http://www.peatworks.org/talentworks

Welcome to *TalentWorks*, the online resource that helps employers and human resources (HR) professionals make their eRecruiting technologies accessible to all job seekers—including those with disabilities.

Are your company's virtual doors open to everyone? They may not be. According to a 2015 survey of people with disabilities conducted by PEAT, 46 percent of respondents rated their last experience applying for a job online as "difficult to impossible." And that matters, because if your technology is limiting your pool of applicants, you could be missing out on top talent.

With most of today's employers using some form of web-based recruiting to evaluate and hire job applicants, it's more important than ever to understand why accessibility matters to eRecruiting, and how to ensure your talent acquisition tools are accessible. *TalentWorks* is designed to help you do just that.

Developed by PEAT, the following web pages synthesize ideas and solutions gathered from employers, advocacy organizations, job applicants, and technology providers. We've distilled those resources into what will be a continuously evolving online guide, all with the aim of helping employers improve the accessibility of the technology they use throughout the entire employment lifecycle.

What exactly is meant by the term "accessibility?" How is it defined in a technology context?

"Accessible technology" is technology that can be used successfully by people with a wide range of functional abilities. When technology is accessible, each user is able to interact with it in ways that work best for him or her. For example, when using a desktop computer, there are multiple ways to input information—via a mouse, the keyboard, or through a speech recognition system to name a few. If the operating system on the computer is accessible, it will work with any of them.

Accessible technology is either directly accessible, meaning it is usable without any additional devices, or it is accessible through and compatible with "assistive" technology ([AT](#)). For example, a smartphone with a built-in screen reader is directly accessible; an online job application that can be navigated effectively by someone with a visual impairment using a screen reader program such as JAWS is AT-compatible. Watch [this featured PEAT video](#) to explore this topic more.

Accessibility is all about the user interface; it gives job applicants and employees a built-in, cost-effective, and equitable way to control and use the technology. Accessibility often falls into the same category as usability, in that both seek to improve the user experience and effectiveness of the technology. *Usability* covers the user experience broadly, while accessibility addresses the specific needs of users with functional differences or limitations.

But in terms of actual product features, they often overlap. For example, a feature like volume control benefits everyone, as does the ability to zoom the display on a small mobile device. This overlap is often referred to as "[universal design](#)," which means the design of products so they can be used by the widest range of people possible. Watch [this featured PEAT video](#) to learn more about how universal design can make all employees more productive.

What can make an eRecruiting tool inaccessible?

[Common accessibility issues with online applications](#) include the following:

- Complex web navigation that is not intuitive
- Timeout restrictions that cause an application to close before the user can save or complete it
- Lack of video captioning
- Lack of alternative text, which can make images hard to recognize
- Poor screen/color contrast
- Inaccessible form fields and mouse-only input options

For more information… http://www.peatworks.org/talentworks/erecruiting-accessibility