

ACTIONABLE IMPACT

Impact Area: WORKFORCE



FEATURED COMPANY:



COMPANY SIZE: 11-50

FOCUS: INCREASING WORKPLACE DIVERSITY

Hiring processes can reflect hidden biases that should be corrected to avoid discrimination and develop an inclusive culture. Employing people from underrepresented populations helps incorporate diverse perspectives into corporate decision making, which can improve profits, productivity, customer satisfaction and community relationships.

"We retain a skilled and enthusiastic work force in exchange for putting in the considerable effort early on to recruit and train individuals with cognitive disabilities."

-Emily Baratta Co-Founder of Gleam Car Wash

Gleam is incorporating special needs individuals into their workforce. They utilize a hiring process model that lifts their bottom line and can also easily be replicated by other businesses.

INCLUSIVE HIRING PRACTICES

Gleam Car wash has prioritized hiring practices in their business model as a tangible way to impact the community while strengthening the company's bottom line. Gleam currently employs 35 people, and 20-25% of these employees have cognitive disabilities. The repetitive nature of car washing makes this industry a good fit for including individuals with cognitive disabilities into the workforce. The decision to build this program into their business model came with uncertainties of the results, but the business has proven successful.

A RELIABLE AND COMMITTED TEAM

Car washes typically experience a 100-300 percent annual employee turnover rate, but this program has allowed Gleam to significantly lower this number. The recruiting and training process for these employees may take more time upfront, but they fit into the daily operations of the business like anyone else with the exception of scheduling accommodations. Gleam's employees are reliable, enthusiastic, hard workers with nearly zero no-shows and injuries. Having no more than 20-25% of the workforce with cognitive disabilities is optimal so the staff can fully integrate and remain efficient.

A majority of their recruiting efforts have been by word of mouth and reaching out to friends and family. In the past, they have also worked with [Easterseals](#), a nonprofit organization that provides support for families and adults with disabilities, to reach potential employees. Moving forward they will be partnering with Laradon to expand these efforts. [Laradon](#) is a Denver training center and school that offers employment programs to help integrate adults with disabilities into their communities.

RESOURCES

- [Laradon and Easterseals](#)
- [Diversity Linked to Increased Sales Revenue and Profits from the American Sociological Association](#)
- [The B Lab Diversity guide](#)

Best for Colorado, a program of The Alliance Center, was created to inspire, equip and celebrate businesses that create higher quality jobs, build stronger communities and preserve a healthier environment through their business operations, products and/or services. Come and join a community of like-minded individuals at all stages of corporate social responsibility who are willing to share lessons learned and best practice information. Learn more at thealliancecenter.org/b4co.