



# Disabilities Mentoring Day

Optimize Your Talent: Action Potential

2019 Guidebook

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# Welcome!

Welcome to Dolphin Disabilities Mentoring Day. We are excited to have you as part of our event for the opportunity to show off your talent and enhance opportunity.

This guide will give you a better understanding of what DMD is and who is involved. Please use this guide to learn how we utilize one day of mentoring to connect opportunity to talent.

## Who Are We?



### Founders:

Jamie Burton  
President and Co-Founder

Scott Burton  
CTO and Co-Founder

### National Office Staff:

Jennifer Gorman  
Regional Director

Candice Ramnanan  
Graphic Designer

Emily Burton  
Events & Social Media

Dan Lajoie  
Website Developer



## MISSION

Dolphin Disabilities Mentoring Day utilizes technology to bridge the communication and knowledge gaps between business, community and employment organizations and persons with disabilities.

## ABOUT

Dolphin DMD was founded in 2011 based on Dolphin's insights and experience and belief that all businesses can benefit from employing persons with disabilities. Dolphin DMD facilitates an experiential learning opportunity for employers, their employees and talented individuals looking to further their employment goals. It is a strategic tool a company can use to improve diversity and inclusion, and address myths and misconceptions regarding people with disabilities and their talents, as they pertain to the workplace.

Dolphin DMD also facilitates employer access to an underutilized talent pool. The rising costs of attracting and retaining employees is crucial when it comes to business growth; the Canadian Employee Relocation Council states that 62% of Canadian CEOs say that talent shortage is affecting business growth. Businesses will not be able to innovate or grow a competitive advantage without people who have the skills to make it happen.

Diverse talent and multidimensional ideas, experiences and perspectives are the foundation of successful innovation. Dolphin DMD ensures that mentees are job ready with experience, skills and knowledge relevant to the mentors and their workplaces.

**Why choose mentoring?** At Dolphin DMD we have chosen mentoring as a best engagement fit because we recognize the potential to address so many of the misconceptions about building a workplace inclusive of people with disabilities, in a timely and efficient manner. A mentoring relationship, as paraphrased from MentorSET, is a partnership where two people have the chance to share their similar experiences in a common field and develop a relationship based upon mutual trust and respect. The mentor becomes a guide for the mentee, and can help provide direction for career development and empathize with mentee career and workplace challenges through shared experiences. Since Dolphin DMD began in 2011, we have seen these mentoring pairings develop into employment opportunities when the demand and talent have been in timely alignment.

Since 2011, Dolphin DMD has grown from a single event of 7 matches with 4 employers to 12 event locations, with 672 registrations, 209 matches and 112 businesses participating in Ontario. Our Canadian footprint expanded to a total of 16 event locations, with 20 cities participating in five provinces, for a total of 757 registrations, 238 matches, and 139 businesses participating.



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By analyzing data from participants, we can do predictive analytics on career paths, with skill transfer indicators. We can predict new positions by applying core competencies and labour market trends.

And we know that mentoring matches are not dependent on education or experience, but rather an opportunity in an appropriate field. Employment is not predicted by previous employment but rather the ability to demonstrate skills. We can begin to build employment models for the gig economy, and neurodiversity. We are helping business Empower Talent for the Future of Work.

## INTENT

Dolphin DMD's primary intent is to match mentees with mentors for a meaningful and mutually beneficial learning experience that is effective and authentic with minimal investment of resources required for engagement. By establishing a connection to the workplace and demonstrating applicable skills, there are instances when the talent matches a current or near future opportunity, and gainful employment is achieved. Further, Dolphin DMD endeavors to continue to generate relevant metrics to evolve best practices in strategies to meet labour market demand for talent and to advise organizations (Gov't, non-profits, educational institutions, etc..) in how to best support people with disabilities in securing and retaining employment in their desired vocation.

Dolphin DMD is learning from business participants that it is challenging to source adequate talent, thereby limiting business growth; candidates don't have the skills, aren't the appropriate fit or are just not applying. Yet, people with disabilities report difficulties finding work with an unemployment rate in excess of 16%.\* Dolphin DMD is addressing this disconnect, and introducing employers to talent they may not have considered. Dolphin DMD results show that 89% of Mentors would recommend their Mentees to apply to the business where they work, and employees recognize the talent and skill they want on the team.

\*(Statistics Canada figures based on a limited window of unemployment and not indicative of chronic or long-term disability)



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# DOLPHIN DISABILITIES MENTORING DAY

## Goals

- Provide mentees access to professional network, environments, career paths and human resources processes
- Increase the confidence of jobseekers and students who have disabilities
- Enhance experiential learning (co-ops, placements and internships) and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities
- Dispel misconceptions about hiring persons with disabilities and promote disability confidence
- Give employers an opportunity to benchmark themselves as being accessible to what is a largely untapped pool of talent as well as a massive consumer market of \$40 billion in Canada when including friends and loved ones (Source: "Don't Lower the Bar", Rotary at Work whitepaper by Mark Wafer).
- Encourage Mentees to start a professional network

## Stakeholder Engagement

### Community Partners

Dolphin DMD reaches out to a wide range of organizations in the host city to access those which will benefit from participating. These include businesses, post-secondary educational institutions, employment support organizations, government service agencies, social clubs, sector specific community groups, etc... Information about the event opportunity and the link to the mentee and mentor registration application are made available to Dolphin DMD partners in advance and are also available on the website <http://disabilitiesmentoringday.ca>

Organizations that refer applicants understand the benefits of embracing innovative strategies that support best practices in career development for persons with disabilities. Further, they recognize that engaging with Dolphin DMD to connect business with talent, they will create greater insight into local labour market opportunities, provide an opportunity to build new/stronger relationships with local employers and to learn more about how to best serve job seekers (mentees) through post event feedback from the DDMD participants.

### Community Coordinators

Taking proactive engagement equals an understanding of the unique needs of both the job seekers and the business in their community. By participating in Dolphin DMD, they anticipate the gaps/challenges in meeting the needs of both parties. Offering high quality service to all stakeholders they focus on connection and opportunity. Dolphin DMD community coordinators are the connector between businesses and sources of talented people, and





have a willingness to collaborate with sources beyond their own organization to maximize the opportunity for greatest impact and success. They work with the mentors and the mentees to create a valuable learning opportunity that meets the needs of both parties.

**Benefits:**

- Be recognized as a local connector between untapped talent and business
- Be the leader for collaboration with your community partners to promote inclusive workplaces
- Develop new business relationships to achieve successful outcomes
- Demonstrate your ability to meet employers needs
- Engage employers by offering a tangible and rewarding experience
- Offer an innovative approach to enhance existing employment support services for job seekers
- Celebrate the victories of a successful Mentee-Mentor match

**Required:**

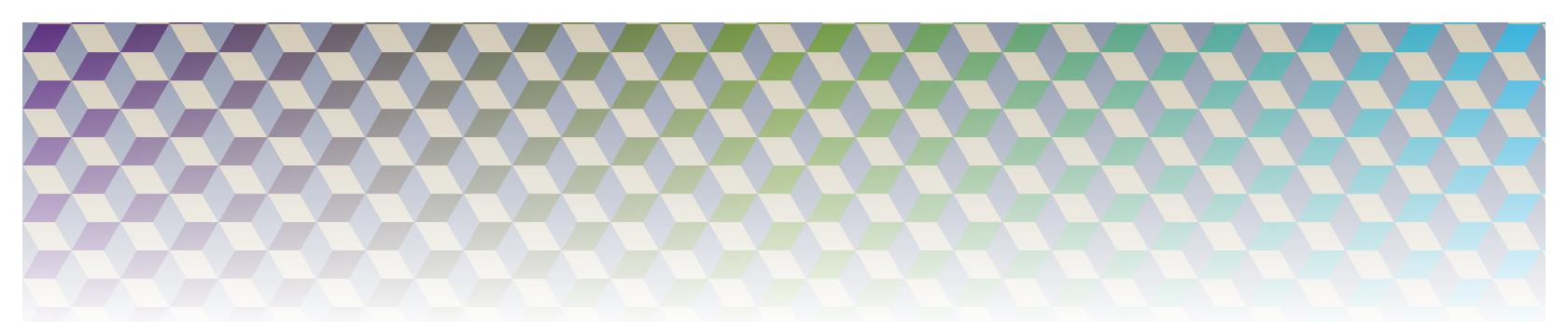
- A dedicated staff person who is a relationship builder, has experience with a variety of businesses, can invest the time and attention required to meet recommended time lines, and who can evaluate opportunities and identify appropriate talent to participate
- Relationships with partners who support or have access to job seekers (ie, post-secondary schools, Employment Supports organizations, employment organizations, private trainers, community groups, etc...)
- Relationships with local businesses and business support organizations (CFDCs, business enterprise centres, Chamber of Commerce, Workforce Planning Board, etc..)
- Understanding of the local employment market

### Business Partners

Businesses are facing a tightening labour market where demand from growth, retirements and a changing demographic is outpacing the talent supply. They are interested in learning about innovative recruitment practices that result in an economic advantage to gain an edge in a competitive market. The economic benefits of hiring persons with disabilities have been proven. (Conference Board of Canada, Feb. 2018) Reasonable investments in workplace access would allow over 550,000 Canadians with disabilities to participate more fully in the workforce, increasing GDP by \$16.8 billion by 2030. Dolphin DMD gives employers the advantage of access to a skilled and underutilized pool of talent. We can offer a strategy to enhance your HR recruitment practices, provide insight into your customer service processes and put you ahead of the competition in finding and hiring the right talent.

Business typically engages by first committing to participating and by identifying which employees will participate as mentors. They may consider a 'spokesperson' role, key areas of interest, or positions of high demand or which are





challenging to fill. They then will identify an existing employee(s) who wishes to act as a mentor for a day to share their expertise. Some businesses may also choose to engage further and host an employee engagement event that day, to talk about diversity & inclusion within their workplace and invite all their employees, not just participants. Some businesses invest as an Event Sponsor to gain greater recognition as a corporate leader for Diversity and Inclusion and to demonstrate their support of innovative strategies for staff training (in building disability confidence) and HR recruitment best practices. Sponsorship however, is not a requirement for participation.

A designated representative from Dolphin DMD will act as a liaison for the business to ensure all the necessary authorizations and procedures are communicated and appropriately attended to throughout the duration of engagement. They will also ensure that all efforts are made to promote Dolphin DMD's business partners (as appropriate to their level of commitment) ie. Inclusion in social media campaign, marketing, etc...

**Benefits:**

- Feature the talent in your business and your workplace culture
- Pre-screen potential candidates and refer them for hire
- Develop student co-operative placements with mentees in post-secondary programs
- Encourage mentees to tell their peer networks about your company
- Engage and develop relationship building skills with your current employees
- Strengthen your existing HR practices and learn how to evaluate how your practices translate into employment access for current and future employees.

**Required:**

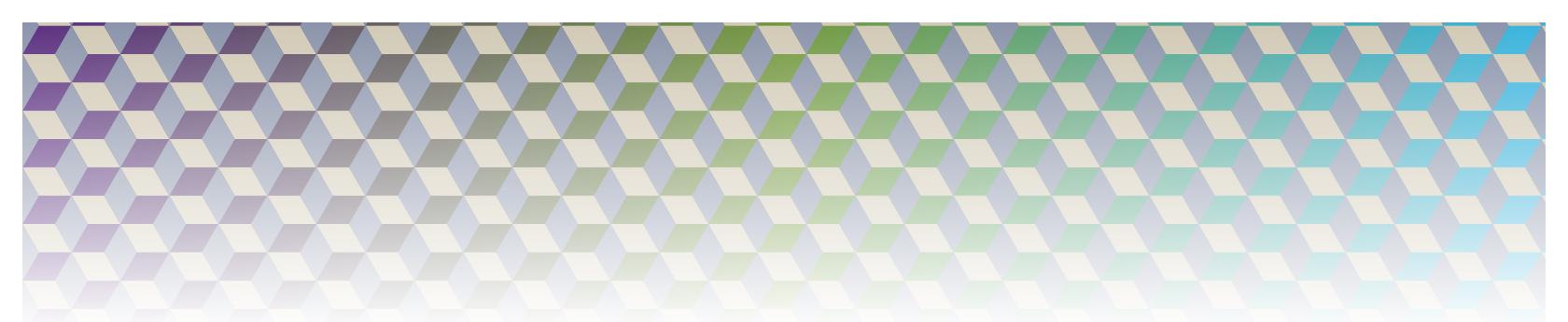
- One person to coordinate your mentor applicants (does not have to be HR) who is interested in engaging with colleagues to encourage participation, able to meet recommended time lines for event milestones,
- Employee(s) as ambassador(s) for your company: who share your values, know how the company works & who wants to share their career paths, expertise and is open to sharing information about their role.

## Mentor Qualifications

**Mentors must:**

- Be knowledgeable of their work area and specialization. This opportunity may not be a good fit for new employees who are still learning their job and the culture of the work place.
- Have interest in meeting someone new, telling their story, answering questions and supporting some of the mentee goals for the day.
- Be good communicators who can share specific aspects of the job, how processes work and important skills imperative for successful skills transfer or skills mobility.





Businesses are invited to participate in this unique opportunity which enables qualified individuals to experience the workplace and gain first hand insight from willing employee mentors. This is the opportunity to establish strategic partnerships, and gain access to a valuable talent pool. Prior to the actual prescheduled day of mentoring both mentee and mentor will be notified of who they have been selected to partner with and are invited to attend the group "Meet and Greet" scheduled in their city. The Meet & Greet event occurs approximately one week in advance of the actual mentoring day.

## Role of Employer/HR

- Market the event amongst your employees
- Identify employees who would be interested in being mentors for the program
- Direct the employee to complete registration prior to the deadline, or organize collection of data and send to event coordinator
- Prepare your employees for the day – schedule for the day (time of arrival and departure) schedule any interaction with HR/tour to learn about the company, facilitate internal discussions about what the mentors want to share, topics of discussion that could be prepared in advance, discussion of mentee accommodations, questions to ask mentee
- Attend the meet & greet session
- Undertake any further preparation that may be needed

## Benchmarks

**March 1 – June 30:** Employer engagement, confirmation to participate

**May 8 – September 6:** Mentors identified and registrations completed

**May 8 – September 27:** Mentees identified & registrations completed

**September 7 – October 11:** All matches made (communicating letters for matches, any site visits occur, accommodations discussed)

**October 15-23:** Meet and Greets in each event city

**October 30:** Dolphin Disabilities Mentoring Day

**October 31 – November 13:** Completion of post event survey

## Mentees

A mentee is job ready, proactive and motivated to gain real world experience and perspective of their desired vocation. These talented people are sourced from the local community, post-secondary education facilities, or are employment Ontario/community support clients. The mentee application is made available via on-line link provided by a referring agency (school or service provider) OR access the application on the Dolphin DMD website at



<http://disabilitiesmentoringday.ca> under the “register” tab, “Mentee application” option. Alternate formats are also available.

Once the mentee application is received, Dolphin DMD evaluates each applicant to determine their areas of talent and interest and whether they are job ready or are developing their skills to become job-ready through education and training.

Mentees most often learn about the event opportunity through Dolphin DMD’s comprehensive marketing campaign or referral from community partners who may be supporting the individual in their career development strategy. During the application process the mentee applicant will have the opportunity to specify any accommodations/supports they require to participate.

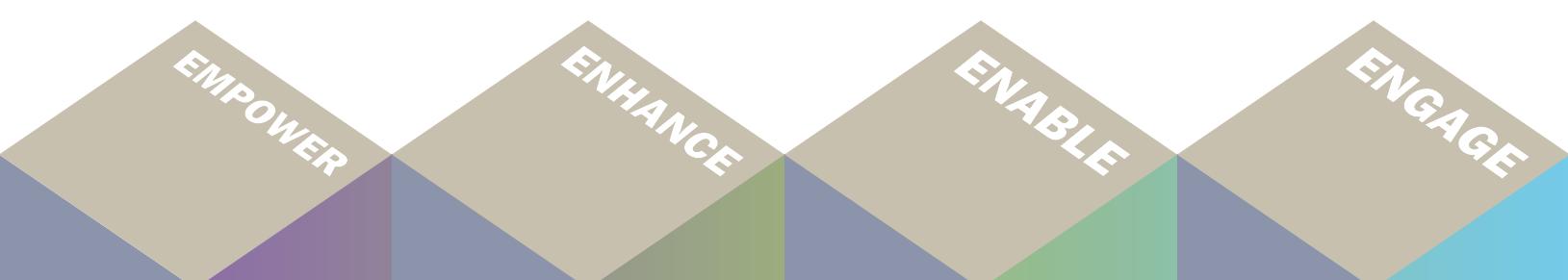
The Top 5 Goals of Mentors	The Top 5 Goals of Mentees
To introduce someone to my work world and its requirements (20.31%)	To learn about potential job opportunities (89.43%)
To help the company discover new talent and potential hires (17.62%)	To expand my professional network of contacts and meet new people (77.36%)
To provide some guidance to someone in my field (16.86%)	To help determine what jobs I qualify for (68.68%)
To introduce someone to an area that they may not have considered in their field of interest (16.09%)	To use my skills in a real world setting (64.15%)
To share my knowledge with someone (13.03%)	To demonstrate my skills (60.38%)

## The Process

### Matching

Dolphin DMD generates matches based on pertinent information provided on the application of both the mentee and mentor to ensure the experience is authentic and valuable to both parties. Using Dolphin Analytics, a match is conducted based on work environment, skills, experience, education, personal interests and participation, and career indicators. If an appropriate match is not possible, a match will not be made. It is critical to the success of the experience that matches be mutually beneficial. If an appropriate match is not possible the mentee/mentor applicant will be notified in advance.

Prior to the actual prescheduled day of mentoring both mentee and mentor will be notified of who they have been selected to partner with and are invited to attend the group “Meet and Greet” scheduled in their city. The Meet & Greet event occurs approximately one week in advance of the actual mentoring day.



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## **Meet and Greet**

Attendance at the Meet and Greet is an expectation of participation in Dolphin DMD. Both the mentee and mentor have an opportunity to meet and become acquainted, clarify instructions for the day of mentoring (ie., business attire, start time, procedures,) and to learn more about expectations for the day. Should they wish to do so, unmatched mentors are welcome to attend the Meet and Greet to learn more about the mentoring day and to support their colleagues.

## **The Mentoring Day**

On the actual mentoring day, the mentee will meet with his/her mentor at the mentor's place of work. They will spend the day together discussing and experiencing the competencies and responsibilities of the mentor's job, as well as things like their career path. The mentor may introduce their mentee to colleagues in related departments if it is relevant to the responsibilities of the role and to gaining a better understanding of the host organization and industry demands. Introducing the mentee to key staff in HR and department managers is often appreciated. This really is an opportunity for the mentor to share their insights and expertise to help guide the mentee in their career development strategy.

The Dolphin DMD representative may stop in for a site visit on the day of mentoring to see how the experience is progressing and take pictures for promotion/social media (when appropriate and authorized).

## **Post Event Evaluation**

Immediately following the mentoring day, both the mentees and mentors will be given opportunity to complete a post event survey to provide feedback about their experience. This feedback and input is valuable and helps determine best practices, generate relevant data and evaluates the success of the event in each location. This information is then utilized for continuous improvement of Dolphin DMD's processes and priorities. The data is also utilized to compile labour market analysis and is incorporated in the final report, distributed to each Community Coordinator and Employer Partner.

## **The Value Proposition**

Dolphin DMD's unique positioning and approach allows for a growing range of access and insight into the needs and opportunities present in local labour markets in relation to both demand for talent and access to talent. This insider perspective allows for the capture and aggregation of valuable data/key indicators (from the application to post event evaluation) that can then be translated into relevant labour market info such as;



- Pathways to employment and career advancement of mentees and mentors
- Impact of mentoring in the workplace on staff training and HR practices (policy)
- Sector specific labour market opportunities in each participating community
- Key competencies including soft skill requirements of roles held by mentors and competencies/skills desired by employers
- Demand for innovative career development strategies and key indicators / barriers to the workforce for mentees
- Demographic data of both mentors and mentees participants (age, gender identity, location, level of education, status, etc...)

All stakeholders engage in the event with different expectations and can anticipate valuable benefits that support their objectives.

## Communication/Social Media

At Dolphin DMD, we seek to be consistent in how we deliver events in all communities and in our messaging. We also want you to communicate in the language that is most in keeping with your environment and core messaging, whether that is a business environment or the larger community. Please keep some of the following in mind as you undertake traditional and social media communications.

### 1. Referring to Your Community Event

We want the brand of Dolphin Disabilities Mentoring Day to be consistent and to create an awareness that the event takes place in many communities each year. When referring to the event you are participating in, please refer to it as Dolphin Disabilities Mentoring Day - Your city name ie. "Dolphin Disabilities Mentoring Day-Ottawa, or Dolphin DMD-Ottawa"

### 2. Typeface

It is important that all communications are easy to read. If you are sharing information with others or developing notices for your workplace, please use fonts that are sans serif, such as Calibri, Myriad Pro or Arial, as these fonts are easier to read and see. Information should be in at least a 12-point font. Important information should be bolded rather than italicized to improve readability and to make the document more accessible.

### 3. Photographs

We encourage everyone to take photographs. Please ensure that the people in the photo agree to having their photo taken by signing the provided consent form available at the Meet and Greet. Images should depict the work place and the interaction of Mentees and Mentors, or as the Mentee engages in an aspect of the job.



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#### 4. Social Media

Social Media is a great tool for celebrating the connections being made and the opportunities happening. You can use local handles and hashtags for your community. We also encourage you to engage in the conversation by using the following social media handles and hashtags:

	@DolphinDMD	#DMD2019	#Empower
	Disabilities Mentoring Day	#talent	#EngageTalent
	Dolphin's Disabilities Mentoring Day	#mentor	#EnhanceTalent
		#ActionPotential	#InvestInTalent
		#Inclusion	#a11y (accessibility)

If you have any questions regarding social media, please connect with Emily Burton, Events and Social Media, at [emilyjburton@outlook.com](mailto:emilyjburton@outlook.com). Please contact the National Office for authorized copies of the Dolphin DMD logo.



## Summary

Dolphin DMD facilitates employer access to an underutilized talent pool. The rising costs of attracting and keeping employees is crucial when it comes to business growth. DMD ensures that mentees are job ready with experience, skills and knowledge relevant to the mentors and their workplaces.

Since 2011, Dolphin DMD has collected data to ensure we deliver a quality event, as well as meet our objectives. As there are few sources of data pertaining to persons with disabilities and employment, we have now begun to aggregate and analyze data for greater consideration. Our data may lead to new opportunity as evidence based decision making is the future; unbiased algorithms and AI development requires diverse talent resources to succeed.

An added benefit of collecting data is capturing the career path of our mentors, (education, previous positions and duration, and top 3 skills) to identify opportunity for talent mobility in our mentees. It is one of the methods we use for matching, but it is also hugely beneficial to have this information for professional development and talent acquisition considerations. We will begin to structure this data to do predictive analytics for skills/job function, to promote neurodiversity, performance prediction and problem-solving ability. All are key components to innovative thinking; critical attributes for the future of work.



Join us in 2019! **OPTIMIZE YOUR TALENT: ACTION POTENTIAL**

