Website Barriers to Employment for People with Disabilities

Karen A. Couture
Keene State College

Kathleen R. Johnson
Keene State College

This study involves an analysis of the web content of 30 award winning companies regarding diversity and perceived company openness to employing people with disabilities. The results are mixed: some websites appear designed with disabilities in mind while others reveal constraints to website job access which in turn can result in underemployment and talent underutilization of people with disabilities. Based upon these findings, the authors discuss and make recommendations to optimize website designs that welcome people with disabilities.

INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

According to the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP, 2016), the unemployment rate for persons with disability (PWDs) is more than double that of persons without disability (11.3% vs. 4.8%) even though two thirds of these PWDs indicate that they are willing and able to work (Canas & Sondack, 2011; Harris Interactive, 2000).

Due to the proliferation of the Internet, employers are increasingly relying on the World Wide Web to recruit new workers, and jobseekers are increasingly expected to search for available openings and apply on line (Green, 2015; Jaeger, 2012). This development has enormous potential benefits for social inclusion; however, whether due to prejudice, ignorance, or inattention, many organizations launch websites that are technologically inaccessible to people with sensory, mobility, and cognitive impairments (Jaeger, 2012). As mandated by the Americans with Disability Act (ADA, 1990), PWDs should have equal ability to complete online job applications or, at the very least, websites should include a statement specifying how a PWD can obtain accommodations for the job application process, if needed. For many PWDs inaccessible websites and lack of information about accessibility and accommodations are barriers that can exacerbate existing employment disadvantages relative to other groups.

Barriers to employment online go beyond accessibility and accommodation issues. Like any employee, PWDs seek employers who will be good to work for, who will value and respect who they are and what they have to offer. Most applicants today begin their exploration of potential employers by going on line (Smith, 2015). It is here that the organizational website provides a window to a company's culture and serves as a valuable recruiting tool (Braddy, Meade & Kroustalis, 2006). As over 90% of companies in North America use website recruiting (Cober, Brown, Blumental, Doverspike & Levy, 2000), it is often here that an individual gets his or her first impression of a prospective employer's standpoint on diversity and whether the organization supports an inclusive work culture. The decision to apply or not may be influenced by the message perceived from the website; the organization may win or lose talent accordingly.

Impressions of an organization received from websites may impact job seekers' perceptions of Person-Organization (P-O) fit (Braddy et al, 2006; Chen, Lin & Chen, 2010; Kroustalis & Meade, 2007). P-O fit is the degree of congruence an individual perceives between his or her values and those perceived to be held by an organization (Chatman, 1989; Kristof, 1996) and has been shown to influence organizational attraction (Chen, Lin & Chen, 2010; Judge & Cable, 1997). An organization may strongly support disability diversity and inclusiveness but this value is less likely to attract capable disabled applicants if it is not effectively conveyed, perhaps as a result of terse phrasing or abbreviated description.

Signaling theory (Spence, 1973), applied to organizational choice, offers another approach for understanding ways in which aspects of the recruitment situation may influence job seekers. According to this theory, job seekers use available cues, or signals, to infer organizational characteristics, particularly when clear and complete information is unavailable from other sources (Rynes, Bretz & Gerhart, 1991). Job seekers may thus infer organizational information from features of the organization's website (Braddy et al, 2006; Chen et al, 2010). The website may be the only source of organizational information available to the job seeker before he or she decides whether or not to apply. The ease with which users can navigate a website and locate desired information may serve as a signal that the organization is well organized and values people, which may increase attraction to the organization (Chen et al, 2010; Cober, Brown, Levy, Cober & Keeping, 2003). On the other hand, an organization that espouses inclusiveness and disability appreciation, yet challenges PWDs to locate information on how to obtain accommodations for the application process, may be sending signals that lead to decreased organizational attraction. The job applicant with disability may infer that the organization is not actually inclusive, is hypocritical, or is insensitive to the needs of PWDs, and eliminate it from the job search.

Ball, Monaco, Schmeling, Schartz, and Blanck (2005) conducted a content analysis to examine the extent to which disability was specifically mentioned in employee diversity policies and diversity initiatives on Fortune 500 company websites. Results indicated that 47% of sampled companies had general employee diversity statements that did not reference any specific diversity groups; 42% had statements that specifically mentioned disability; and 11% referenced specific diversity groups but omitted disability. The authors noted that many of the statements that included disability did not go beyond legally required EEO policy language that merely lists protected groups.

In the ensuing decade since the Ball et al (2005) study there has been increasing attention to disability in the workplace. One reason for this is legal compliance. The passage of the Americans with Disability Amendments Act (ADAAA) in 2008 expanded the definition of disability and provided plaintiffs with greater opportunities to prevail in lawsuits (Dorrian, 2014). EEOC statistics indicate that the number of disability discrimination charges filed annually increased from 14,893 in 2005 to 26,968 in 2015 (EEOC Charge Statistics).   Organizations can help protect themselves by assessing the extent to which a PWD has the knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform job tasks and providing reasonable accommodation where indicated (Dorrian, 2014). In other words, protection comes from a focus on ability rather than disability, and organizations benefit from recruiting broadly to maximize the likelihood of attracting job seekers with the special skills needed in businesses today.

The current study adds to the Ball et al (2005) study in several ways. First, we drew our sample of company websites from recent Fortune lists to provide an updated examination. In addition to the Fortune 500 lists, we sampled from a recent Fortune Best Companies to Work For list. If a company is a "Best Company" for employees, we might expect there to be more person-focused and inclusive diversity statements along the lines that the company values all persons, helps all employees develop their potential, and believes in social justice and opportunity for all.

We also investigate the quality and availability of accommodation statements for the job application process. These may serve as powerful signals for an organization's values regarding disability. A job seeker with disability who needs an accommodation to apply for a position but cannot locate directions for obtaining accommodations, may (correctly or incorrectly) infer that the company is not interested in employing PWDs. An organization that prominently displays its willingness to accommodate is likely sending a far more welcoming signal.

We further note the extent to which our sampled companies presented information regarding the technological accessibility of their websites. Such features as easily located accessibility information; instructions for changing website characteristics (e.g. color contrast) and provision of free, installable assistive technology apps, may be perceived as signaling openness to employing PWDs.

In sum, an organization's policies reflect the acceptance or lack of acceptance of disability as an aspect of employee diversity (Hagner, 2014). The current study extends previous research by examining the level of diversity and disability commitment revealed specifically through recent organizational diversity and EEO statements and accessibility and accommodation information presented on company websites. We suggest that these features may be influential to disabled job seekers' attraction to the organization by signaling organizational values and facilitating judgments of Person-Organization Fit. We end our paper with a general assessment of our sampled websites and present implications of our findings for employers and persons with disability.

METHOD

Using a random number generator, we selected a total of 30 websites from the top 100 companies on the 2014 Fortune 500 List, 2015 Fortune 500 List, and from the 2015 Fortune 100 List of Best Places to Work. The Fortune 500 sampling frame included only the first 100 companies as there are a total of 100 companies on the Best Places to Work list. Companies in the final sample (Table 1) spanned a variety of industries and varied in size, number of employees, and locations. Only two companies selected for our sample were ranked on both Fortune 500 2014 and 2015 lists (Apple and Marathon Petroleum) and no company from either of our sampled Fortune 500 lists appears in the sampled Best Companies list.

TABLE 1
SAMPLED COMPANIES

2014 Fortune 500 List	2015 Fortune 500 List	2015 Fortune Best 100 List
Apple	Apple	R.W. Baird
JP Morgan Chase	Costco	NuStar Energy
Marathon Petroleum	Marathon Petroleum	Kimley Horn
Boeing	Well Fargo	Baker Donelson
American International Grp.	Alphabet (Google)	OC Tanner
Intel Corp	Energy Transfer Equity	Marriott International
Tesoro	HCA Holdings	Arnold & Porter
Sears Holding	DuPont	WellStar Health
American Express	Cigna	Adobe Systems
DirecTV	3M	Accenture

Each co-author independently examined a subset of the websites to pilot test our scoring system. After checking scoring reliability and revising the scoring method, each co-author scored the 30 websites. We identified company diversity appreciation or inclusion statements and assessed the ease of locating them, the latter done in reference to the navigational distance (measured in number of links) from each company's home page. We also conducted a content analysis that examined word choice and central messages of each site's diversity and EEO statements in order to distinguish the nature and extent of each site's diversity appreciation. We then determined whether "disability" was specifically referenced in the diversity statement. Following this strategy, we assessed whether accessibility information existed on the sites as well as directions for obtaining accommodations with the job application process.

RESULTS

Diversity Statements (Presence/Absence)

Some organizations address their commitment to inclusiveness and diversity in the company mission statement but more often they develop a distinct and separate, stand-alone statement that captures the essence of this commitment. They might refer to this statement simply as their "commitment to diversity," "commitment to inclusiveness," or "philosophy about diversity." There are many possible ways that an organization can express this commitment, and it is not uncommon for a company to describe it in conjunction with other organizational values such as sustainability, corporate social responsibility, respect for and equitable treatment of individuals, acceptance of differences, and a commitment to eliminating discrimination. It seems reasonable to expect that organizations committed to diversity would not only develop such a statement but include it on their websites and make it relatively easy to locate. We found that the majority of our sampled companies (nine out of 10) on both of the Fortune 500 lists included a diversity statement; however, only six out of 10 sampled companies from the Best Companies to Work For list had such a statement on their website. This difference is surprising, as the selection criteria for the Best Companies list refer to employee-centered policies and practices, whereas the Fortune 500 lists are based on generated revenue.

Diversity Statements (Ease of Locating)

Diversity statements do little to clarify a company's position on the subject if they are not easily accessible or if they are hidden by layers of imbedded material making them difficult or impossible to locate. Returning to signaling theory, if a statement is not prominent or easily found, the signal received may be that the organization does not truly value diversity. Therefore, we also assessed the ease with which we could locate the statement, measured by how many links it took to find it from the website's home page. Table 2 shows the results of that analysis. In general, the majority of the statements were easily found within two or fewer links. Some companies had "diversity" referenced directly on their home page menu and others from one or two links from the home page. The most typical route to the statements was through the career or job page. Although most statements were easy to find, several statements were moderately to very difficult to find, requiring a minimum of three or more links to locate.

TABLE 2
OF LINKS TO LOCATE DIVERSITY STATEMENT

	Fortune 500 (2014)	Fortune 500 (2015)	Best 100 (2015)
Easy*	7	8	5
Moderate/difficult**	2	1	1
No statement found	1	1	4

*≤ 2 links from home page
**≥3 links from home page

Diversity Statements (Level of Commitment)

Our analysis revealed a great deal of variation in the actual content of the diversity statements. In making sense of this variation in a way that would address our research concerns, we discerned three differences in the level of commitment for diversity. Level 1 statements are descriptive claims about the existence of diversity at the organization. These tend to be fairly brief and straightforward. Consider Costco's statement as exemplary:

> Costco has a diverse workforce. Our mission is to foster a climate of inclusion to take advantage of that diversity. (www.costco.com. Retrieved on 7/26/15.)

Level 2 statements have a company focus and tend to emphasize diversity as providing primarily a financial or strategic benefit to the organization (as opposed to a benefit to individuals such as employees, customers, and/or community members). JP Morgan Chase (Fortune 500, 2014) provides a good example. We retrieved the first quotation in 2015. The second, retrieved in 2016, shows that the company expanded the length of its statement but continued to express a company-centered perspective on diversity. The company is diverse apparently because it helps to create a more successful company. While company "success" is not clearly defined, we assume it is measured financially and/or strategically.

> Nothing is more vital to the long-term growth of JP Morgan Chase than our ability to attract and retain talented and dedicated employees. (www.jpmorganchase.com. Retrieved on 8/9/15)

> Employees are our greatest asset, and we strive to attract talent from the broadest pool to foster innovation, creativity and productivity. There is tremendous power that results from this kind of diversity. In fact, creating a diverse and inclusive environment is critical to our success, and we are deeply committed to hiring and retaining employees from different backgrounds, experiences and locations. (www.jpmorganchase.com. Retrieved on 6/16/16)

Being inclusive of people with disabilities -- in recruitment, retention, promotion, and in providing an accessible environment -- gives businesses a competitive edge. However, it is possible to go further, as we see with Level 3 statements. In contrast to the declarations of diversity of Level 1 and the company-focused statements of Level 2, the diversity statements we identified as Level 3 tend to have a more humanistic focus. These incorporate a concern for social justice and human dignity, as well as the well-being and development of the worker as an individual. R.W. Baird from the Best 100 list provides a good example of Level 3:

> Baird is committed to diversity for our clients, for Baird associates and for the communities in which we live and work. This commitment is in keeping with our culture of integrity, our genuine concern for clients and fellow associates and our respect for the individual. Our commitment to diversity includes providing opportunities for every individual to advance professionally and personally regardless of gender, race, color….which are just some of the differences that make each of us unique…. (www.rwbaird.com. Retrieved 3/17/2016).

Likewise, Apple provides another example of Level 3 wherein not only the company benefits from inclusion and diversity but the individual as well:

> We see diversity as everything that makes an employee who they are. We foster a diverse culture that's inclusive of disability, religious belief, sexual orientation, and service to country. We want all employees to be comfortable bringing their entire selves to work every day. Because we believe our individual backgrounds, perspectives, and passions help us create the ideas that move all of us forward. (www.apple.com. Retrieved on 8/17/16).

Table 3 below summarizes our sampled companies' level of commitment to diversity. The majority of the companies go beyond Level 1, although only approximately half expand their commitment to Level 3.

TABLE 3
SUMMARY OF DIVERISTY STATEMENTS BY LEVEL OF COMMITMENT

	Fortune 500 (2014)	Fortune 500 (2015)	Best 100 (2015)
Level 3	Apple, American Express, Tesoro, DirecTV, AIG	Apple, Google, HCA Holdings, DuPont, Cigna, 3M	R.W. Baird, Baker Donelson, Marriott International, Arnold & Porter, Accenture
Level 2	Marathon Petroleum, J.P. Morgan, Boeing, Intel	Marathon Petroleum, Wells Fargo	Adobe
Level 1	0	Costco	0
No statement found	Sears Holding	Energy Transfer Equity	NuStar, Kimley Horn, O.C. Tanner, WellStar Health

Diversity Statements ("Disability" Included/Omitted)

As noted, companies with Level 1 diversity statements declare diversity at their organizations but go no further in describing what that means. In contrast, other diversity statements often further specify the specific groups of people they welcome and respect (for example, women, veterans, those of specific ethnicities).This helps to create an expectation that the organization will follow through with their stated commitment in its policies and practices. We would argue, as did Ball and her colleagues in 2005,that if an organization is truly committed to welcoming and valuing workers with disabilities, then the organization should also specifically mention "disabilities" in their diversity statement. We, therefore, examined the statements to determine whether "disability" or "disabilities" was also included. Table 4 shows that while the majority of companies with diversity statements included the word "disability" in those statements, we found that, similar to Ball et al (2005), many did not.

TABLE 4
DIVERSITY STATEMENTS: "DISABILITY" INCLUDED/OMITTED

	Fortune 500 (2014)	Fortune 500 (2015)	Best 100 (2015)
Included "Disability"*	Apple, American Express	Costco, Well Fargo, DuPont, Cigna,	R.W. Baird, Baker Donelson, Marriott International, Arnold & Porter, Accenture
Omitted "Disability"	Marathon Petroleum, JP Morgan Chase, Boeing, Intel, Tesoro, AIG, DirecTV	Apple, Marathon Petroleum, Google, HCA Holdings, 3M	Adobe
No diversity statement	Sears Holding	Energy Transfer Equity	NuStar, Kimley Horn, O.C. Tanner, WellStar Health

Equal Employment Opportunity Statements

As with diversity statements, EEO statement phrasing can help signal to job seekers the organization's diversity valuation and commitment. We found that some companies merely provided a link to an "EEO is the Law" poster from the EEOC website. Other companies, such as WellStar (www.wellstar.org, retrieved 7/21/16) provided no detail about their EEO commitment and simply stated that they are "an

Equal Opportunity Employer." Alternatively, there are companies that elaborate on their EEO commitment. We identified EEO statements at the first level if they simply noted that the company complied with EEO laws; these statements may include some identification of the specific protected categories as noted in the EEO poster mentioned above. The second level provides some sense of their commitment to diversity other than legal compliance. As with the diversity statements, the third level includes but goes beyond the others to convey the connection between diversity and the goals of the company and that diversity and inclusion are integral to the company's culture and identity. Table 5 summarizes the results.

Level 1: (legal compliance)
O.C. Tanner will recruit, hire, train, promote, and compensate individuals at all job levels without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, the presence of non-job related disabilities, sexual orientation, or whether an individual is special disabled veteran, veteran of the Vietnam era, recently separated veteran, or other protected veteran. (www.octanner.com. Retrieved 7/21/16).

Level 2: (legal compliance and commitment to inclusion)
Apple is an Equal Opportunity Employer that is committed to inclusion and diversity. We also take affirmative action to offer employment and advancement opportunities to all applicants, including minorities, women, protected veterans, and individuals with disabilities. If you'd like more information about your EEO rights as an applicant, please click here (www.apple.com. Retrieved 8/16/16).

Level 3: (legal compliance, commitment to inclusion, and diversity as part of company's core values)
We continue to believe that our policies regarding equal employment opportunities are necessary not only to comply with federal, state, and local laws and obligations, but also because they are in keeping with our Core Values and represent an important contribution to the communities in which we live and work. We ask for your continued assistance and support of our program and policies. (www.accenture.com. Retrieved 8/16/16).

TABLE 5
SUMMARY OF EEO STATEMENTS BY LEVEL

	Fortune 500 (2014)	**Fortune 500 (2015)**	**Best 100 (2015)**
Level 3	0	Marathon Petro, Google, HCA Holdings	Accenture
Level 2	Apple, Boeing	Apple	Adobe Systems, Marriott International
Level 1	Chase, Intel, Tesoro, American Express, DirecTV, Sears Holding	Cigna, DuPont, Energy Transfer Equity, Wells Fargo, 3M, Costco,	WellStar Health, Baker Donelson, R.W. Baird, NuStar Energy, O.C. Tanner, Arnold & Porter, Kimley Horn
No EEO statement	Marathon Petro, AIG	0	0

While we determined that all the company EEO statements are adequate, most do not reach Level 3. In addition, many of the statements were not prominently placed, with some at the bottom of the career page, in small or faded font, making it feel pro forma. It is our contention that a company with a strong commitment to diversity should use every reasonable opportunity on its website to convey that

commitment, and the EEO statement is a prime location to take advantage of that opportunity. Expressed commitment to the equal opportunity laws may be an important indicator of company commitment to diversity in general and disability in particular.

Accessibility Statements

The Partnership on Employment and Accessible Technology (PEAT) found in a recent survey that 46% of respondents described their last online job application experience as "difficult to impossible" (PEAT, Is HR tech...). Much of the difficulties reside in accessibility issues. Accessibility refers to equal access, that persons with various functional differences are able to access and experience (see, read, hear, and use) the website and the content of that website. If website functionality is not consistent with the functionality of the individual, it will present an obstacle for that individual (Jaeger, 2012). For example, if there is no captioning for the deaf person or no audio for the blind person, then the website is not fully accessible to those individuals. A website may be designed in a way that an adjustment in font size by the visually impaired might distort the text or cut off information, rendering it inaccessible. PDF documents included on websites may not be accessed by many current assistive technologies such as screen readers or enlargement programs. Websites should also provide these documents in an alternative text-based format such as HTML or RTF to overcome such obstacles. These are just a few examples. However, because so many employers today use some form of web-based recruiting to evaluate and hire job applicants (Cober et al , 2000), website accessibility is critical for providing equal opportunity for PWDs. In addition to causing frustration, poorly designed websites can create unnecessary barriers for people with disabilities.

According to Title I of the ADA (1990), covered employers must either make their on-line application processes accessible or provide an alternative means for people with disabilities to apply for jobs, unless they can show that doing so would cause an undue hardship. Companies may need to update their websites to ensure accessibility and compatibility with assistive technologies. There is some debate over which accessibility standards are sufficient for compliance (PEAT Talks). In many employer-employee settlements, the Department of Justice has required employers' conformity to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) developed as an international collaboration by the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI). While a full technological examination of the accessibility of each website goes beyond the scope of this paper, we wondered whether our award winning companies included information on their website about accessibility. Six out of the 10 Fortune 500 2015 companies and seven out of the 10 Best 100 Places to Work companies included locatable information. (This question was added to our research in 2015 and consequently, we were unable to view the websites from 2014). At the minimum, a company provided contact information if the user had questions about accessibility (e.g. Energy Transfer Equity). Other companies provided detail about their commitment to accessibility. For example, Accenture points to its efforts to conform to WCAG guidelines such as its provision of "alternative text for images" and Marriott International asks if the user has "trouble typing, moving a mouse or reading" and provides a link to download and install a free assistive technology app that helps PWDs navigate their site (https://www.essentialaccessibility.com/marriott/). Not only can the availability of such accessibility information improve functionality of the site, it can reduce frustration and impact PWD perceptions that the company appreciates and is committed to disability diversity.

Accommodation Statements

As mentioned earlier, Title I of the ADA requires that employers make their job application processes accessible or provide reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities to apply for jobs, unless they can show that doing so would cause an undue hardship. For example, if the interview process involves a face-to-face interview, the deaf applicant could request an interpreter be present (www.eeoc.gov/). Or if there is a problem with screens "timing out" when a disabled applicant completes online applications or pre-employment tests, the person may request an alternate testing method. Most accommodation statements provide a phone number or contact information so whatever accommodation may be needed can be discussed. As with accessibility information, our sampled companies varied in the

extent to which they elaborated upon this statement. Some companies (e.g. Wells Fargo and Intel) also reiterated their commitment to disability diversity, while others (e.g. Energy Transfer Equity) provided only contact information. We examined whether the websites in our sample provided an accommodation statement for potential applicants.

The majority of the Fortune 500 2014 (seven out of 10) and Fortune 500 2015 (nine out of 10) did, indeed, include a locatable statement on their websites, although a slight majority of the Best 100 websites did not do so (six out of 10). It is possible that companies seemingly without statements do provide accommodation information but require the user to register as a job applicant and actually begin applying for jobs before this information is revealed. These findings suggest that even some of the award-winning companies can do more to fulfill their legal obligations. Those interested in working for the organization may perceive the lack of accommodation information as a signal that the organization does not welcome disabled applicants.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Organizations are increasingly relying on online recruitment (Green, 2015). In order to enhance effectiveness of this strategy, organizations benefit from understanding ways in which job seekers learn about company culture and values from websites. Websites may then be designed to better serve the needs of both parties. Website features help form job seekers' perceptions of person-organization (P-O) fit which influence organizational attraction (Braddy et al, 2006; Chen et al, 2010). Job seekers who perceive that the organization is welcoming and shares their values may be inclined to apply to that organization and thereby increase the talent in the applicant pool. In short, website features may serve as signals for organizational characteristics in the absence of clear and specific information (Braddy et al, 2006; Chen et al, 2010).

As with other job seekers, persons with disability (PWDs) desire to work at organizations that respect them and share their values. Organizational websites provide insight into the company's commitment to diversity in general, and disability, specifically. Previous research investigated the effectiveness of a number of website features for conveying facets of organizational culture including diversity (Braddy, et al, 2006; Kroustalis & Meade, 2007); however, fewer studies have examined website features that specifically relate to disability. One notable exception is Ball et al's 2005 categorization of diversity and disability policies.

The current study contributes to the literature on website disability features. Like Ball et al (2005), we examined the presence and nature of diversity and equal opportunity (EEO) statements and whether they specifically mentioned disability. Although differences in the two studies preclude direct comparisons, we nonetheless found similarities in the breakdown of diversity statements: Ball et al (2005) found that forty-two percent (42%) of companies with diversity statements specifically included disability in their definition of diversity; we found forty-six percent (46%). While these percentages are positive they could be greatly improved to help enhance perceptions of cultural inclusiveness. Use of the "Level 3" type of phrasing described in our study may also help more strongly convey organizational commitment.

We also examined accessibility and accommodation statements and, like our diversity and EEO statements, results vary. Organizations may increase job seekers' perceptions of disability appreciation if they include descriptions of their efforts to enhance accessibility and expand their accommodation statements.

We were interested in whether there would be differences between the statements of the Fortune 500 companies and those of the Fortune 100 Best Companies to Work For. The rankings of the Best Companies to Work For are calculated from scores on an employee survey that includes items measuring perceptions of trust, respect and fairness, as well as a culture survey, completed by management, that assesses topics such as hiring practices, recognition programs, and diversity efforts (http://fortune.com/best-companies/). Fortune 500 company rankings are based on revenue. Surprisingly, Fortune 500 company results suggested greater diversity/disability appreciation and commitment in some

areas than did Fortune 100 company results. Ninety percent of sampled Fortune 500 company websites had locatable diversity statements compared to 60% of the Fortune Best Companies. In addition, 80% of the Fortune 500 companies had locatable accommodation statements while 60% of Fortune Best Companies did not.

We suggest that website feature consistency is important for confirming and strengthening messages about the organization's valuation of disability and inclusiveness. Inconsistency, perhaps resulting from the combination of a sincerely worded but disability-excluding diversity statement and difficult-to-locate accommodation information, may lead the job seeker to perceive that the company does not truly appreciate PWDs and conclude that a better P-O fit might be found elsewhere.

There are many reasons why companies should care about PWDs and removing barriers to their employment. If web-based recruiting is limiting the pool of applicants, then companies are missing out on talent. Avoidance of message inconsistency and the adoption of easily navigable, accessible websites, locatable accommodation information, and diversity-related statements that emphasize disability appreciation and inclusion as a core company value, help organizations maximize their opportunities to attract and retain talented workers. In addition, workers with disabilities are best positioned to understand customers and clients with disabilities. They have insights about how to communicate with them, how to market to them, and about product development that can ultimately tap into the disability market. Further, raising awareness and removing barriers to employment for PWDs can help reduce charges of discrimination and litigation expenses as well as help create positive public relations and corporate image.

FUTURE RESEARCH

The current study examined several important variables (diversity statements, equal opportunity statements, accommodation statements and accessibility information) that help to signal company culture. Although an organization may state that it values diversity, it does not necessarily follow that diversity is actually a part of its culture and daily practices. Our analysis does not indicate whether there is buy-in or substance to company claims and, if there is, whether that buy-in is at all levels and corners of the organization. Future research could assess the links between a company's website diversity messages, its actual practices, and the extent to which PWDs benefit. Future studies could also examine additional types of disability-specific website content and features, such as narratives, video, and photographs of employees with disability, for their impact on viewers' perceptions of organizational culture and organizational attraction. Ball et al (2005) noted sampled companies' disability-related practices and accomplishments, but their focus was not on how they impacted perceptions of culture and organizational attraction. Other work (Braddy et al, 2006; Kroustalis & Meade, 2007) investigated diversity-related website characteristics but not specifically disability-oriented material. Future research would also benefit from having job seekers with disability as participants. Knowledge added from these studies would help organizations create websites that more accurately convey company culture and assist job applicants in finding workplaces that best match their goals and talents. Today, company websites are an important part of recruiting, hiring and orienting new employees. If we are attentive to the process and tools of e-recruiting, company websites can help reduce barriers to the employment of PWDs.

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Contact author: Kathleen R. Johnson, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Management, Keene State College, 229 Main Street, Keene, NH 03435-2101   Phone: 603-358-2623   Email: kjohnson@keene.edu