badger@eccoe.ca

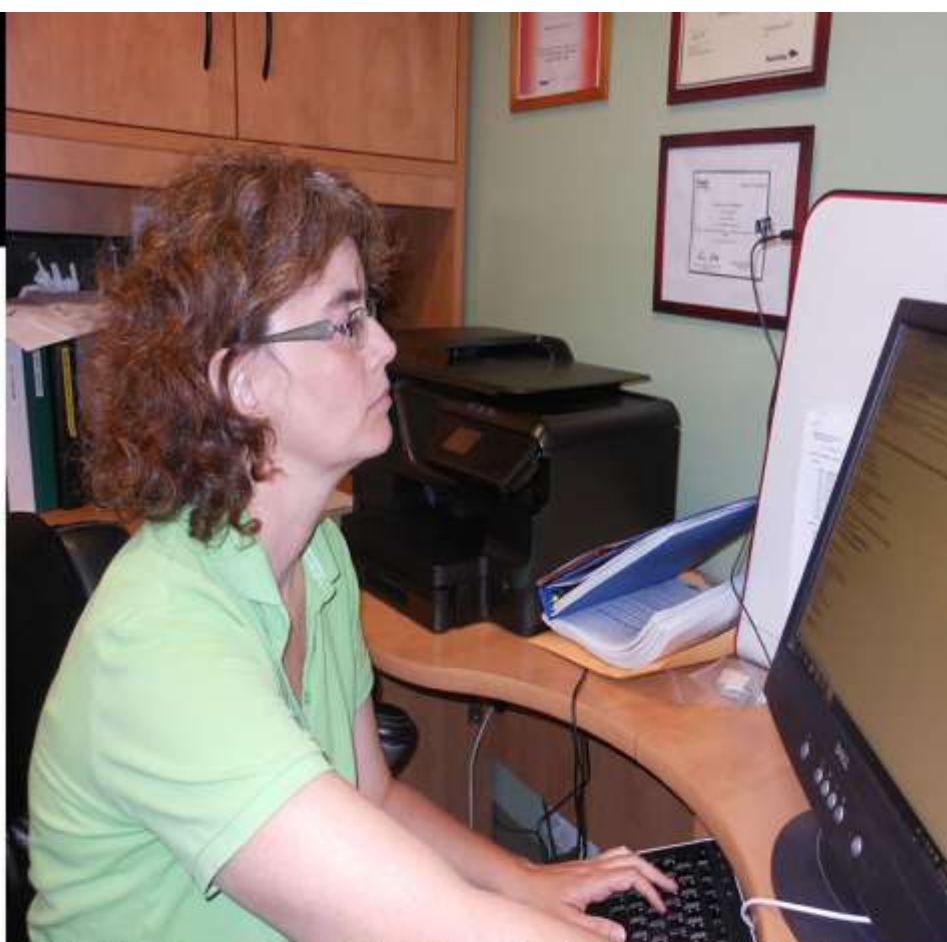
Deaf Resource Centre
101—285 Pembina Hwy
Voice (204)-284-9373
TTY (204)-284-9373
www.deafmanitoba.org
deafmb@shawbiz.ca

MTS provides several products and services designed to enhance consumers' accessibility to telecommunications and make communications easier and faster.

www.mts.ca/mts/personal/accessibility+products+and+services/accessibility+products+and+services

Manitoba Deaf Sports Association
164 Princess Street
Winnipeg MB, R3B 1M3
email: deafeagle@hotmail.com

ASL Teaching Services
www.aslts.ca/courses.shtml



Sheila, Executive Director, Deaf Centre Manitoba Inc.

"Deaf people *can achieve* their dream without any barriers!"

Sheila, Executive Director,
Deaf Centre Manitoba Inc.

OTHER WEBSITES

- www.avlic.ca
Association of Visual Language Interpreters
Of Canada
- www.deafness.about.com
Information, success stories and links
- www.hrdc.drhc.gc.ca
Human Resources Development Canada

DID YOU KNOW? Positions held by Deaf persons include lawyers, dentists, doctors, chemists, inventors, artists, sculptors, writers, architects, poets, newspaper editors, clergy, actors, and teachers. - www.deaf.net

SUMMARY

A KEY TO SUCCESS FOR ANY business is recruiting hardworking and motivated employees. Deaf individuals often showcase these qualities. Demonstrate your leadership by taking advantage of this vital workforce.



Kayle, Welder at SCT Welding Laser & Manufacturing Company



Dustin, grocery clerk at Food Fare



Jacqueline, pizza dough maker at Pizza Hut

Developed by Reaching E-Quality Employment Services
Promoting Employment of People with Physical Disabilities
or Health Conditions. Funded by Investors Group

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Investors Group, Province of Manitoba,
SCT Welding Laser & Manufacturing Co., Giant Tiger, Food Fare,
Deaf Centre Manitoba Inc., Manitoba School for the Deaf

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