Managing Your Career: Strategies for Graduates with Disabilities

Module 2: Understanding Employment Equity

Slide 1: Welcome to Managing Your Career: Strategies for Graduates with Disabilities. This presentation was developed by the Academic Advising & Career Centre in partnership with Access*Ability* Services to help students with disabilities transition from university to the world of work. My name is Shayna Golding and I am a Career Counsellor at the Academic Advising and Career Centre at the University of Toronto Scarborough. I will be co presenting this presentation with my colleague Cheryl Lepard, Disability Consultant with Access*Abilty* Services.

Slide 2: This is Module 2 Understanding Employment Equity. It is the second module of a 6-part series.

Slide 3: Agenda. In this module we are going to be looking at what is employment equity and who is covered under this act. We will be defining the term persons with a disability. We will be examining some employment equity programs. We will also be identifying key industry sectors that are impacted by employment equity programs. We will be reviewing employer obligations and accountability. Researching employment equity policies and then summarizing some final thoughts.

Slide 4: What is Employment Equity? "Employment equity means more than treating persons in the same way but also requires special measures and the accommodation of differences" http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/e-5.401/page-1.html#h-2

Slide 5: Employment Equity strives to achieve equality in the workplace and correct the conditions of disadvantage in employment experienced by 4 targeted groups; women, visible minorities, aboriginal people and persons with disabilities. For the purposes of this presentation we will be focusing in on the last category, persons with disabilities.

Slide 6: Defining Disability. Under the Employment Equity Act the term *Persons with disabilities* is defined as "persons who have a long-term or recurring physical, mental, sensory, psychiatric or learning impairment" and who (*a*) consider themselves to be disadvantaged in employment by reason of that impairment, or (*b*) believe that a employer or potential employer is likely to consider them to be disadvantaged in employment by reason of that impairment http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/E-5.401/page-1.html#h-3

Slide 7: Employment Equity Programs. In Canada there are 2 employment equity programs; The Legislated *Employment Equity program (LEEP)* impacts all federally regulated employers with 100 or more employees and all federal departments. The second one is the *Federal Contractors Program* (FCP) and impacts employers with 100 or more employees who have secured a federal goods or services contract of $200,000 or more.

Slide 8: Key Sectors. What employers are likely to be impacted or governed by these employment equity programs? Industries such as government at all levels federal, provincial and municipal are likely impacted. Regulated Industries such as transportation, banking, communications, utilities, mining and Federal Contractors such as business services, machinery and equipment supplies, electrical, chemical, educational services, transportation equipment.

Slide 9: Employer Obligations and Accountability. What does this mean for the employer? The Employment Equity Act requires employers covered by the act to identify and eliminate employment barriers. The goal is to institute positive policies and practices and make reasonable accommodations so that the representation of persons in designated groups in the employer's workforce reflects their representation in the Canadian workforce. The Canadian Human Rights Commission is responsible for auditing employers impacted by the act to ensure compliance. http://www.chrc-ccdp.ca/publications/ee_faq_ee-eng.aspx#1

Slide 10: Researching Employment Equity policies. How do we know if an employer that we are interested in working for or a company that we are interested in has an employment equity policy in place? Ways that you can research this include reviewing company websites often under the human resources section, look for statements on job postings, research employers registered with *Ability*EDGE. *Ability* Edge is a branch of Career Edge which provides internship opportunities for recent graduates. You can also review ads in *abilities* magazine, and conduct information interviews which is a topic that we covered in module 1.

Slide 11: Example Statement. Here is an example statement "The University of Toronto is committed to employment equity and diversity in hiring. We strive to attract candidates from all designated groups in order to help shape the diversity found within our campuses."

Slide 12: Final Thoughts. Here are just some final thought on employment equity. Keep in mind that when employers have statements on their job postings indicating that they encourage applications from persons with disabilities, you want to highlight your skills in relation to the job you are seeking. You want to make sure that you highlight all of the skills, credentials and experiences that you have and how they are relevant to the position that you are applying for. Understanding employment equity polices can assist you in identifying employers who are governed by the act and can assist you in targeting your job search.

Slide 13: Resources. Thank you for reviewing this module. There are some additional resources provided here. The Human Rights Commission has more information about employment equity as well as the human rights code. Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) provides some additional information and finally you can select the link to view the Employment Equity Act.

Slide 14: Thank you for reviewing this module. If you would like to provide feedback or if you have questions or concerns, please contact Shayna Golding golding@utsc.utoronto.ca or Cheryl Lepard clepard@utsc.utoronto.ca