



BLNs Funded by
Florida Agency for Persons with Disabilities
Through the
2006 Medicaid Infrastructure Grant

BLNs Organized and Report Developed by
Wilson Resources, Inc.

Survey Conducted in Cooperation with The Able Trust

**2006-07
Pre and Post Survey Results**

Florida's local Business Leadership Network (BLN) members were asked to respond to a survey that assessed the impact their involvement with their local BLN had on their attitudes and actions in recruiting and hiring people with disabilities. The survey also asked BLN members the barriers they faced and what the BLN could do to assist them overcome these barriers to the employment of workers with disabilities.

Surveys were provided at local BLN meetings and sent to members electronically. The surveys were completed during the months of January, February and March 2007.

There were ninety-two (92) respondents to the survey.

Question 1. How many people does your business employ?

- 9%** Less than 10
- 27%** 10-199
- 19%** 200-500
- 46%** More than 500

NOTE: One organization reported that it employs 10-199 people locally and internationally between 200-500; another reported that it employs 10-199 locally and more than 500 internationally.

Question 2. Choose the category that BEST describes the principle activity of your business or profession (select one).

- 3%** ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT (Examples - movie rentals, museums, sports organizations, theaters, travel)
- 10%** EDUCATION (Examples - private/technical schools, tutors)
- 7%** INFORMATION AND SUPPORT (Examples - computer technology, newspapers, magazines, professional business organizations, radio, TV)
- 5%** PRODUCTION (Examples - agriculture, construction, pharmaceuticals, manufacturing, mining, technology, textile)
- 4%** SALES (Examples - clothing, construction equipment, food, hardware, marketing, pharmaceuticals, real estate)

50% SERVICE (Examples – bank, broker, cable TV, health organizations, hospital, hotel, legal, restaurant, security firm, transportation, utilities)

Question 2...continued Choose the category that BEST describes the principle activity of your business or profession (select one).

21% OTHER

Comments:

1. Promote history, culture, and education.
2. Good judgment
3. One-Stop Career Center
4. Product development, sales, MFG, and marketing
5. We also have some normal support clerical administrative type jobs.
6. Local Government
7. Government
8. Non-Profit

Question 3. Are you a member of senior management with the responsibility for developing policies and practices related to employees with disabilities? **48% Yes** **52% No**

Question 4. Are you a human resource professional? **53% Yes** **47% No**

Question 5. Do you have the responsibility for hiring or supervising employees with disabilities? **56% Yes** **44% No**

Question 6. Does your business have a formal policy for hiring persons with disabilities? **60% Yes** **40% No**

Question 7. Has your company faced barriers in hiring people with disabilities? **45% Yes** **55% No**

Question 8. If so, please indicate the type of barriers you have faced (check all that apply*):

- 21%** Employee attitudes/fears
- 5%** C-Level executive attitudes/fears
- 16%** Mid-Level manager attitudes/fears
- 3%** Customers' attitudes/fears
- 13%** Company's lack of information about disability employment issues
- 27%** Aligning individuals with a disability with the right job fit
- 9%** Do not know where to find qualified applicants with disabilities
- 17%** Limited pool of qualified applicants with disabilities
- 7%** Fears about costs – accommodations; insurance premiums
- 8%** Ability/know-how to make accommodations
- 3%** Fear about termination process
- 3%** Other

Comments:

1. Access to and cost of finding candidates with disabilities
2. Confidentiality

Report Author Comment: *When the first five responses to question eight are totaled, 58 percent focus on "attitudes" at all levels and "lack of information." In these respondents' opinions, these are the major barriers to the employment of people with disabilities.*

*Total exceeds 100 percent; respondents checked all that applied.

Question 9: Are you or your business a member of the Florida Business Leadership Network (BLN)? **64%** Yes **34%** No

Question 10: Are you or your business a member of a local BLN Chapter? **91%** Yes **9%** No

Question 11: If YES, please indicate which chapter:

- 0%** Bay Area BLN
- 14%** Big Bend BLN
- 21%** First Coast BLN
- 18%** Greater Orlando BLN
- 20%** Miami-Dade BLN
- 5%** Polk County BLN
- 23%** Tampa Bay Metro BLN
- 0%** Palm Beach BLN

Question 12: Have you participated in any of the following Local BLN activities (check all that apply*)?

- 77%** Chapter meeting
- 21%** Member Recruitment campaign
- 13%** Employer Training
- 9%** Internship program
- 23%** Disability Mentoring Day
- 8%** Hiring a Person with a Disability with the Assistance of a Service Provider
- 5%** Other:

Comments:

1. Promote production and media work
2. Kick off meeting
3. MFSHRM- Chapter Meeting
4. Board member

*Total exceeds 100 percent; respondents checked all that applied.

Question 13: Have you utilized/participated in any of the Florida BLN resources (check all that apply*)?

- 30%** Connections monthly e-newsletter
- 24%** BLN website
- 25%** Member packet
- 10%** Online Disability Hiring Guide
- 10%** Employability Symposium

*Total exceeds 100 percent; respondents checked all that applied.

Question 14: What can your Florida or your local BLN do to help you overcome hurdles you may have faced in hiring people with disabilities (check all that apply*)?

- 41%** Offer training in my community to dispel myths and change attitudes
- 26%** Offer training and technical assistance at my worksite to dispel myths and change attitudes
- 30%** Provide specialized training, such as legal issues related to the hiring and firing of employees with disabilities, including information on the cost of accommodations
- 45%** Provide more opportunities for employers to share best practices on the employment of people with disabilities
- 36%** Provide written and verbal presentations on where to find qualified people with disabilities
- 30%** Provide more no-risk opportunities for employers and their employees to experience workers with disabilities at their worksites, e.g., internships or mentoring activities like Disability Mentoring Day
- 23%** Conduct an Employer Awareness Campaign in my community, media, ads, etc.
- 10%** Other:
Comments
We need access to greater pool of interested applicants

*Total exceeds 100 percent; respondents checked all that applied.

Report Author Comment: *When asked how the BLN could help the respondents overcome hurdles to employment for people with disabilities, respondents most frequently cited "training" as a means of overcoming these hurdles.*

Question 15: Prior to joining the BLN, how would you rate your knowledge about hiring people with disabilities (check only one)?

- 7%** Very Poor
- 13%** Poor
- 33%** Fair
- 38%** Good
- 8%** Excellent

Report Author Comment: *Prior to joining the BLN, 46 percent of the respondents rated their knowledge about hiring people with disabilities "good to excellent."*

Question 16: As a result of being a member of the BLN, how would you rate your knowledge about hiring people with disabilities today (check only one)?

- 1%** Very Poor
- 0%** Poor
- 14%** Fair
- 52%** Good
- 33%** Excellent

Report Author Comment: *As a result of becoming a BLN member, 85 percent of the respondents rated their knowledge about hiring people with disabilities "good to excellent." The percentage of respondents knowing more about hiring people with disabilities nearly doubled, from 46 percent to 85 percent, as a result of the respondents' BLN involvement.*

Question 17: As a result of the BLN's efforts, I have done the following (check all that apply*):

- 14%** Hired person(s) with a disability
- 11%** Created new job opportunities for people with disabilities within my company
- 9%** Offered internship(s) to a student or adult with disabilities
- 11%** Provided mentoring opportunities to a student or adult with a disability
- 53%** Participated on the BLN
- 16%** Donated funds or professional services to the BLN
- 17%** Presented information on the BLN and employment issues through speaking engagements and presentations
- 36%** Referred a colleague to join the BLN
- 9%** Other

Comments

1. Referred a potential employer
2. Hired through Disability Mentoring Day
3. Spread the word on the BLN's Mission
4. Made a commitment to hire a person with disabilities
5. Shared with Diversity Council
6. Shared information with colleagues, i.e., BLN and Disability Training
7. Had more people hired

Report Author Comment: *As a result of their BLN involvement, employers are offering more opportunities to people with disabilities: 45 percent of the responses indicated that BLN members had hired, created new job opportunities, offered internships or mentored people with disabilities.*

*Total exceeds 100 percent; respondents checked all that applied.

Question 18: The Florida BLN is considering adding new services to its program in 2007. Please indicate any of the services you would be interested in receiving/participating (check all that apply*)?

- 37%** Online educational seminars on disability hiring issues
- 27%** Teleconferences on the employment of people with disabilities
- 37%** Statewide employer conference
- 46%** Student career fair
- 7%** Please list any additional activities that you are interested in seeing from the

Florida BLN.

Comments

1. Local opportunities for employers and providers.
2. Unsure – but I am willing to assist and offer a second pair of hands.
3. Encourage and host career fair more than just once a year.
4. More supported employment training.

*Total exceeds 100 percent; respondents checked all that applied.

Question 19: Please indicate any disability employment subjects you are interested in learning more about through the Florida BLN activities listed above (check all that apply*).

- 23%** Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- 26%** Interviewing candidates with disabilities
- 30%** Recruitment
- 30%** Workplace accommodations
- 30%** Employment support services (i.e., supported employment, on-the-job training services provided by local and state disability organizations)
- 22%** Marketing to customers with disabilities
- 24%** Tax incentives for hiring people with disabilities
- 32%** Disability Etiquette
- 26%** Communicating with and about people with various types of disabilities

*Total exceeds 100 percent; respondents checked all that applied.

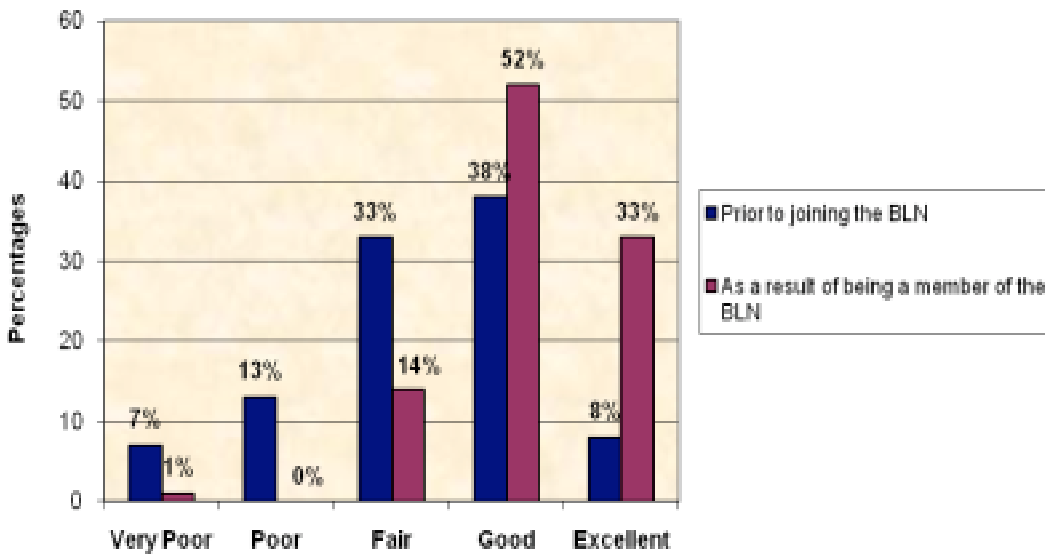
Local Florida BLN Effectiveness

In collaboration with The Able Trust, Wilson Resources, Inc. surveyed BLN members at the end of 2006 to assess the impact their local BLNs had on their attitudes and actions in recruiting and hiring people with disabilities. The survey also asked BLN members the barriers they faced and what the BLN could do to assist them overcome these barriers to the employment of workers with disabilities.

Most frequently, attitudes at all corporate levels were the leading barriers to the employment of people with disabilities, according to the local BLN respondents. Training was most frequently cited as the solution to overcome hurdles to the employment of people with disabilities.

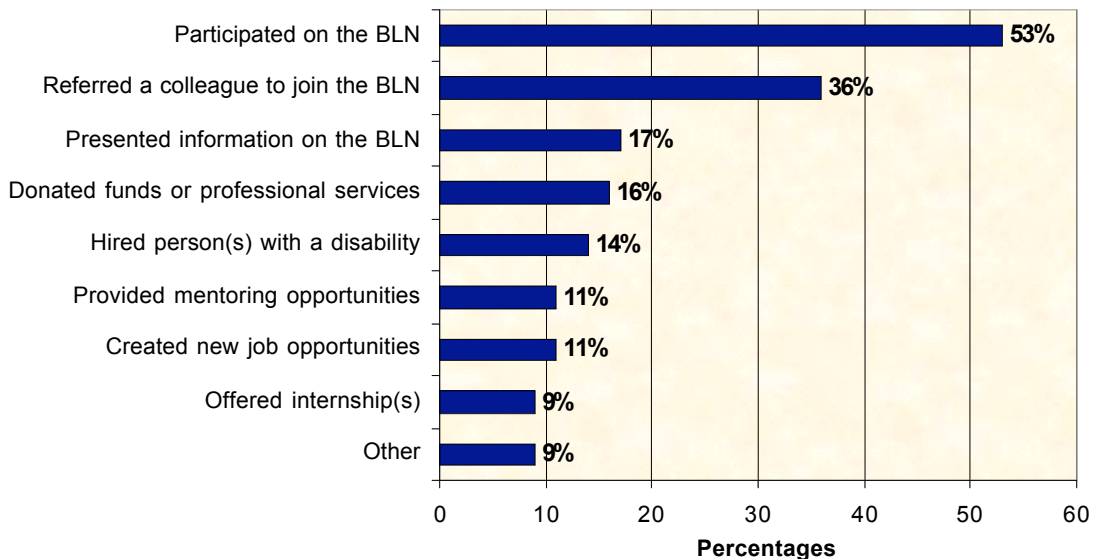
As a result of becoming a BLN member, 85 percent of the respondents rated their knowledge about hiring people with disabilities “good to excellent.” The percentage of respondents knowing more about hiring people with disabilities nearly doubled, from 46 percent pre-BLN involvement to 85 percent post-BLN involvement. (Table 1)

**Table 1: Knowledge About Hiring People with Disabilities
Pre-BLN and Post-BLN Participation**



The survey also found that as a result of their BLN involvement, employers are offering more opportunities to people with disabilities: 45 percent of the responses indicated that BLN members had hired, created new job opportunities, offered internships or mentored people with disabilities. (Table 2)

**Table 2:
As a result of the BLN's efforts,
I have done the following:**



These survey findings, data from the Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Florida One-Stops reflect an upswing in the employment of people with disabilities in Florida. Florida's local BLNs are contributing to this expansion.