

People with Disabilities and the Technology-Driven Workplace

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DBTAC Audio-conference

October 21, 2003

Presentation Overview

- Why an interest in IT and the HR process?
- Overview of two Cornell studies on Human Resources practices and IT
 - A review of selected e-recruiting websites
 - Survey of practitioners on accessible IT
- Implications
- Resources for future reference

Why Interest in IT and the HR Process?

- 1 in 6 people in U.S. have a disability
- As workforce ages, visual and hearing disabilities become more common
- Over half of U.S. households now own computers; people with disabilities are half as likely to have Internet Access as those without disabilities

E-HR and People with Disabilities

- As Internet access becomes more common, businesses are becoming network intensive
- Web applications can pose barriers for those with vision, hearing, or dexterity-related disabilities
- Most web sites are not designed to be accessible to people with disabilities

A Review of Selected E-Recruiting Websites

Sample

- 10 Highest Traffic Job Boards
- 31 Corporate E-Recruitment Sites
 - 14 “Best” E-Recruiting Sites
(Cambria Consulting, 2000)
 - 17 Top Fortune 500 Companies

Web Pages Evaluated

Four Essential E-Recruitment pages:

- Corporate Home page
- Job Search page
- Sign up / Registration page
- “Resume Builder” page

Evaluation Methods

- Accessibility Evaluation Software:
 - Bobby v. 3.2 (priority one level)
- Simulated Process Evaluation
Attempted to find and apply for a job using only:
 - Screen reader accessible information
 - Keyboard NavigationHome page, career page, job search, job application/resume builder

Bobby Results

% of pages without major accessibility errors
(Bobby Priority 1 errors)

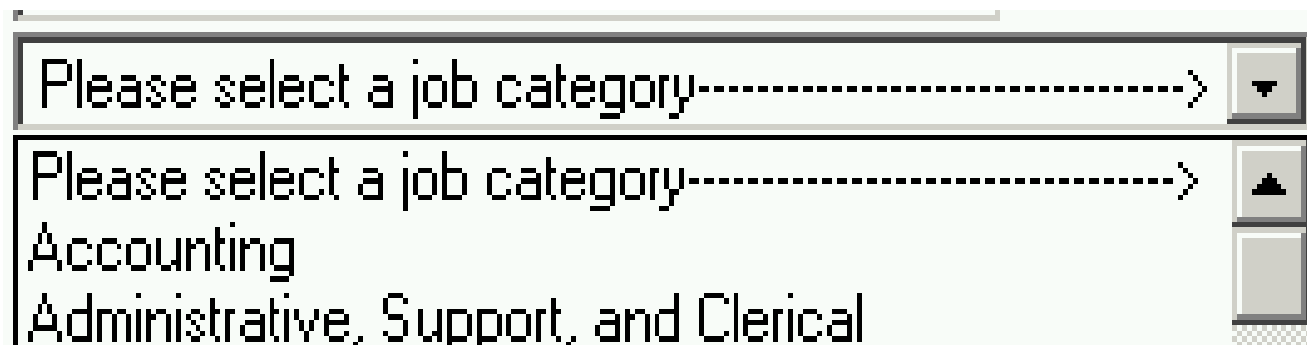
Page Type	Job Boards (n=10)	Corporate Recruiting (n=31)
Home Page	0%	26%
Sign up Page	0%	10%
Job Search	0%	17%
Resume Builder	0/2	1/11

Simulated Process Evaluation

- Job Boards (9 sites)
 - One third navigable throughout the entire search & application process steps
- Corporate E-Recruitment Sites (12 sites)
 - One quarter navigable throughout the entire search & application process steps

Common Accessibility Issues

- Critical “submit” image buttons missing alternative text (alt text)
- Critical links missing alternative text
- Image maps lacking alternative text
- Auto submit “combo-boxes”



Conclusions

Majority of recruiting websites evaluated were not accessible.

However

Many of the issues can be easily corrected through the simple use of alt tags for buttons and links.

HR and IT Survey

- 433 private sector HR representatives interviewed
- SHRM members
- Had participated in a 1998 survey of employer practices in response to the ADA

Respondent Characteristics

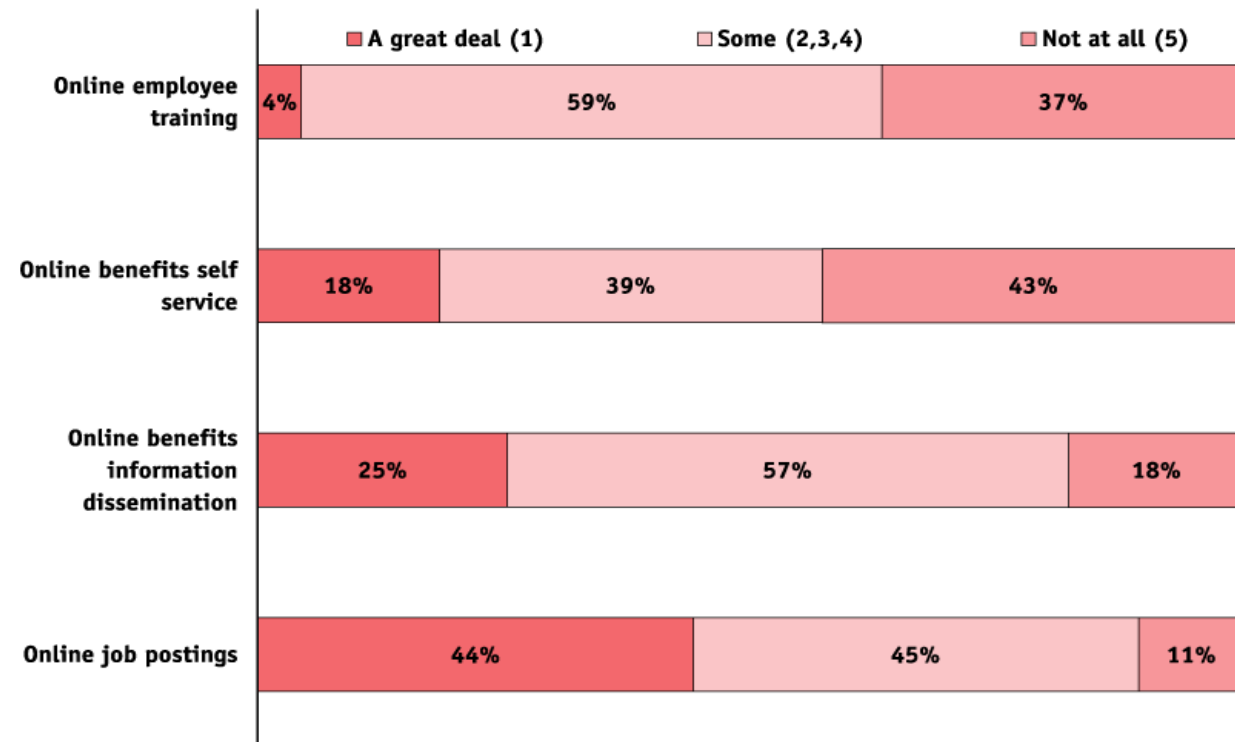
- 24 percent were from large organizations (5000+ employees); 42 percent from organizations with fewer than 500 employees
- 41 percent from service industries, 21 percent manufacturing, 13 percent from finance/insurance organizations

Employee Computer Use

- More than 80 percent of employees in finance, high tech/telecomm, and insurance use computers more than half the workday
- 60 percent of employees in service and public administration use computers more than half the day
- About 40 percent of transportation/utilities and manufacturing employees use computers at this level

Use of Online Technology

Figure 5: Organizations' Use of Online Technology

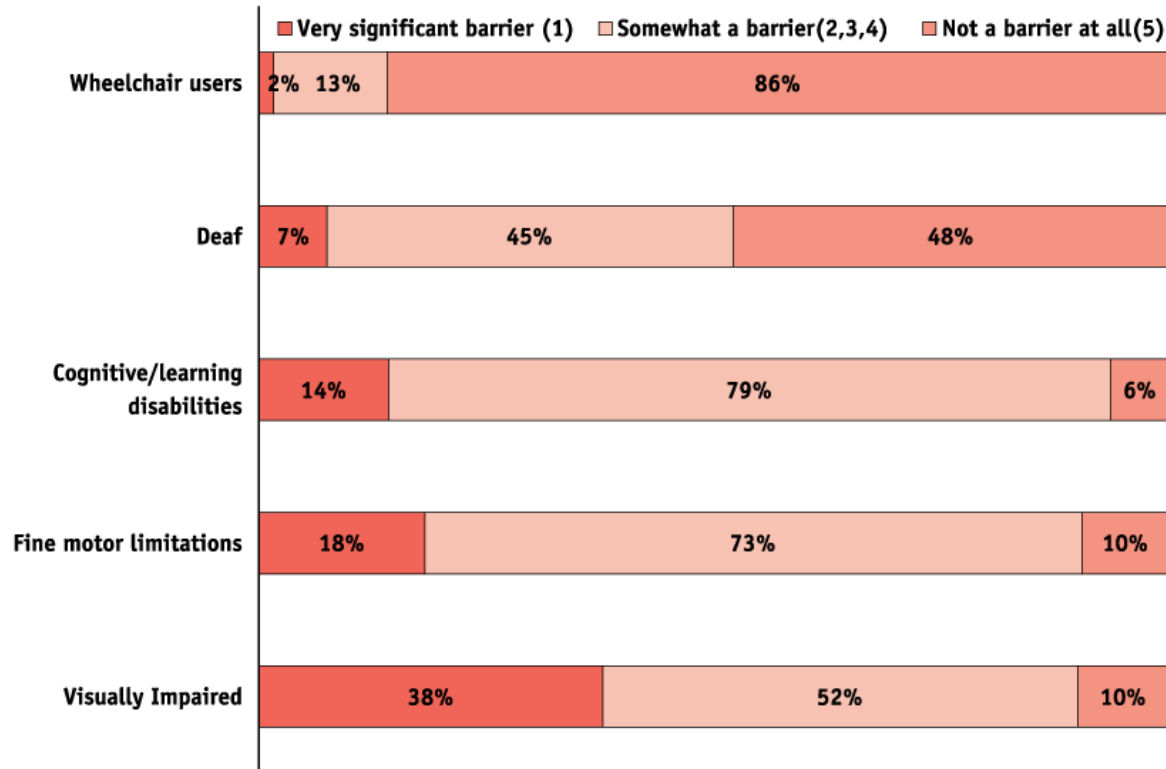


Note: Percent of all respondents (n=433) excluding "don't know/refused" responses.

Source: *Survey of SHRM Membership on IT Access in the Employment Process*. Cornell University, 2003

Perceptions of IT as a Barrier

Figure 7: Perceptions of Barriers to Computer Use by Disability Type

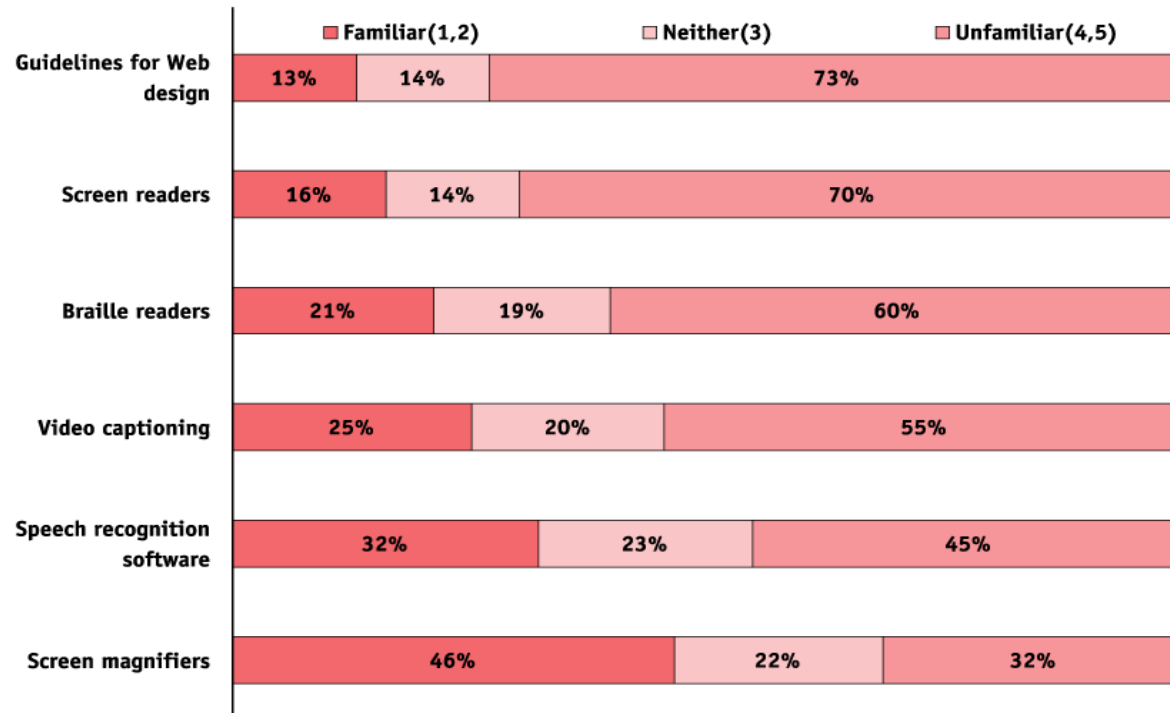


Note: Percent of all respondents (n=433) excluding "don't know/refused" responses.

Source: *Survey of SHRM Membership on IT Access in the Employment Process*. Cornell University, 2003

Familiarity with Assistive Technology

Figure 9: Familiarity with Assistive Technologies

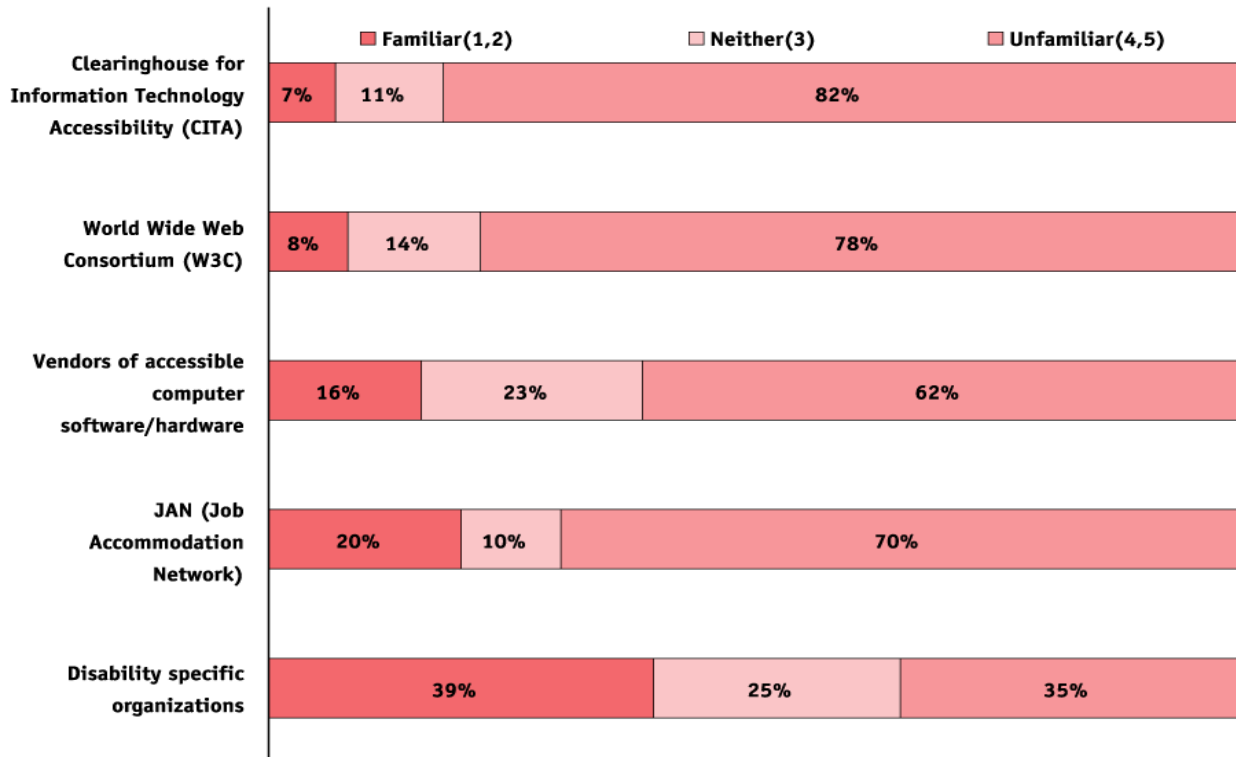


Note: Percent of all respondents (n=433) excluding "don't know/refused" responses.

Source: *Survey of SHRM Membership on IT Access in the Employment Process*. Cornell University, 2003

Familiarity with IT Access Resources

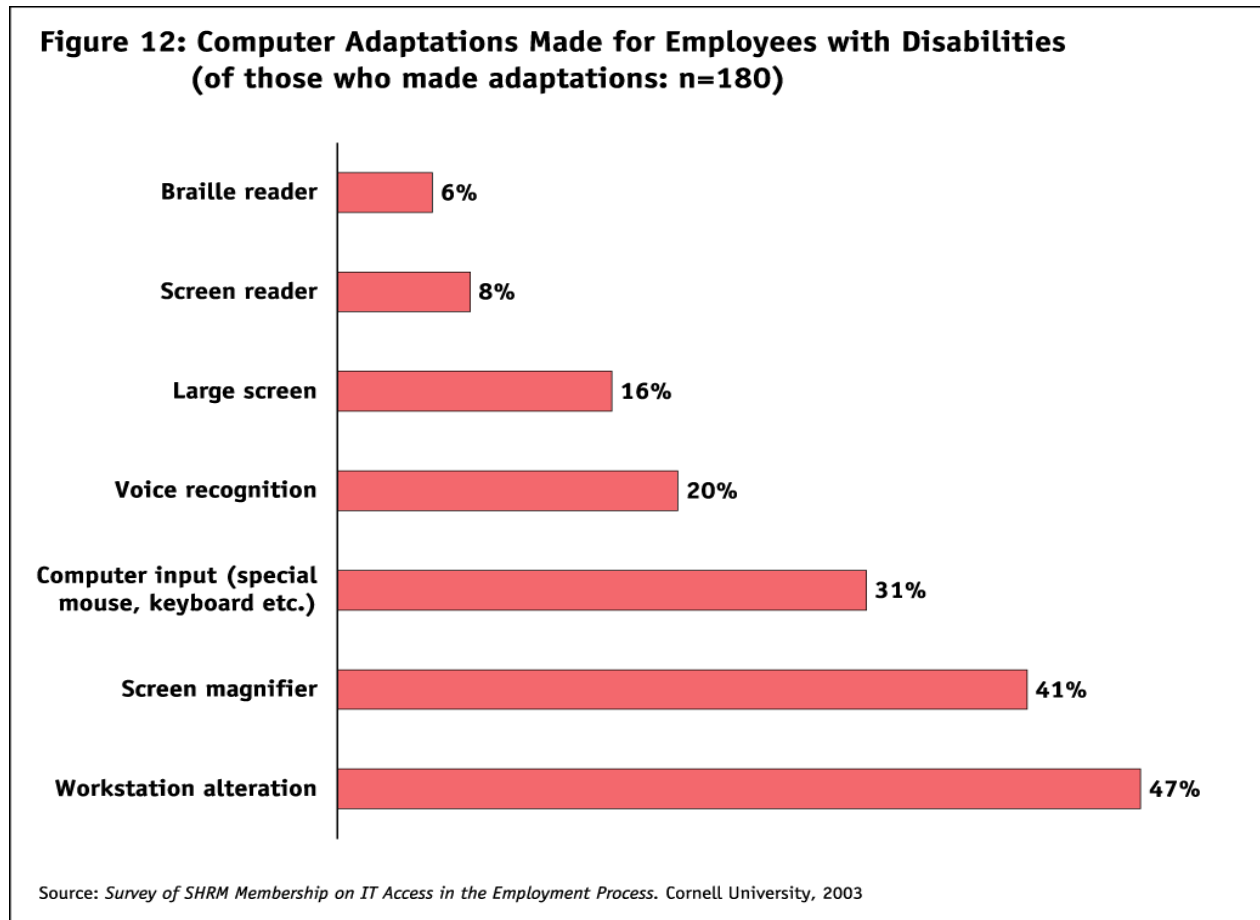
Figure 14: Familiarity with IT Accessibility Resources



Note: Percent of all respondents (n=433) excluding "don't know/refused" responses.

Source: *Survey of SHRM Membership on IT Access in the Employment Process*. Cornell University, 2003

Experience Providing IT Access



Assessment of Web Site Accessibility

- Approximately 10 percent said their HR sites had been evaluated for accessibility
- About 40 percent said their sites had not been evaluated
- Slightly more than half were unsure of whether their HR site had been checked for accessibility.

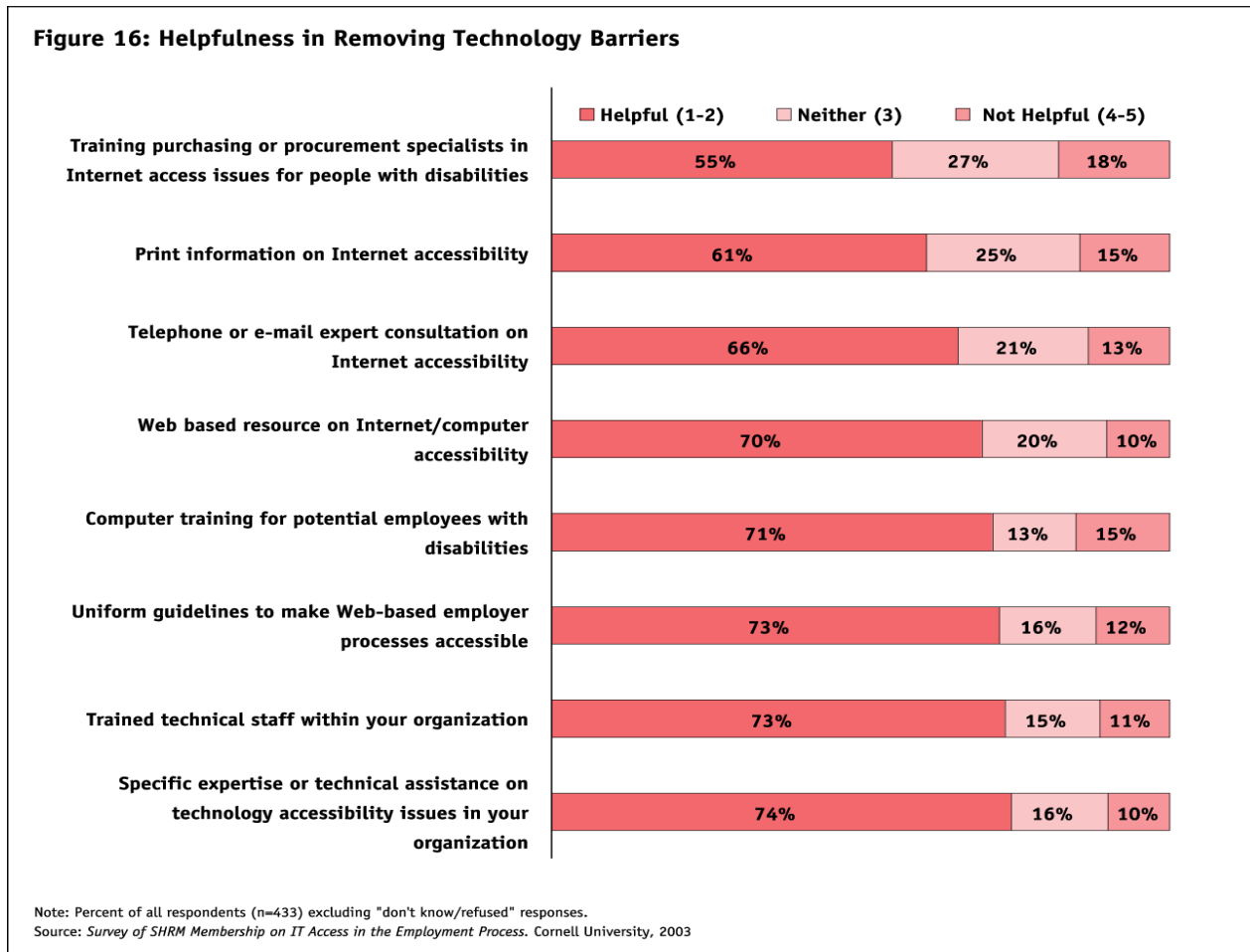
Employee Training in Internet Accessibility

- Only 15 percent of respondents reported that any employees had been trained in Internet accessibility for persons with disabilities
- 31 percent reported some staff trained in making computers accessible

Helpfulness of Organizational Resources

- The employee with a disability him/herself was rated as the most helpful resource (84 percent)
- Health and safety/ergonomics staff rated helpful by 72 percent. Computer network services staff and disability management staff rated helpful by 66 percent.

Helpfulness of Barrier Removal Aids



Conclusions

- Results demonstrate the magnitude of computer use and computer related skills required throughout the labor force
- Need to raise awareness of IT access considerations for persons with disabilities
- Highlights the importance of computer training for potential employees with disabilities

Implications

- IT access an issue across the employment spectrum for persons with disabilities
- The HR practitioner is a key workplace contact for intervention
- Information services on web design considerations and accommodations are needed
- Knowledge of key resources is imperative

Additional Resources

- Disability and Information Technology Assistance Centers, 1-800-949-4232, www.adata.org
- U.S. EEOC - www.eeoc.gov/ada/adahandbook.html
- Section 508 - www.section508.gov
- World Wide Web Consortium - <http://www.w3.org/>
- ACCESSIT - www.washington.edu/accessit/
- Cornell University
Program on Employment and Disability
ILR Extension, Ithaca, NY 14853
(607)255-9536, www.ilr.cornell.edu/ped/

Related Cornell University Research Reports

- Bruyère, S. & Erickson, W. (2001) E-Human Resources: A review of the literature and implications for people with disabilities. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, School of Industrial and Labor Relations-Extension Division, Program on Employment and Disability.
- Bruyère, S. Erickson, W., & VanLooy, S. (2003) Accessible IT for people with disabilities: IT considerations. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, School of Industrial and Labor Relations-Extension Division, Program on Employment and Disability.
- Erickson, E. (2002). A review of selected E-recruiting websites: Disability accessibility considerations. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, School of Industrial and Labor Relations-Extension Division, Program on Employment and Disability.

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