

December 3, 2020



New Skillsoft Survey Highlights Concerns about Intellectual Disability in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Efforts

Results suggest that workplace DEI efforts may often exclude intellectual disabilities; interest is at an all-time high for creating more inclusive environments.

BOSTON--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- As a part of International Day of People with Disabilities, [Skillsoft](#), a global leader in digital learning and talent management solutions, today highlighted a potential gap in workplace policies around Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Data from Skillsoft's *Intellectual Disabilities in Workplace DEI* survey suggest that workplace DEI efforts may often fail to include people with intellectual disabilities. Data also indicated that support for creating truly inclusive workplaces is surging.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here:

<https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20201203005586/en/>



Skillsoft launched this survey as part of its emerging partnership with Special Olympics, the global inclusion movement dedicated to empowering people with intellectual disabilities through sport. Since 2015, Special Olympics has worked with Skillsoft to develop trainings, career maps, and learning solutions to empower leaders with

The "Intellectual Disabilities in Workplace Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion" survey data highlights the need for true inclusion. (Graphic: Business Wire)

and without intellectual disabilities with the skills to create more inclusive communities and workplaces.

The more than 1000 survey participants were comprised of primarily professionals in the HR and learning space. The results provide insight into how HR leaders across industries think about inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in the workplace. Three overarching themes were identified: low awareness surrounding intellectual disabilities in the workplace, support for intellectual disability inclusion, and a demand for company policies to be backed up by action.

Lack of Understanding

Survey results indicate that respondents do not understand how to make their workplace more accessible for people with intellectual disabilities and why doing so is important to achieving full inclusion. Though the vast majority (88 percent) of respondents work for companies with a diversity and inclusion policy, 55 percent were not confident their organization had any guidance related to intellectual disabilities.

“Many organizations lack the appropriate level of understanding and action on how to create a culture of ‘true inclusion,’” said Mark Onisk, chief content officer, Skillsoft. “Even though 87 percent of people who took this survey confirmed interest in being more inclusive, they are missing the essential step of ‘how.’ That’s where learning and development comes in.”

Support for Inclusion

Although employees indicated that they are willing and ready to learn more about inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities, their efforts could fall behind without proper training. While 81 percent of respondents suggest their colleagues would be at least somewhat supportive in the inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities, there is still hesitation. The survey found 33 percent of respondents’ biggest concern is how people without an intellectual disability would engage with those who do have an intellectual disability.

Results also indicate there is demand for change. 93 percent of respondents believe that becoming an inclusive organization would help company culture. In fact, 76 percent of respondents report their management or leadership would be at least somewhat supportive of becoming more inclusive of people with intellectual disabilities.

“It’s clear that many leaders are primed for substantial change,” said Denis Doolan, chief of organizational excellence, Special Olympics. “With transparent conversation and investing in a culture of learning that brings about open-minded thinking and positive action, this essential conversation is ready to come to the forefront.”

Action Requires a Prescriptive Path

The key to meaningful change is a focus on developing a policy that is backed by action. Even in organizations with thoroughly designed DEI policies, inclusive behaviors must go beyond policies and statements. Having a policy in place does not mean the work is done, one survey respondent indicated that “policy is good, but needs more action to support it, [and] more focus at the leadership level.”

To be meaningfully inclusive will require a concerted effort to provide training and information to employees. The timing for change is right: in a follow-up survey, 63 percent of survey respondents indicated they were interested in creating a more inclusive culture.

For more information and the full results of the survey, visit www.skillsoft.com/special-olympics-inclusion-without-exceptions.

About Skillsoft

Skillsoft delivers online learning, training, and talent solutions to help organizations unleash their edge. Leveraging immersive, engaging content, Skillsoft enables organizations to

unlock the potential in their best assets – their people – and build teams with the skills they need for success. Empowering 36 million learners and counting, Skillsoft democratizes learning through an intelligent learning experience and a customized, learner-centric approach to skills development with resources for Leadership Development, Business Skills, Technology & Development, Digital Transformation, and Compliance.

Skillsoft and SumTotal are partners to thousands of leading global organizations, including many Fortune 500 companies. The company features three award-winning systems that support learning, performance and success: Skillsoft learning content, the Percipio intelligent learning experience platform, and the SumTotal suite for Talent Development, which offers measurable impact across the entire employee lifecycle. Learn more at www.skillsoft.com.

View source version on businesswire.com:

<https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20201203005586/en/>

Jen Kaye
Senior Manager, Communications
jen.kaye@skillsoft.com
(617) 512-0059

Source: Skillsoft