



The Future of Accessibility

Scan Club output for July 2022



Employment and
Social Development Canada

Emploi et
Développement social Canada

Canada



In July 2022, the Human Resources Innovation Foresight Team (“HRI”) hosted its monthly Scan Club on “The Future of Accessibility”. Participants from across the Government of Canada participated in the hour and a half activity. HRI provided participants with three specific “Weak Signals”:

- [Transcript of the Conference “What If We Let Users Customize the Interface?”](#)
- [Welcoming Neurodiversity in the Workplace](#)
- [US Companies Offer AbortionTravel benefit after Roe decision](#)

Participants then discussed the importance of these signals and their potential impact on the Federal Public Service. The following infographics summarize each Weak Signal and organizes the participant’s’ insights and discussions into various areas of implications using a [STEEPV framework](#).

Visit HRI at:

- GC-wiki: https://wiki.gccollab.ca/EDSC_Innovation_RH_-_HR_Innovation_ESDC
- GC-collab: <https://gccollab.ca/groups/profile/928221/esdchuman-resources-innovation-innovation-en-ressourceshumaines-de-edsc>

Accessibility setting



Contrast

Default Reinforce Reverse

Font (dyslexia)

Default Adapt

Line spacing

Default Increase

Justification

Default Remove

Pictures

Default Replace with text

Transcript of the Conference “What If We Let Users Customize the Interface?”

Access42 has developed AccessConfig, a free, open-source, lightweight style selector that allows people with disabilities to use a site according to their specific accessibility needs.

Impacted groups:

- People with disabilities

So what?

How might this impact us in the future?



Social + Cultural

- **Accepting Accessibility:** Giving people with disabilities the opportunity to customize their experiences according to specific needs is a push towards equity in services and products, and increases awareness and empathy – illustrating accessibility for all as a norm not an exception.
- **Flexible Service:** Expanded bespoke accessibility platforms could make services, internal and external, more user-friendly and adaptable to the diverse needs of employees and clients.



Welcoming Neurodiversity in the workplace

Microsoft, among several other large technology companies, are implementing a neurodiversity recruiting program into their talent management processes.

Companies involving and accommodating neurodivergent employees report productivity gains, quality improvement, boosts in innovative capabilities, and broad increases in employee engagement. Ultimately, organizations are seeing evidence of equity and diversity benefiting the bottom line of organizations.

Impacted groups:

- Introverted employees
- Employees with disabilities
- Organizations with hiring processes allowing for diversity and equity

So what?

How might this impact us in the future?



Social + Cultural

- **Adaption Waste:** The neurodiverse who do not receive resources and support needed to excel, or rather who are forced to adapt to the status quo, use a great deal of time and energy “fitting in”. As a result, maximum excellence is mitigated and/or an organization does not realize the potential of its employees in full.
- **New-rodiverse:** Organizations enabling the hiring of people with disabilities is a boon for equity and diversity. This has the potential to impact innovation and productivity in ways few organizations have experienced before having relied on a similar employee archetype.



Values + Ethics

- **No to Accommodation:** The term suggests a compromise, which is neither productive for either party (employer-employee) nor is it an equitable approach as some employees will not experience compromised workplaces, while others will.
- **Baseball Teams not Factories:** Organizational structures do not afford customization and flexibility with unique employees. Ironic, because no one employee is the same. Each need, skill, experience, etc. requires its own resources and support, like that of a baseball team with different positions.



Policy + Government

- **Continue Remodeling:** Other elements of organizational talent management (promotions, training, managing styles, evaluation, etc.) do not allow for those who are neurodivergent. Hiring is only one step towards enabling success for those who do not benefit from the status quo.



WARNING

This third signal discusses sensitive issues regarding reproductive health



US Companies Offer Abortion Travel benefit after Roe decision

The U.S. Supreme Court overturned the landmark 1973 ruling recognizing a woman's right to an abortion. In response, U.S. companies are offering a travel benefit to receive abortion care in states that allow for it. These companies include Walt Disney Co, Johnson & Johnson, online dating sites OkCupid and Bumble Inc, Netflix Inc and JPMorgan Chase & Co, the nation's largest bank. diverse talent. Apple, IBM, Google, and Tesla have already eliminated four-year bachelor's degrees as a requirement for many job postings.

Impacted groups:

- People who give birth
- Pro-choice organizations
- Populations more severely impacted by lack of access to abortion care

So what?

How might this impact us in the future?



Social + Cultural

- **Care is Cool:** University Providing abortion care support could be the first of other ways organizations attract talent (not to be insensitive) to outshine regressive employers. This could include improved maternal and paternal leave support, childcare support, elder care support, etc.



Policy + Government

- **Coming to Canada (permanently):** Like the Trump election exodus, it is possible more people will leave the United States for places where abortion care is more accessible and where those kinds of values are less tread upon. Though, this would be available to only those who could afford it. Doctors who are persecuted may also flee to Canada.
 - **Coming to Canada (temporarily):** Like medical tourism, Canada could be a place for people to travel to receive abortion care and then return home afterwards. Though, this would be available to only those who could afford it.
 - **Coming to Canada (both):** Should this trend grow, Canadian medical services could see a rise in abortion rates to a point that services could be inundated. Already, it is difficult for some Canadians to receive abortion care.
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*“The future is already here –
it’s just not evenly distributed.”*

— *William Gibson*



