

## DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

### *Selected March 2007 Dates to Remember*

*(From the Multicultural Calendar 2007)*

- *Women's History Month in the UK and the US (in Canada it is celebrated in October)*
- *Mar 08: International Women's Day (UN)*
- *Mar 21: International Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UN)*
- *Mar 31: Eid-Moulud un Nabi (marks the birth of Prophet Muhammad, the founder of Islam) (Islam)*

## ACCOMMODATING DIFFERENTLY ABLED EMPLOYEES

Every employer needs and wants to hire qualified people who will contribute to the achievement of their business objectives and help to move the organization forward. To achieve optimal results, an employer needs to draw from the largest pool of candidates available. Yet all too often, when hiring, developing and promoting employees, people with disabilities can be overlooked and the talent they can offer the organization remains untapped. Accommodation on the job, which in many cases can be provided at little or no cost, is often all it takes to **Enable** a dis**abled** individual to maximize their contribution to the organization. Providing this accommodation reaps significant benefits for not only the individual but also the company. To cultivate that reservoir of talent, you, as the employer, need to have a thorough understanding of what accommodation means in practical terms in order to initiate open communication with the individual involved.

The Canadian Human Rights Commission has provided an on-line guide to employment accommodation for people with disabilities. It provides an understanding of the legal aspects of the duty to accommodate as well as tips on how you can become a barrier-free employer. It also includes a few cost effective and common sense examples of providing accommodation.

[www.chrc-ccd.ca/discrimination/barrier\\_free-en.asp](http://www.chrc-ccd.ca/discrimination/barrier_free-en.asp)

Complimenting this guide is Alan Cantor's article "Part 2: The Cost and Benefits of Accommodating Employees with Disabilities". In his article, Mr. Cantor dispels the myth that workplace accommodation is always expensive and discusses the benefits and added value of workplace accommodation along with some cost-effective suggestions.

[www.cantoraccess.com/worksit2.htm](http://www.cantoraccess.com/worksit2.htm)

Accommodation is the law but it's also the right thing to do for everyone concerned. An inclusive workforce offers added value to your business, your employees and your customer. Are you a barrier-free employer? Are you optimizing the potential of *all* your current and prospective employees? Do you want to maximize your business results and add value to your organization by increasing your access to a diverse pool of skilled candidates? The information in the above articles will help you determine what you are doing right and what more you can do to ensure that you are a barrier-free employer.

Click on **Some Other Resources – Accommodating Differently Abled Individuals** for additional information and ideas to help your company effectively and efficiently invest in a fully accessible and inclusive workplace.

In April look for “***Building an Inclusive, Diverse Workforce: Showcasing Success Stories***”.

We’d be delighted to showcase *your* organization’s successful business case for diversity in the newsletter; details can be sent to us via HRPLD’s Administrator.