

KEEPING DISABILITIES SECRET

Task 1. Reading

1. Scanning for details

Find the following numbers in the article and match them to their meaning.

12.8 17 2 25 33 3.8 4.4 74

- A _____ the number of people (in millions) working with disabilities in the UK
- B _____ the percentage of people in the research who did not inform Human Resources about their disability
- C _____ the percentage of people in the research who did not mention their disability to their colleagues
- D _____ the percentage of people who believe that workers with disabilities are not as effective at their jobs
- E _____ the percentage of people with disabilities who had job offers taken away once they revealed they had a disability
- F _____ the percentage of people with disabilities in France who were offered an interview
- G _____ the unemployment rate for people with disabilities in the United States
- H _____ the current national unemployment rate in the United States

Read the article

Keeping a secret The workers hiding their disabilities

A. In the United Kingdom, health professionals estimate that there are around 4.4 million people living with physical or mental disabilities, meaning, a condition which may stop them performing the job fully. However, exact numbers are not known as there are a large number of people disguising or hiding their disabilities for fear of losing work, not getting promoted, or just being treated differently.

B. At the University of Derby, research showed that 25% of the people they spoke to had not told the HR department about their disability. An additional 74% of people didn't tell their colleagues about it either. There's a lot of concern on the part of people with disabilities that they will not be treated as an equal, and they have good reason to do so. Recent research showed that around 33% thought disabled people did not work as effectively as those who were not. Furthermore, 17% of adults with disabilities said that offers for jobs had been taken back once they revealed their condition and a study in France showed that of those who reported a disability during the application process, only 2% of them were asked to interview. In the United States, the unemployment rate for disabled adults recently rose to 12.8% compared to the current national average of 3.8%.

C. For many of these workers, the pandemic brought welcome relief as they were able to work from home which helped them with hiding their condition and also better enabled them to manage it. Forcing workers to go to the office and be there for a specific number of hours is not something that is easy for everyone. Many workers need physical support and just being able to rest during the day, or go for a walk makes life much easier for many. It also means appointments with doctors and therapists are much easier to attend as the working from home arrangement gives greater flexibility. Previously, workers with disabilities were concerned that if they asked to work from home, it would be viewed that they were not working hard or avoiding work altogether. The pandemic meant that everyone was working from home it has been a huge improvement in the lives of many.

D. However, with the prospect for many that working life will return to 'normal' with the pandemic showing signs of improving, a lot of workers are worried that they will have to face the old issues again. What we all have learned during the last two years is that it is possible for everyone to function remotely and it is important that companies create changes so that everyone is able to work at their best, whether or not they have a disability

Reading comprehension

Read the article on the previous page and find words which mean the same as the following.

1. _____ change the way something looks so people do not recognise it (v, para. A)
2. _____ a feeling of worry (n, para. B)
3. _____ make something known or show something that was hidden (v, para. B)
4. _____ a positive feeling that comes after a difficult time or when something unpleasant stops (n, para. C)
5. _____ make it possible for something to happen (v, para. C)
6. _____ the ability to change or be changed according to the situation (n, para. C)
7. _____ the possibility of something happening (n, para. D)
8. _____ at a distance from something (adv., para. D)

