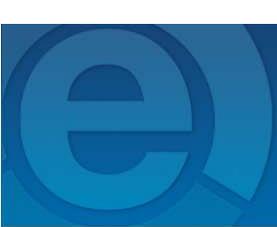


Inclusive and Accessible Workplace Technology

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Inclusive & Accessible Workplace Technology

- DOL and ODEP seek to ensure that all individuals, including those with disabilities, have the tools and technologies they need
- If you can't access and use the tools and technologies to perform a job, your employability and productivity suffer
- ODEP develops policy around ensuring that access



Key Examples of Workplace Technology

- Use the internet to search for jobs and get information about them
- Complete online job applications
- Write e-mails to correspond with potential employers, colleagues and others
- Complete online forms, e.g. leave, benefits
- Participate in training via web and software
- Access e-mail, web, software, and other types of information and communication technology (ICT) – including those based in the cloud – in the course of job duties



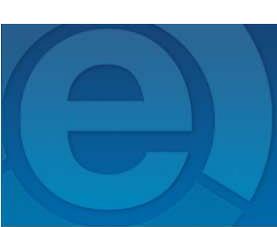
Approach to Accessibility & Usability

- Important to ODEP to aim for the most accessible and usable experience for everyone
- Be upfront and honest
- Test continuously and always continue to improve
- Provide ongoing support and training
- Listen to our users and provide open communication
- Learn from others and share what we know
- Work with vendors
- Stay ahead of the curve; don't be afraid to try



ODEP & Its Partners in Policy

- ODEP's policymaking efforts don't take place in a vacuum
- Constantly engaging partners and stakeholders from other federal agencies, nonprofits and NGOs to address barriers to the employment of people with disabilities – including inaccessible technology
- Current initiatives include:
 - Accessible Workplace Technology Initiative
 - Social Media Accessibility Working Group
 - ePolicyWorks Initiative
 - Online National Dialogues



Accessible Workplace Technology Initiative

- Accessibility of Online Job Application Systems
- Availability and Interoperability of Assistive Technology
- Accessibility of Emerging Workplace Technologies
(Cloud, Mobile Apps, Collaboration Tools,
Crowdsourcing Tools, Social Media)

*** Linchpin of these efforts is work with technology vendors and their developers to encourage greater accessibility in the development of their products from the ground up instead of as an afterthought.*



Social Media & Employment: Major Trends

- More and more organizations are using social media to conduct outreach, recruit job candidates and encourage workplace productivity
- More and more jobseekers with and without disabilities are using social media to support employment-related activities, such as:
 - Looking for and apply to jobs
 - Discussing job openings and job-search tips
 - Creating résumés
 - Establishing networks of professional connections



#SocialGov Efforts

- #SocialGov Summits: GSA-sponsored series of events for the Federal Social Media Community of Practice
- For participants to share and learn from one another how federal agencies are using social media and engagement technologies to improve customer service and agency goals.
- ODEP has partnered with GSA in support of these efforts
 - To expand and improve capabilities through the ePolicyWorks initiative
 - To inform how social media can be made accessible for jobseekers and workers with disabilities



Social Media Accessibility Working Group

- ODEP leads in partnership with GSA
- Currently collecting best practices that government agencies, companies, and individuals can use to ensure their social media content is accessible to all
- Other activities include:
 - Testing out new media tools approved by GSA for accessibility and usability, such as hackpad.com, and then sharing those findings with our federal partners, etc.
 - Working collaboratively with other agencies, developers, etc., to develop solutions for some of the accessibility issues related to social media content and tools



ePolicyWorks: Collaboration in the Cloud

- A new, collaborative approach to federal policymaking that leverages Web-based technology, stakeholder involvement and real-time information sharing
- Empowers national experts to shape policy and address specific barriers to employment faced by people with disabilities
- Establishes a model for future national policy-building efforts
- Serves to support the federal government's pledge to modernize government, heighten transparency and maximize efficiency
- Centerpiece is a set of online collaborative workspace where members can access the latest news, events, reports and legislation related to disability and employment, as well as organizational and productivity tools



SharePoint Workspace

- Secure, password-protected, online collaborative workspace
- Provides a virtual space for workgroup members to further the national dialogue on disability and employment issues
- Leverages technology and uses Web 2.0 features to help members continue meeting discussions and turn ideas into actions
- Using Microsoft SharePoint, and hosted in the cloud, this virtual environment allows Members to:
 - Form secure, online workgroups to further collaborate
 - Initiate and participate in discussion threads on timely topics and trends
 - Share information about upcoming events related to employment, disability and health care
 - Collaborate on a variety of resources, including informational briefs, presentations and other documents



Why SharePoint 2010?

- Compatibility with other Microsoft products used by the majority of our members
- Used by other federal agencies, including DOL (agency-approved, supported tool)
- Effective and proven way for members to collaborate from a variety of locations
- Supports check out functionality, versioning control and other useful productivity tools
- Customizable product, which allowed ODEP team to fix accessibility “bugs” and improve usability



Potential Benefits

- **Overcome organizational challenges** - access to files and conversation streams anywhere, any time
- **Enhance communication** - tailored discussion forums, social networking features and collaboration tools
- **Increase productivity** - manage document sharing, tracking, storage and versioning
- **Save money** - online vs. in-person; re-usability of outreach processes
- **Increase inclusiveness of outreach** - national dialogues and online discussions for engagement with federal partners and stakeholders



Potential Drawbacks to Using ePolicyWorks

- **Concern about adopting new technology**
 - Training
 - Accessibility and usability issues
 - System compatibility

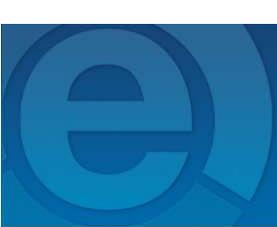
- **Resistance to changing business practices**
 - Lack of participation from the entire group (adoption model)
 - Inconsistent usage
 - Need for leadership involvement across partner agencies

- **Requires leadership**
 - Need for management support
 - Need for specific outcomes and accountability



Examples of Accessibility “Fixes”

- Set “More Accessible” mode as the default
- Created a Site Map that integrates functions, as well as links to pages (e.g., Add a calendar item, Add a discussion)
- Improved site navigation and added help features
- Added descriptive labels
- Revised table formats
- Added alt tags and removed non-tagable tool tips
- Removed unreadable check boxes
- Disabled pop up boxes
- Removed disabled ribbon features
- Simplified forms and limited mandatory fields



Integrating IdeaScale into ePolicyWorks

- Integrated crowdsourcing tool to conduct online national dialogues, involving thousands of participants and generating hundreds of ideas, which are vetted and used to develop policy
- 10 online dialogues – or campaigns – available for use by ePolicyWorks member groups and ODEP
- Successfully worked with IdeaScale to develop an accessible and usable template
- Also collaborating with DOT
 - To share best practices, technical solutions/ improvements and other helpful ideas for successful dialogues
 - To offer online dialogues to VTCLI grantees for use at the local level
- Plan to share accessible template with GSA for cross-agency availability



Examples of Accessibility “Fixes”

- Increased font sizes and color contrast
- Used CSS to hide unnecessary functionality within the IdeaScale template that hindered usability for those utilizing assistive technology
- Improved the read order of the IdeaScale voting features for assistive technology
- Added setting to turn "Events" off when not active
- Simplified the URL in the “Reset Password email” to improve ease of use
- Corrected keyboard focus When clicking “Forgot Password”
- Removed unnecessary graphics
- Added alt text to "Close Window" throughout the template
- Improved dropdown menu behavior throughout the template
- Inserted a success message for screen reader participants so that they know their action was performed successfully
- Required numbers for all numeric form fields