



### What is #AbleTo?

#AbleTo is Ottawa's campaign to close the employment gap between students and graduates with disabilities and their non-disabled peers. The campaign aims to help every student and graduate with visible and non-visible disabilities find meaningful work. Not just because it's the right thing to do, but because it's good for our community and good for local businesses who are currently struggling to find and retain the talent they need.

### What is the employment gap?

The employment gap is the difference in the rate of meaningful employment between students and graduates with visible and non-visible disabilities and their non-disabled peers. [Ontario is home to nearly 50,000 post-secondary students with visible and non-visible disabilities](#)—more than 10,000 in Ottawa alone. When these students graduate, they are often at a disadvantage—overshadowed by myth and overlooked by employers and hiring managers. This problem persists even though students and graduates with disabilities are educated, skilled and qualified—just like their peers without disabilities.

### Why hire people with disabilities?

The business case for hiring students and graduates with disabilities is clear.

Accessibility and accommodations are achievable, necessary and affordable, often costing less than \$500. Furthermore, ignoring students and graduates with disabilities is bad for business, as customers are more socially minded than ever before, and skilled labour is in short supply.

Sixty-three percent of Ottawa employers are struggling to find and retain the workers they need. Eighty percent of Canadians say they are more likely to do business with a company that has a policy of hiring people with disabilities. And 40 percent of the consumer base will be people with disabilities by 2035.

You can strengthen your business and find the talent you need. Help close the employment gap for students and graduates with disabilities and start by taking simple steps to be more inclusive.

[Learn what you are #AbleTo do to be more inclusive](#), and thrive in a talent crisis.

### What is the AbleTo pledge?

The #AbleTo pledge is your commitment to help to close the employment gap. Whether you are an employer, someone living with a disability, family member, or a member of the community, you are #AbleTo hire students and graduates with disabilities or spread our message and support the movement.

You can pledge your commitment to #AbleTo in two ways:

- 1) Share one of the David C. Onley Initiative's #AbleTo posts on Twitter, Facebook or LinkedIn.
- 2) Take your individual #AbleTo pledge. Simply write a post on social media that states what you are #AbleTo do to help close the employment gap faced by students and graduates with disabilities.

For example, you may be #AbleTo support your peers with a disability or #AbleTo be an advocate for inclusion in your workplace.

Be sure to use the #AbleTo hashtag. You also can encourage others to visit [AbleTo.ca](#) if they want to learn more.