

ADVISORY COUNCIL SESSION

GETTINGHIRED.COM

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Edited for readability

>> JIM LUNNY: Hi, this is Jim Lunny here with GettingHired.com. Also along with us is Frank Weichmann. I know a lot of you have started to sign in in anticipation of our Advisory Council session. We'll wait for a few more minutes for a few more of you to sign in. You are not missing anything. Just hold on and we'll be back with you shortly.

Okay, let's get started if we could, please. This is Jim Lunny with GettingHired.com, joined by Frank Weichmann and Hank Fichtner here in New Jersey. I want to welcome you all to our third Advisory Council session for 2011.

You will find it to be an informative meeting and we have a great agenda for today. Before we get into the agenda, let me just say that the way we'll structure this is that we'll have, after each one of our presentations, we will have an opportunity to ask questions. During the time of the presentation we've muted all of your lines just to avoid unnecessary background noise for the presenter. But we will unmute at the end of the presentation and everyone will have an opportunity to ask questions at that time.

During the course of the presentation if you would like to use the chat window in WebEx, you can submit questions as we go so we have both of those capabilities.

(Beeps.)

We'll be covering three -- we have three presentations. I'll start by giving you an update on what is going on here at GettingHired.com. We are pleased to have Carol Glazer, president of NOD, joining us for the second presentation, giving us an update on a few things from the National Organization on Disabilities.

And in the third segment of our session we'll have Debra Ruh, chief marketing officer, SSB

Bart Group, joining us talking about building inclusive and accessible HR systems and processes. Again, we hope you find the agenda to be informative and we welcome your participation in the Q and A session at the end of each one of those segments.

Let me take the opportunity to welcome new members to the GettingHired.com community. Welcome to the new employers, new advocacy organization members, and new service provider members who are with us today. And to our longer term members, I want to welcome you to the session today and thank you for your continuing support of GettingHired.com.

Frank, if you could turn to the first page, what I would like to do is give you all an update on where we are here at GettingHired.com with some of the statistics we report on at each one of our sessions. I'm pleased to let you know that even in a tough economy, we have continued to grow.

Last time we got together we had a hair under 55,000 registered job seekers. As of yesterday morning we totaled 63,219 job seekers. With the changes we've recently made to our home page and the jobseeker registration process, we're measuring them a little bit differently. The current figure includes those jobseekers who are fully registered plus those we are sending job alerts to and those who have made application to your positions without having gone through a full registration process. But 63,200 individuals seeking jobs through GettingHired.com as of yesterday morning. So a nice 15% increase since the last time we got together.

We are really pleased to be looking at the next set of numbers and we're going to look at some of the background behind that. But let me just let you know that since the last time we got together we've had significant increase in the number of application referrals. Referrals to your job listings that we've made. And we've had a significant increase in the number of unique job seekers who have in fact been referred to you to make application to your positions.

When we got together last time, had about 21,000 applications cumulatively. As of yesterday morning we're at a total of 30,700 application referrals cumulatively, that represents 32.8% growth since the last time we got together in that cumulative number.

Relative to unique job seeker application, last time we got together we had a little over 10,000.

We're now at a cumulative total of 16,500 applications as of yesterday. This represents a 64% increase over the last time we got together.

So we're pleased we're seeing these increases in application activity and we'll have the opportunity to talk a little bit more about what we have been doing to achieve that. And of course we'll continue to see that grow more into the future.

Frank, next slide.

Again, just some of the other statistics. We've got, as of today, we're pleased we have 284 active employer members of the GettingHired.com community. Last time together in June, we had 273. So we've seen a modest increase in the number of members in the community.

Then in terms of the number of jobs our employer members are posting we've seen an increase in that. We have seen a little more than a 5% increase to a total of 124,228 positions, as of this morning, took a look at that number. In comparison to 118,000 positions the last time we got together.

We have been working hard with service providers to add service provider organizations to GettingHired.com and in particular we have added a significant number of assistive technology providers and transportation providers to the community. For you employers, you have the ability of course to connect with those providers of those services as you might require.

We have a total right now of almost 2200 organizations in the service provider network compared to a total of 1850 as of June. So we have seen an 18.5 percent increase in the size of the GettingHired.com service provider community. We're pleased with that and will continue working to add service provider organizations, providing products and services both that you as employers will find helpful to support what you do and service provider organizations who provide employment services to individuals. So through them we can reach out to individual job seekers and put your job listings in front of those folks.

(Beeps.)

Finally, on the college and university front, we have at this time 82 educational partners. These are the organizations, sorry, the institutions who have posted their logos and with whom

we have reciprocal links. We have quite a few more that are members of the service provider network. And of course we are networking, through our monthly newsletter and other communications, with about 2300 institutions across the country. These include a range of community colleges, colleges and universities across the country.

Frank, next page, if I could.

Just to give you a sense of -- again, I will say welcome to those of you who as new employer members are with us, but let me just show you this slide which shows you who some of those folks are. Again, welcome to the GettingHired.com community. And the second half of this slide, giving you a sense of some of the renewing employer members here at GettingHired.com. So I'll take the opportunity to thank you folks again for your continued support of GettingHired.com.

Frank, next page, if I could.

This is giving you some information on the results we've seen from the work we did in early June to change the way we are reaching out to and connecting with applicants for your position through our home page. And as we talked about back in June, it was very early days with that, we expected that this work in terms of revising the home page and making the links to your jobs more immediate and accessible to job seekers, we expected this would have a very positive impact on the traffic we bring to you, the number of page views of your positions that we put in front of job seekers, the number of job seekers we connect with your positions, and the number of applications made from GettingHired.com job seekers.

And, in fact, we want to take this opportunity to look at what the numbers are telling us relative to the new home page results. As of now, after about two months of experience with this, the numbers all look very good. So we're pleased with this, we have seen some big increases in some of these important statistics. In particular, relative to the statistic for the average monthly number of unique job seekers who were referred to complete job applications with you, we have seen a 340% increase in the average monthly figure for the last two months relative to the full 12 months prior to us making this change on our home page.

In the 12 months ending May 31st of 2011, we used to see an average of a little over 400 unique job seekers being referred to make application to your positions through GettingHired.com. We're now seeing a monthly average of over 1900.

So we feel good about that. We feel that that does confirm that the changes we talked about last time we got together to the home page are driving traffic to your job listings. And we'll continue of course to monitor that. But we're pleased with that increase.

The other figures, including the average monthly number of page views we're putting in front of people, all show significant growth. All growing nicely.

Again, we'll continue to take a look at that and plan on reporting to you those numbers for next time we get together.

So that is really what I wanted to cover for GettingHired.com. And I think what I would like to do now, Frank, is ask you to unmute so we can see if we have questions on those figures I went through relatively quickly.

(Beeps.)

>> FRANK WEICHMANN: All participants are unmuted at this time.

(Pause.)

>> JIM LUNNY: If anyone has any questions, your lines are all open. We would be pleased to hear them and we have Hank and Frank here who can amplify on those as required.

(No response.)

>> JIM LUNNY: Frank, did we have any questions come in on the chat window?

>> FRANK WEICHMANN: No, we have not.

>> JIM LUNNY: Okay. No questions for us?

(No response.)

>> JIM LUNNY: I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to run through those figures. Let me now just tell you that we have two great presentations ready for you. I'm going to ask Frank to put you all back on mute just to eliminate background noise. We're going to turn first of all to Carol Glazer, president of the National Organization on Disability. We're

privileged to have worked closely with Carol and her team at the NOD from the earliest days of GettingHired.com.

Carol, the floor is now yours.

>> CAROL GLAZER: Thank you, Jim. It's great to address you all and those are unbelievably impressive numbers. We're glad you are doing what you are doing. And you may not realize this but you have an extremely important social mission as well as a business mission. I know you do realize that.

In my presentation today I'm going to tell you a little bit about NOD briefly and some of the polling we have done mainly of employers through the firm of Harris Interactive. But more recently some employee engagement questions that we've asked in recent polls done by the Sirota survey company and what they tell us about the state of our field of disability employment, and how it's being practiced in the employment community, and what this tells us on the practitioner side and where some of the gaps are.

The National Organization on Disability has been around for 30 years, we've addressed every aspect of the disability field during that time. We have mainly a corporate board, corporate board like focus. They realized a while back that we were spread out a little bit too much. So a few years ago our board opted to narrow down our focus to employment. All of our efforts right now you see on slide 3 relate to employment in one aspect or another.

We're working with the Army to help on a demonstration program to help the most severely injured veterans to access civilian careers when they come back from combat. And this is probably the most difficult part of the transition process. And the one that's most fragmented and frankly somewhat disorganized out there because this is a group of veterans that wouldn't have survived previous wars and here they do but we often don't expect them to go back to work. We're seeing models of new services with these veterans and at a good success rate.

We're helping high school students through paid internships at hospitals and universities.

Our newest and largest program, and the one I'll focus on in this presentation, is working with a number of national companies to help them put in place disability employment programs in

their workplaces. And we're working on the supply side as well. We're working with voc rehab and other sourcing agencies to help those candidates make their way, and help employers find qualified candidates.

Our CEO council has been around for a while. It's a way of contributing and supporting our programs and more. And recently we seek to get those CEO council members active as a group, much like this one, as a group of like minded employers who see themselves leading the nation as they are on disability employment.

We've been probably best known for our Harris surveys, mainly on the quality of life for People with Disabilities. That's something we've done for 25 years. We measure the gaps between people with and without disabilities, a measure of quality of life indicators.

On the next slide you will see some of the data that comes out of our most recent gap survey. And of course, no surprise to those of you on this call, the employment gap is high. It remains high and unfortunately since the last poll was done about six years ago the trend is going down but only slightly.

If you look at these surveys going all the way back to the beginning in 1986, before the ADA, I'm sorry to say that the gap has decreased very, very little. Almost impossible to measure.

You can see some of the other gap indicators that have been decreasing. Education I think is probably one of the most important ones. I would attribute the reduction of that gap to the fact that parents have long advocated for their children with disabilities to get a good quality education.

No surprise with the figures on poverty and that the gap is as high as it is. People with disabilities are the minority group in this country with the highest rates of poverty of any other.

On the next slide, just a little description of our employment survey that we conducted in 2010 with funding from the Kessler Foundation. We interviewed 400 employers, large, medium and small but with a minimum of 50 employees. We really wanted to understand their attitudes and practices towards hiring people with disabilities.

What you will find here, I think, for most of you on this call, probably no surprises, but a few

anomalies. A few things that we didn't expect ourselves. Some data that don't exactly fit together, that don't seem to have a plausible explanation.

I'm on slide 6 now. So this is companies that are reporting out who believe that the average percentage of people with disabilities in their workforce is about 3%. We suspect that's probably an under estimate. It doesn't account for disabilities that are not visible.

We know about problems with disclosure for people with disabilities in the workplace, but nonetheless the numbers are still small. They may be higher than 3% but they're still small. And we know this is a way-overlooked segment of the workforce that is really not on the screen for a number of companies.

And here you see that on slide 7. That while many companies have a diversity policy and many have a diversity program, many fewer have disability specific programs.

As we proceed through the slide, going to slide 8, you see some of the other practices that may help explain the 3% number. I think this really speaks to the need for more active recruitment, and for more of the kind of work that GettingHired.com is doing. Companies who have programs, even the small number that do, that are mainly focusing on accommodations and training. And recruitment plays a distant second or third to those two primary aspects of disability employment programs for the companies that have them.

Moving to slide 9, I wasn't surprised then given that there weren't programs and that recruitment is less than 50% of what companies are doing, after a shortage of job openings, the main reason employers aren't hiring people with disabilities is a perceived lack of qualified candidates, no surprise.

We tried to dig down a little bit deeper to find out what methods companies do use to find candidates with disabilities. And this, frankly, was a bit of a surprise. What you see here are largely informal means of recruiting new candidates into the workforce. This is a new and unfamiliar workforce yet companies are resorting to these informal methods of looking to their employees for referrals and looking to friends and word of mouth rather than more formal ways of recruiting that we know can be so much more effective.

So then you move into slide 11 and you see that very few companies have a specific person that is designated to pay attention to disability employment, and pay attention to recruiting candidates.

You can see that only 19% of the companies actually have a designated person. And in similar fashion you see that only about a third of the companies actually track, uses quantitative measures to track the number of employees with disabilities.

So when you go all the way back to that early slide showing a figure of only 3%, we can appreciate some of the factors behind why the number is so small.

So there aren't programs. You have companies that are spending their resources and programs on accommodations and training rather than recruitment. You don't have people that are designated to pay attention to this issue. You are not tracking the results. And mainly the hiring that's being done is through word-of-mouth and through employee referrals, lo and behold you have a lack of qualified candidates. And again, the result is that only 3% of your workforce is people with disabilities.

I'll move on to -- let me just ask Jim or Frank, would you want to pause for questions now or should I keep running through our slides?

>> FRANK WEICHMANN: Carol, why don't you keep going through as you planned and we'll have a period of time when you are finished to come back and cover all questions.

>> CAROL GLAZER: Okay.

So that's the demand side. And if that -- that wasn't an advertisement for GettingHired.com I don't know what was. This is all data done by the Harris Interactive, a very well-respected polling firm. So I can assure you these numbers are very objective, but it does speak for the need for our host organization here.

Looking at the employee side of it, I just want to qualify and say that the work with Sirota is very, very new for us. We just entered into a relationship with them less than a year ago. This is a firm that mainly does employee engagement surveys. And we asked them if they would be willing to put into their engagement surveys questions that would gear towards employees with

disabilities so that we could gauge their level of engagement.

They have asked a number of their companies whether they would include these questions and what they have gotten after this one try, and this is early, are six companies that actually included some questions for employees with disabilities.

So this is a very small database. It's a very new data gathering, and so even we haven't had a lot of time to drill down and see what these numbers mean and what they tell us about the state of the field. So with all those caveats, I'll give you a couple of slides and they may simulate some interesting conversation.

Moving to slide 13, what you see is about an 8% difference in the level of engagement among people with disabilities versus those without. Perhaps not surprising. I think that number was a little bit higher than even I expected it to be. That's very significant I think for all of us who care about this, whether we're employers or whether we're working the supply side of the labor force equation.

If you go to slide 14, you see there too not quite as high but a 7.5% difference across a whole number of variables. You see about a 7.5% difference between employees with and without disabilities. Among such variables is their sense of achievement, their sense of leadership, their sense of their ability to influence the outcomes of their work, and of course equity being in there as well.

When you move on to slide 15 you see the categories in which there were the largest differences. The two greatest differences are in communication, and also in the ability to improve skills. And, you know, I think what that tells us is that we have got to be very attentive to various methods of communication as we are whether employees have disabilities or they don't. Everybody communicates in a different way. But, clearly, those with disabilities feel that the company is not making the kind of effort that is required to give them a sense that the community, that the company is communicating effectively on matters that affect them.

And then of course the sense that everybody knows about the importance of professional development, of training, of the opportunity for lifelong learning. And here too, those with

disabilities do not feel that they have the same opportunities as their nondisabled counterparts.

Finally, and again, so much of this is intuitive but it's interesting to see it here in the numbers. While the communication may be perceived as not being very good both upwards and downwards, when you look at communication sideways, that is people's sense of teamwork with those folks that are immediately surrounding them, their closest colleagues in the workplace, the sense of teamwork really varies very little, or relatively little between employees with and without disabilities.

So the up and down is not working as well as it should. The sideways is working okay. And training and the ability to improve skills are both areas that need greater attention I think for all of us.

I think all of these circles on the next slide, slide 17, are practices that probably many of the employers on this call engage in, starting from recognizing the benefits of people with disabilities in making a diverse and productive workforce.

We do have a little bit of data that shows absenteeism rates are lower and loyalty is higher. Turn over as a result can be lower. And we can't forget the creative problem solving skills that people with disabilities have to exercise just living their daily lives in a world that wasn't necessarily built for them.

The idea of appointing a dedicated recruiter, obviously you see how few companies are doing it, but obviously when you have somebody in place whose job it is to find these employees with disabilities, an individual who has the responsibility, the dedication, the focus, the persistence on that specific aspect of the workforce we know that you are going to get better outcomes.

We know also, moving over to affinity groups, particularly if you look at the Sirota engagement surveys you can see that having an affinity group, having a group of like-minded colleagues where you feel safe to express your views, we know that those kinds of employee affinity groups have been very successful for women in racial and ethnic minorities for years. More and more companies are doing that for employees with disabilities and we know it's a good moral booster.

Setting hiring targets. You know, what you measure is what you do. Very impressed with the GettingHired.com numbers early on in the call.

We found at NOD and in our work with employers that those that set hiring targets generally do better and faster and are more able to meet the mark in finding the most qualified candidates in the quickest amount of time and of course creating an inclusive work environment. We know companies that embrace diversity can adopt a number of strategies to welcome talented employees with disabilities into their workforce, and obviously this involves making disability a specific part of the diversity and inclusion agenda.

Moving to slide 18, just a little bit about what NOD has undertaken. Really this is a relatively new program for us, Bridges to Business. We began doing this because we saw a big mismatch between the supply and the demand side of the labor force equation. We would go to Voc Rehab agencies and service providers who would tell us that employers were discriminatory or were not necessarily paying attention to their candidates, didn't understand their candidates, weren't interested in hiring their candidates. But then lo and behold when we went over and talked to employers we heard, "I don't know where to find, to source candidates as we saw in the data earlier. I do try to talk to service providers and engage in the whole public disability employment system. We find it daunting, it's a bit confusing. Many of them don't meet our needs, don't understand, don't send us qualified candidates."

So with that we thought we could make a difference with our work nationally and with our understanding of the way that disability plays out in community life and in the workplace. That we might be able to, make a better and more efficient connection between the supply and demand side of the equation. So we have recruited somebody on our staff, Howard Green, who spent about 30 years working as a voc rehab provider. And then working at Virginia Commonwealth University doing training and a lot of research on the practices of disability workforce development agencies.

And then on the other side, we recruited Meg O'Connell who came to us from Booz Allen with a background in HR and recruiting and diversity. She was one of the original architects of

the Business Leadership Network and a real pioneer from the employer perspective in creating diversity and disability inclusion initiatives.

So we are doing this from the supply and the demand side. And I would say that what we do here, and this slide tells you the various activities that we're engaged in with our employer companies, we do a deep dive. We take what other organizations and agencies may do one of or a piece of and we really go in with companies and we create an entire disability inclusion program, starting with identifying end goals.

And, again, we're very metrics focused. We look not only at the number of hires, but we look at other variables like close to hire, time to hire. Some of our employer companies are interested in having us look at safety issues. We have a lot of distribution centers. Some are -- all look at attendance and productivity.

We will then come in and we'll look at their policies and practices. We will train managers, train co-workers on everything from disability etiquette to regulatory issues including the ADA or OFCCP.

We then, where companies are putting in place a recruitment initiative and it's local, we will go out to the community. We use a scorecard. We assess the various sourcing agencies in the community, nonprofits, for profits, with an understanding of the types of jobs that are being hired. And with job descriptions in hand. Some of this we've actually helped companies to craft. And we try to make the best match between a sourcing agency and the employer company, where the interests are most aligned and where we think a particular provider can offer the largest pipeline.

We then, again, we put in place systems to measure what we do, where we have to. We intervene with the service provider, the sourcing agency. We help them raise money. We help them hire job coaches or job developers. We help them better understand the labor force needs of employer companies and we actually train their staff where it's necessary and desirable to do that.

So all of this really adds up to a companywide initiative that has us serving in a project

management role, putting in place a tracking system, and then troubleshooting problems when they come up and reporting out results.

On slide 19 you can see the various aspects of what drives a successful disability hiring initiative. I think I covered those all on the previous slide but you can see here where they all fit together into a program.

Again, very metrics driven.

Finally, on slide 20 we meet employers where they are. I would love to say as president of NOD that we have many, many companies in the country who are now in the third phase of their development. This really ends up being a relatively new kind of diversity initiative as we get through the data. Most of the employers we work with are in the first and second category, obviously, with companies that are new to this, who came in on the ground floor.

We start with their policies and their procedures and their training systems, and their current recruitment practices. And we help them identify targets. We move on to with companies that already have initiatives in place. We will help them refine what they're already doing. Help them make it more robust. Help them make their efforts more consistent. And try to up their hiring targets and expand what they do.

For us, this is a matter of business, of what employers are looking for. But it's also a matter of our mission.

Whenever those two things can come together, as they obviously do so well with GettingHired.com, whatever your mission, when the heart part of what you do and the head part and the bottom line part of what you do are all aligned with each other, that's a success.

In our field we think those are ingredients for success so we're very pleased to be working in this space now and look to continue conversations with GettingHired.com about ways we may enhance each other's work through a partnership.

I would end there and ask for questions.

>> JIM LUNNY: Carol, this is Jim. First of all, let me thank you and tell you and your team it was a pleasure to have been working with NOD and we look forward to continuing to

work with you.

When you and I spoke about some of the material you wanted to cover today we had a conversation along the lines of, well, the information that was presented on the employer survey was certainly eye-opening and interesting information. I think it's fair to say some of those numbers don't apply to employer members of GettingHired.com. Our employer members are actively seeking to recruit, hire, retain and advance people with disabilities. Some of the figures you presented with respect to employers in general may not apply directly to this particular group, though it is interesting information for employers as a whole, and points us in the direction of continued need to get messages out to others.

>> CAROL GLAZER: Thank you for that clarification, Jim. It goes without saying that the folks on this call are all in those very, very small numbers. And if anything, you should be very pleased to know that you are leading the country and that what we have to do is get others to follow.

>> JIM LUNNY: Great. And I also wanted to let everyone know that we talked a little bit about the data relative to the other survey, the survey of employees with disabilities. And we talked specifically about, well, the take-aways that our employee members might get from that data. I know that you mentioned a few.

We had a great presentation from our friends at Merck a few sessions ago, talking about successes with their affinity group program. I wonder if you might have anything else relative to thoughts on take-aways from the survey information relative to training or providing opportunities for teamwork or anything along those lines?

>> CAROL GLAZER: Jim, are you asking me or --

>> JIM LUNNY: Yes, Carol, I was asking if you had anything additional you might want to talk about relative to what employers can implement in response to the survey findings, any examples. Sorry, didn't mean to put you on the spot.

>> CAROL GLAZER: No, no, I clearly -- again, I think we were a little surprised that the disparities are as great as they are. I think it means that companies that care about this do have to

do a better job of communicating and creating the kind of environment where people feel comfortable, first of all, disclosing their disabilities and asking for accommodations that they may need to make it a more satisfactory job experience.

Sometimes people say the word "accommodation" isn't the right word. We should call them "productivity enhancements" because really everybody has them in one form or another. But it really underscores the kinds of efforts that most forward leading companies are doing on this call, affinity groups, trainings, giving people the opportunity to advance their skills, giving them an opportunity to feel they're important to what happens in the company and that they're being heard both from above and as well as when they're in management positions. And their employees are taking them seriously.

>> JIM LUNNY: Yes. Thank you. Do we have any other questions for Carol?

(Pause.)

>> (Off microphone)

>> JIM LUNNY: Everyone is unmuted, if there are any questions for Carol.

>> (Off microphone)

>> JIM LUNNY: Any questions for Carol?

Frank, did we have anything that came in on the chat screen?

>> FRANK WEICHMANN: No.

>> JIM LUNNY: Well, then, Carol, the information you gave us was crystal clear.

>> CAROL GLAZER: (Chuckle.)

>> JIM LUNNY: But, again, in all seriousness, you've raised some good things to think about and identified some continuing challenges for those in the gettinghired.com community. You've pointed us in directions I hope everyone will find helpful with respect to addressing some of the things we talked about. Thank you for your presentation today.

Frank, I think we're back on mute.

I'm going to now turn the floor over to our long time friend Debra Ruh. Debra with SSB Bart Group, chief marketing officer, is going to talk to us a bit about building inclusive and accessible

HR systems and processes.

Debra, I think in a moment you will have the floor.

Debra, you should be set now.

>> DEBRA RUH: Can you hear me?

>> JIM LUNNY: Yes, I can hear you.

>> DEBRA RUH: Excellent. Don't you love when technology works. I'm going to move to my presentation.

>> DEBRA RUH: (Chuckle) I don't work with technology much. Okay. Anyway, yes. I'm a very long time friend of GettingHired.com and have been watching what you have been doing with a lot of interest, and applaud that in this economy, that they're still growing and growing.

Frank and Jim, thanks for inviting me to participate today.

So my name is Debra Ruh and I'm the chief marketing officer of SSB Bart Group and the founder and chief executive officer of TecAccess who recently joined forces with SSB as two small firms coming together in a difficult economy.

It's really been a very good partnership. SSB does the same thing that TecAccess does for a living. We focus on the technology part of this. We want to make sure when you are out there doing the good work and NOD is out there helping spread the word about people with disabilities in the workforce. We want to make sure you, as you put that sign out that says, yes, we welcome all, we have a diverse workforce, that you don't forget that you need to make sure your website and your HR systems are fully accessible. Your service centers, your software applications, things that employees with disabilities will use to apply for and be successful in their jobs, that these systems are accessible.

We're going to focus today on specifically the HR systems. And I feel I'm doing the same thing Carol was doing. I'm preaching to the choir a little bit here but the world is changing. The number of people with disabilities is on the rise for a lot of different reasons. Some of them are technological advances.

Carol had mentioned the service people coming back from the war on terror. A lot of people

that in the past would have died are now alive because of technological advances that we've made. We saw for the first time in this war service people with severe disabilities getting help and going back in the field with prosthesis and things like that. We've never seen that in other wars, so that was a very big thing for us and shows how dedicated that these men and women are to our country.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities is being ratified in the United States and it's being adopted across the world. A lot of people are focusing on making sure people with disabilities have the same rights as everyone else.

Some of our laws are being updated. We saw the Amendments to the Americans with Disabilities Act, the ADA. We saw Section 508 updated, federal contractors must have accessible systems and be able to tell the government how many people with disabilities you interviewed and hired, and a lot of different things. In some ways a lot of our clients are saying how are we supposed to do that when we can't ask if a person has a disability? So there is a lot of activity going on around this space.

This also is about the digital divide. If we do not include accessible technology in the workforce and in every other aspect of our world, then people with disabilities are being left out. And I feel it's corporate social responsibility as well.

ICT, Internet Communications and Technology. accessibility is a global issue. Everything should be accessible. Accessibility is just part of the design. It's just like making something usable so people can use it. It should be part of the lifecycle of the design.

Our world is changing so much with technology that everybody wants to be able to and needs to be able to participate in technology.

I tell my clients to pay attention to this because this is such a big thing, if you think about technology and the Internet and communication, I mean, everybody is impacted. Everything is impacted. I have a car, I have a Prius and my car talks to me now and I can speak back to it, I can give it simple commands. But that is something that was created to support people with disabilities. It's now becoming a standard part of cars. I have wireless key entry in my car. I

have push buttons on my dashboard. I don't use a key anymore. I use a push button.

So think about the touch points. Where do your clients, employees and stakeholders interact with ICT accessibility? Examples are your website, career centers, intranets, service center help desk, IT support, HR, documents and marking.

And then you have to have a plan, create a plan, measure results and manage the plan.

Accessibility must be built in at the process level to make sure it's part of the lifecycle. And for quality assurance, tools versus manual testing using people with disabilities is a best practice.

So a lot of clients that we work with, they want to be an employer of choice. And I've had people say to me, well, you know right now the employers are holding all the cards because there are so many Americans looking for jobs. But the reality is this is not just about employing people with disabilities. This is also about retaining the people that work for you.

And as I looked at Carol's numbers, I know, I agree with her, I think those numbers are grossly under reported because if you look at the Americans with Disabilities Act and the people that are now part of that class, it's staggering. Many people who are covered under ADAAA don't necessarily think of themselves as having a disability. We were calling veterans returning with disabilities -- a lot of times they said, "No, I don't have a disability." Then we started using the term "wounded warriors."

If you are an employer of choice, which I'm sure everyone is on this phone and I know a lot of our clients are, or you want to be the employer of choice, you cannot forget about your HR systems and the processes that have to be taken account of to make sure they're fully accessible. Can a wounded warrior submit a resume if she is blind? Can someone who can't use a mouse send their resume? How do I accommodate someone during an interview if they tell me they need an accommodation?

Employers are saying they want to hire persons with disabilities but if your HR processes aren't accessible and recruiters don't know how, then you are sending a different message. Not to mention you are putting your organization at risk.

Some best practices and quick tests that you can do -- because sometimes when I talk about

this, I'll have HR personnel come to say, "What can I do, Debra? I'm not responsible for that in my organization. My job is to make sure I'm hiring as many candidates, qualified candidates, as possible. And we want an inclusive, diverse workforce and welcome people with disabilities to do the job, but how do I know that we're doing what we need to do?"

There are some quick tests you can do. First of all, you want to be sure everyone can access your HR systems. The people that are generally going to have the most problems are people who are blind or vision impaired, those who are deaf or hard of hearing or people with mobility issues. People with intellectual impairment are also going to have issues, especially if it's not very user friendly or hasn't been designed with universal design in mind.

Best practices are always to test the entire process using people with disabilities that use assisted technology. Don't try to guess if it works for a person who is blind. Actually have somebody who is blind go through the process and see if they can submit their resume.

Can they get an interview assuming they're qualified to do the job they're applying for? Can they make it all the way through the entire HR process? And remember to test for multiple disabilities and test every single aspect of the process.

It would be great if I can go to your website and your home page is accessible enough that I can find your career site so I can get to it. Can I see the jobs that are there? Can I see the video that your CEO has put out there talking about what a wonderful place your company is to work at? That video is captioned and transcribed, right?

Can I -- so I find a job that I would be perfect for. Can I submit my resume by myself? And then will it go to the recruiter? Will I hopefully get an interview? Can the recruiter accommodate me if I need an accommodation? And then the manager who is going to interview me because I made it through the first interview with the recruiter, you have to think about every single process. And you have to train everybody.

Some quick tests, you can unplug your mouse or don't unplug your mouse -- I use a laptop and don't have a mouse plugged in. But go through your entire -- the entire HR process, online process without touching your mouse. Can you do it with graphics, logos? Do they have text

alternative? Are the videos captioned? Anything that is presented in an animated or video way, is it transcribed in captions?

And then some other quick tests, use the accessibility features used in your operating system. Mac has done a good job with some of their accessibility tools and the Microsoft Operating System. Windows 7 has really wonderful accessibility tools built into it.

Just to do a call-out for Microsoft right now. If they had not built accessibility into their operating systems from the beginning, a company like TecAccess where I hire mainly people with severe disabilities who work from all over the country, we wouldn't have been able to have a company like that, that teleworked as technologists unless the accessibility had been built right into the operating system.

I'm not saying Microsoft is completely perfect, but I am so thankful that they took the time to make accessibility a big part of their culture.

Move to my next slide. There are a lot of legal obligations. I was speaking at an international conference a few months ago. I had a gentleman from New Zealand say to me, "You need to stop talking about all your legal obligations, litigation, all that stuff in the US and start talking about the return on the investment and why people should retain people with disabilities."

I would love to stop talking about the legal obligations and all the different people getting in trouble right now with the EEOC and Americans with Disabilities Act, and the 20 million dollars a telecommunications company just got hit with, and an airline that got hit with the largest fine ever by the Department of Transportation over these issues. But the reality is right now these are still driving a lot of people to include people with disabilities and retain people with disabilities in their workforce.

We're not to a point where we can move past this slide. Legal obligations, the Americans with Disabilities Act is certainly a big one. Even though it doesn't really address specifically how you are going to make your technology accessible, your website, your products, your services, if it gets before a judge, the judge will look at Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to determine whether or not there is a case. And so even though Section 508 is for the federal

government and state governments that are adopting it, it is still very important to corporate America because that is what is being looked at in the legal situation.

There is also Section 504 that talks about individual accommodations. So Section 508 I have already talked about, Section 508 that right now OFCCP is looking at. And there is a component of that that says your HR systems will be accessible.

Section 255 is the Telecommunications Act, which addresses a lot of this and goes even a step further and says that people with intellectual disabilities or cognitive disabilities like my daughter with Down's Syndrome will also be included in this. I already mentioned the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. You also have the US Carrier Access Act and HAVA, the Help America Vote Act.

All of the states have done something with Section 508 type language, but it is all over the place, from barely attempting anything to making it stricter than the Section 508 requirements.

And then you have standard boards like W3C that had adopted WCAG 2.0 standards, ISO has also adopted the standards. It's not going away. Technology needs to be accessible for everybody.

The pace of innovation with technology is amazing. It's happening so fast. Sharing data between systems, departments, companies, powerful server capabilities that are simplifying the ability to retrieve information. Managing teams across the globe. A lot of times we will have training classes and we'll have, you know, a site in Russia and somebody in China. There will be people in China and the US, on the East Coast and West Coast.

And it's wild trying to get everybody together but it is happening. Companies and workers are using all kinds of things to stay in touch, e-mails, text messaging, audio, video conferencing -- blogging, social media.

I think we all are very aware of technology and how it is changing our lives, and bringing innovation to our lives especially with people with disabilities because technology can help level the playing field. It's not going to level it across the board but it can help a lot. There are no signs the rate of change will slow.

The convergence of technologies which is enabling all kinds of new scenarios, new technologies replacing existing solutions, increased storage capacity and speed delivered in smaller form, all these factors are creating all kinds of new possibilities.

So, once again, where are the risks and touch points especially when this is such a big nut to get your hands around? Websites. There have been multiple lawsuits saying websites are a place of business and they must be accessible. Online HR system and career centers. The intranet. If you have a service center. We had a customer that was a large financial institution. They spent a lot of time and effort to make sure their website was fully accessible. But they were getting most of the complaints from their existing customers, people that were already their customers. That instead of being able to go to the online service center and say make a payment or use some of the features that were built into their service center, they were told they would have to call their call center or they would have to go into a location. This cost the corporation more money, but also really made these clients unhappy with them.

And they've realized that that was almost more of a risk to them. So any of the products and services that you are providing to your customers. Promotions in marketing and I'll give you another example there. That same client, they were out really spending a lot of time saying, oh, come and get this financial product. It's amazing, it's wonderful, they were spending millions of dollars on commercials, television, yet when people with disabilities went out and tried to get that product, it wasn't accessible.

So they had made efforts but had just forgotten to do it there. So communications, and then very importantly, make sure that in your procurement activities, that you are only purchasing systems that are fully accessible and compliant and/or make sure that language is in your procurement contracts so that even if somebody sells you a system, an enterprise wide system and is not accessible, you can go back to them and say I told you it had to be accessible and compliant so now you need to fix it on your dime, not mine.

Companies that understand this realize that making accessibility part of your procurement process is very important.

So for HR best practices, you have to gain an executive level support for your disability initiative and make sure accessibility is part of it. Build a focused recruiting program for people with disabilities. A lot of this Carol already handled. Ensure marketing efforts include people with disabilities. Assess and provide accessible systems and facilities.

Build an inclusive workplace with visible disability programs. I'm reading these because a lot of people that attend my Webinars are blind and cannot see this. To me "best practice" is making sure the content of my presentations is accessible, that everybody can hear the content.

Educate your leadership team and workforce, which is what we're doing right here thanks to Frank and Jim. And Carol mentioned the affinity groups. A lot of our clients have created employee resource groups for people with disabilities and are using those groups to help improve their accessibility.

Ensure training programs and self-service applications are fully accessible. Include everyone in promotions and career advancement. Verify equal access to your product and services, brand your organization as a disability friendly business.

As far as undue burden, Section 501 does allow relief in the case of undue burden, but we recommend striking undue burden from your accessibility vocabulary. Anything can be done, but it's got to be reasonable.

I'm not saying go out and spend all your money. I'm saying make it part of your plan. So maybe you can't fix your intranet overnight. But you can make it part of your roadmap and your plan saying that that is scheduled to be done the next time we update or something. So instead of saying we can't do it, or it's too expensive or too hard, have a plan and work the plan.

Visit other organizations with operational accessibility programs and benchmark their processes.

Offer training for more than one year. You know, make it part of your HR process. Make it part of your new hire training, your management training. Don't rely on just kick off training but continue it. People move and people change and training has to keep being re-enforced. This should be part of your culture.

Make small, easy to make compliance issues first. And then build management expectations that accessibility is not difficult or expansive, especially if it is part of the lifecycle. Constantly look for new ways to promote accessibility and create a roadmap and a plan of action.

The 30, 60, 90-day action plan, hopefully everybody on this phone are already fully committed to accessibility and inclusion. But if not, make sure your leaders are completely committed to this. Champion 508 and 503 compliance reviews. Collect an inventory of all internal and external career sites. Evaluate your career sites by doing accessibility scans and start doing detailed requirement analyses. Send report findings and recommendations to your leadership and identify and prioritize lists of deliverables, defects and enhancements you found through testing. A lot of this can be done with a tool.

One advantage SSB Bart Group had over TecAccess was they have a tool called AMP, Accessibility Management Platform, which does a lot of these things. At TecAccess we were doing sampling tests, which is a good standard of testing. But when you have a tool that can do all the testing and dashboard the results, measure, put everything in a matrix, it's a lot easier for large companies to manage this data. You want to launch integration and roll out plans, and plan to invest to remediate your sites, because you are going to find problems. What is the plan to fix them?

Track your results. Train and continue to test for best practices. And that definitely will yield positive benefits of increased hiring of people with disabilities. But at the same time that will make your HR process easier for everybody to use, because we have found over and over and over again that when products and services are made accessible, they became easier for everyone to use.

I went through my information very quickly because I know that you have a limited amount of time. It doesn't have to be hard but it does have to be part of the process. And you know, there are all kind of ways, all kind of information that you can get on this topic. There are free resources. You can get a copy of an AMP 30-day free license, if you go to SSBBartgroup.com and my contact information is here as well.

Sometimes you just have to start and create a plan and work your plan. And then I also recommend attending certain events, such as the US Business Leadership Group's national conference that is coming up in Louisville, Kentucky in October. You will see a lot of information there, too.

Frank, I'm going to turn it back over to you.

>> JIM LUNNY: Well, Debra, this is Jim. I want to thank you for that very comprehensive overview and Frank is going to unmute the audience. If there are questions for Debra, please let's have them at this time.

(Pause.)

>> DEBRA RUH: Thank you, Jim.

>> FRANK WEICHMANN: Everyone is unmuted at this time.

(Pause.)

>> JIM LUNNY: Do we have any questions?

(No response.)

>> JIM LUNNY: Hearing no questions, Debra, let me thank you again for that. Hopefully everybody found that, I'm sure they did, to be informative and opened their eyes to a couple of things. Although I'm sure this group on the phone understands most of these issues, your presentation gave us some other avenues to explore and some other details to consider.

Let me just wrap this up. We're a little bit ahead of schedule, but no problem. It will give you all some time back.

First of all let me --

>> DEBRA RUH: Jim, I think we have a question from one participant.

>> JIM LUNNY: Okay, good. Okay.

>> It might have been directly to you. If you could read that out loud, we didn't get that in our general box.

(Pause.)

>> DEBRA RUH: I'm sorry, this is from Debra Kroger. Excuse me, it took me a second to

figure out where it is.

"Can you comment on accessibility for online tests for assessing math and reading ability?"

Okay. That's a great question, Debra. What we recommend when it comes to testing, is that you always make sure your testing protocols have the ability to extend the length of the test.

That's the main thing that we focused on. When you are creating testing, you want to make sure that you, if you put tables in there or graphs or once again anything that is visual, you know, visual could be a picture, graphic, anything like that, that information has to be presented in a textual way.

But the main problem we find is that if the testing, if you only have a certain time to take the test or a certain amount of time to do this Section, the student has to have the ability to at least ask for an accommodation for that testing time to be extended.

Not only is that a best practice with respect to accommodating people with intellectual or cognitive disabilities because it might take them longer to take the test. It also is very helpful to people that have mobility impairments. For example, there is a woman on my team that can't use her arms so she chooses to use a head pointer. It takes her longer to do things than somebody that could use both hands.

But also it addresses certain learning types. Everybody learns and accesses the data differently. So if you can extend the test time then you will make it more accessible to everybody, including people with disabilities, like people that had reading disabilities as you mentioned.

>> JIM LUNNY: Okay. Thank you, Debra. Thanks for the answer and thanks for that question.

Are there any other questions from anyone?

(Pause. No response.)

Okay, let me wrap-up. I want to thank you all for your time today. I was remiss when we started in not letting you know that Tom Capato, our CEO, got pulled away on something and wasn't able to be at the session today. He sends his regards.

I want to thank Carol and Debra again. I believe contact information for both are included in the presentations. I would also be happy to pass all that information along directly. So if you have questions for either of them or their respective organizations, you can make contact with them to follow-up on those.

I want to let you know that we will be posting all the presentations from today, plus a full transcript of today's meeting on the Advisory Council site and we'll send out a reminder to all when that is done.

I want to let you know finally that our next session is going to be Dec 13th and ask our employee members in particular to consider whether you would be in a position to participate in that session by making a presentation on some of the things you were doing in your respective companies, perhaps some areas we talked about today. I know we talked about things like training and communication issues, affinity groups, using technology. Managing work from home teams would be of particular interest to some of our job seekers with disabilities.

But, generally speaking, one of the things we would like to accomplish and would bring great value to you as members of the Advisory Council is to hear from each other and share best practices.

So we certainly have an opportunity to do that at each one of our session, the next is December 13th. If you would like to be included on that one, or following meetings, let me know and we'll make that happen. Again, I want to thank you for your time today and we'll adjourn the meeting. Thanks again. Have a great rest of the day.

(Meeting ends at 1:21 p.m. CT.)