

Making the **Workplace Work** for All:

ENABLING EMPLOYEE SUCCESS

Are you unsure of where to start when it comes to mental health accommodations, modifications, and resources?

A workplace mental health accommodation, or “Success Enabler” as our research partner Inclusively calls them, is any adjustment or support provided to an employee that allows them to perform their job effectively while managing mental health conditions. Success Enablers are tools designed to create a more inclusive, productive environment where employees can thrive.

Employers need to act now because the next generation of the workforce is entering the job market everyday with a significantly higher likelihood of having been diagnosed. This is a workforce planning strategy that is urgent for employers to start solving for now.

Read on to learn more from Inclusively’s newest data and NAMI’s recommendations on helping employees thrive, starting with the data that shows just how imperative it is to learn more.



What is the State of the Employee Accommodation Experience Today?

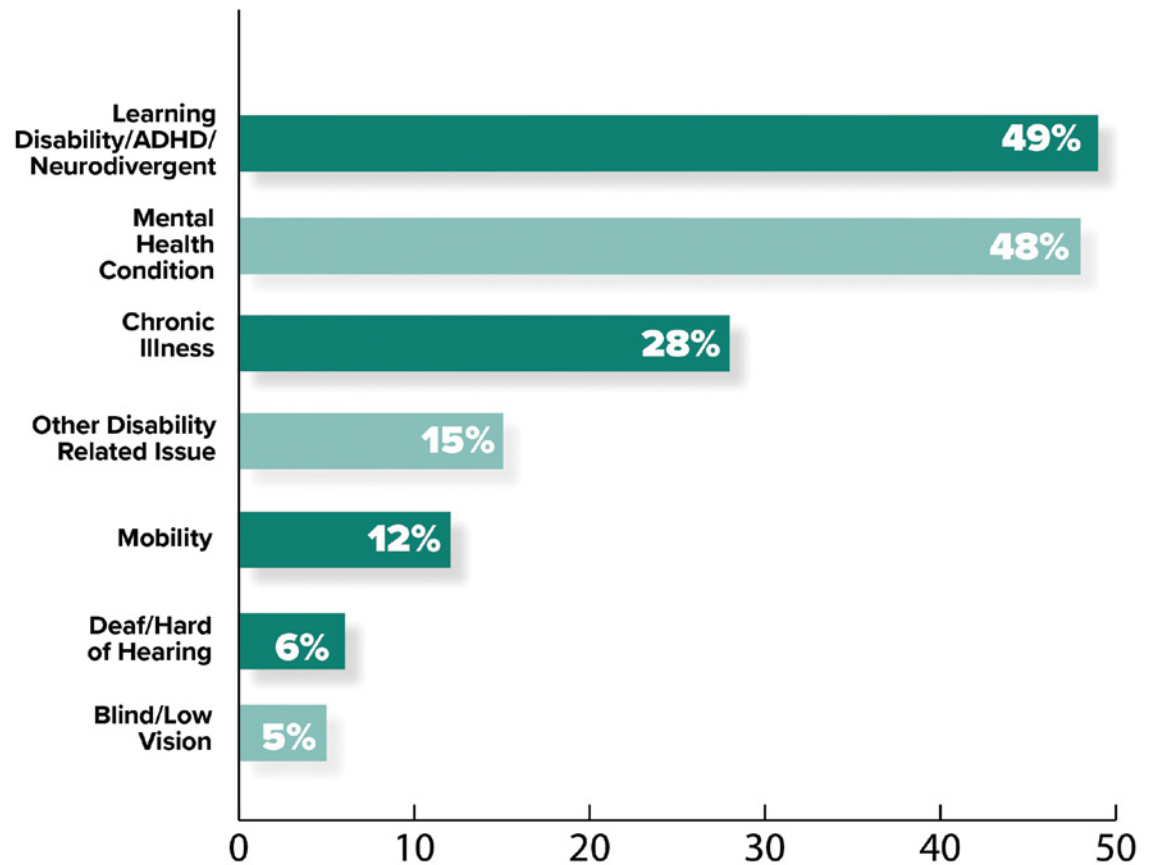
To understand the state of the employee workplace experience, **Inclusively** surveyed about **9,000 job seekers** in July 2024 via its Hire Platform.

- Respondents were job seekers or currently employed
- Responses were anonymous
- Inclusively received 544 responses (multiple responses were accepted for some questions)

Mental health is a top reason for needing accommodations.

Our Key Takeaways:

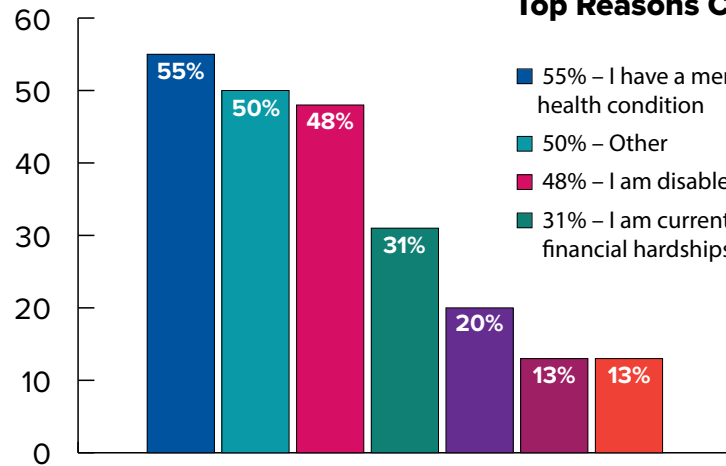
- **Neurodivergence & mental health** top the list of disability-related issues. And respondents are proud of their identity being associated with a disability.



When asked, “Do you need accommodations, modifications, or personalization of the environment to reach your potential at work?”

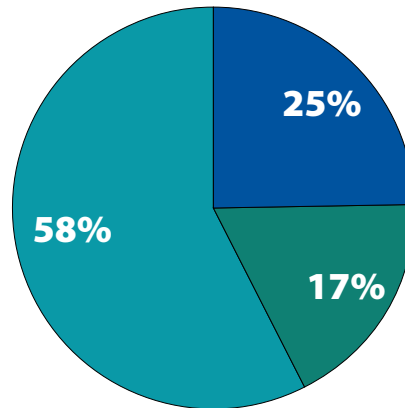
Almost **60%** cited accommodations as critical to workplace success.

Respondents do **NOT** feel safe disclosing disability-related issues to their employer.



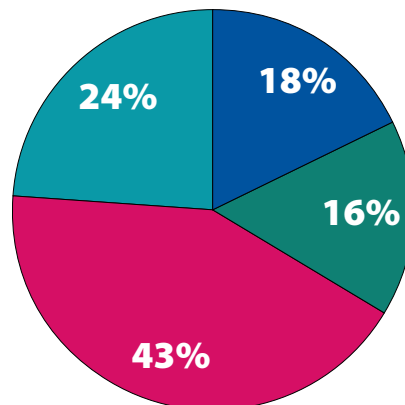
Top Reasons Cited for Accommodation Support

- 55% – I have a mental health condition
- 50% – Other
- 48% – I am disabled
- 31% – I am currently facing financial hardships
- 20% – I am dealing with significant life change (i.e., death, divorce)
- 13% – I'm a caregiver
- 13% – I am balancing work and education



I need accommodations, modifications or personalization of the environment to reach my potential at work

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know/Unsure



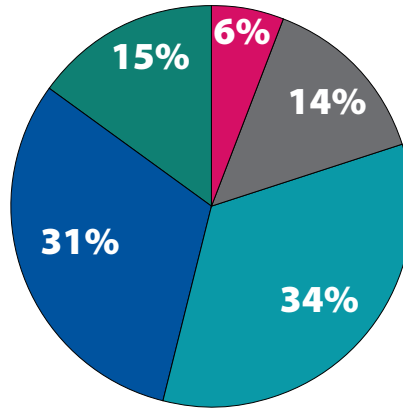
Respondents who do not disclose say they don't feel safe sharing that information in their workplace.

- I didn't know how to
- I didn't feel safe to disclose
- Other
- Both

When asked, “Would you like to receive the support and accommodations you need without having to share personal information including disability status?”

77%
of respondents prefer to start with **anonymous** support & accommodations to stay in their job and be productive

Understanding employee needs is the first step towards a well-functioning company.

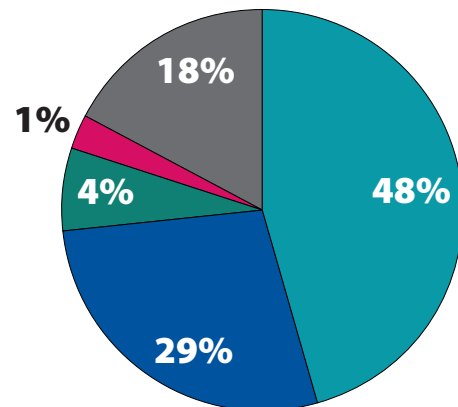


46% who do disclose say the process to request accommodations is difficult.

- Very Easy
- Easy
- Difficult
- Neither Easy or Difficult
- Extremely Difficult

Respondents want anonymous support and accommodations.

This desire for anonymous support and accommodations highlights the need for companies to start now and create a safer environment where employees feel comfortable having these crucial conversations about mental health.



- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Neutral

The Impact of Workplace Mental Health Accommodations

As workplace mental health becomes an increasingly crucial topic, it is necessary to understand all the options that are available to better support employee well-being.

Success Enablers are often simple workplace adjustments that help employees perform their jobs effectively. Many Success Enablers are low-cost or even free, requiring just a little time and thoughtful planning. Plus, they're not just good for employees—they're **great for business**. By making it easier for employees to perform their work duties, or return to work after a disability or medical leave, organizations can help reduce costs from lost productivity and play a crucial role in attracting and keeping top talent.

Not all employees with mental health conditions will need support, but for those who do, it's essential to remember that the process should be personalized and collaborative. Start with the employee's input because Success Enablers should reflect the unique strengths, work environment, and job duties of the individual.

Here are some helpful strategies to start supporting employees ([DOL, 2024](#)):

- Offer mental health platforms for self-service solutions.
- Target mentorships to facilitate conversations.
- Promote additional or customized workplace mental health training materials.

Additionally, offer free or low-cost options to support your employees:

- Noise canceling headphones for busy workplaces
- Access to quiet spaces for focus time
- Encourage setting agendas prior to all meetings
- Utilize closed captions for virtual meetings



What is a Universal Approach to a Better Workplace Experience?

As you learn more about your employees' mental health needs, it can be helpful to better understand Success Enablers as a whole.

Inclusively and NAMI believe that everyone is unique and benefits from having access to the appropriate resources and tools to reach their full potential. This is critical as more and more people enter the workforce and identify with having a disability.

This is why a Universal Approach is imperative. We define a **Universal Approach** as companies streamlining and standardizing their process so that it is not separate from other offerings at their company. Doing this will reduce stigma and eventually promote self-id because most employees don't know how to find the benefits, support, and accommodations they need to thrive in their jobs. Additionally, many are not aware that they can utilize accommodations to support their mental health conditions.

It is estimated that:

- A mere **3–5%** of employees currently in the workplace disclose a disability and/or request a disability-related accommodation through a company Interactive Accommodations Process.
- An additional **20–30%** have a disability but do not disclose, and consequently they do not receive the accommodations they need to succeed.
- **100%** of people could benefit from more personalization at work, with opportunities to have choices around where, when, and how their work gets done.



Actions Employers Can Take To Improve Their Employees' Workplace Mental Health Experience

A thriving and productive workplace starts with supporting employee mental health.

As leaders, it's imperative to take intentional steps to foster an environment where mental well-being is prioritized.

By starting the conversation, educating all staff, and promoting the use of **mental health support**, employers can build a supportive culture that empowers employees to bring their best selves to work and shows that the employer is putting their words into action.

1. Start the Conversation:

- Lead by example—discuss mental health openly in meetings and communications.
 - ✧ Sharing personal stories, acknowledging stressful times, or including brief check-ins during meetings are all great options.
- Normalize the topic to create a culture where employees feel safe sharing their experiences.
 - ✧ Use phrases like, “We all have mental health!”, “How can I support you?”, or “What kind of support would be helpful right now?”
- Show that the organization prioritizes well-being by making mental health a regular part of workplace discussions.
 - ✧ NAMI's Workplace Mental Health poll found that 74% of employees believe it's appropriate to have mental health conversations at work.

2. Educate Everyone:

- Provide training sessions and resources on mental health awareness.
- Teach managers and employees how to recognize signs of distress and approach conversations about mental health.
- Foster a supportive environment where everyone feels empowered to understand and assist each other.
- Check out [NAMI StigmaFree Workplace](#) for no-cost resources and guidance on these topics!

3. Promote Accommodations to Enable Success:

- Clearly communicate that mental health Success Enablers are encouraged and supported.
 - ✧ This should be a collaborative experience between managers, HR, and the employee.
 - ✧ Do your best to over-communicate what mental health supports and benefits employees have access to.
- Demonstrate commitment to employee mental well-being by making accommodations accessible and part of the workplace culture.

By integrating these strategies into the workplace, employers can make a meaningful impact on their employees' mental health and overall job satisfaction. Open conversations, comprehensive education, and accessible accommodations are key to creating a workplace where everyone feels valued and supported. In doing so, companies enhance the well-being of their teams and strengthen the foundation for long-term success. Sources like [NAMI StigmaFree Workplace](#) and [Inclusively's Success Enablers](#) and learning modules can help organizations understand the path to a better workplace experience.

Resources:

www.inclusively.com
www.nami.org/stigmafree
NAMI—Succeeding at Work
Job Accommodation Network





National Alliance on Mental Illness

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