

HCAA Employment Research Results

BY CARRIE JOHNSON

Americans with hearing loss often actively search for work but are less likely to be employed. While the challenges of looking for a job, securing a position and building a career apply to everyone; hearing loss can add additional barriers and challenges. HCAA wants to increase the number of employment opportunities for people with hearing loss as well as improve communication access in the workplace. Therefore, HCAA founded an Employment Task Force to spearhead change. The mission of this task force is to provide insight into business challenges, benefits, and solutions for employing people with hearing loss and is composed comprised of people representing diverse roles in the community. To initiate this process, and better understand the needs and perceived priorities of people with hearing loss, the task force helped HCAA create an Employment Survey, which was conducted in the fall of 2021. By better understanding the issues people with hearing loss face while searching for employment and/or in the workplace, HCAA can offer relevant help and support.

We are pleased to share the results in *Hearing Life* magazine. A big thank you to those who completed this survey and to members of HCAA's staff and the Employment Task Force for spearheading this effort. The Employment Research results will also be shared online at hearingloss.org/hearing-help/communities/employees/.

Below is a quick snapshot of the 581 surveys we received.

- 239 are employed full-time
- 61 work part-time
- 48 are self-employed
- 62 are unemployed and seeking work
- 22 are unemployed and not currently seeking work
- 13 are students
- 164 are retired

We also gained insight into which types of resources are most helpful and which employment related topics respondents would like to learn more about. In brief, respondents indicated that the following resources are (would be) extremely or very helpful: (1) advocacy at the policy level for hearing friendly workplaces (67.6%), (2) website resources (65.2%), (3) employer education on hearing loss and accommodation (62.7%), (4) *Hearing Life* magazine articles (54.0%), and (5) virtual/online webinars (49.1%). Typically, respondents are extremely or very interested in learning more about: (1) requesting/

negotiating accommodation (53.6%), (2) DHH friendly workplace policies and practices (51.5%), (3) using workplace technology (50.7%), (4) employment law (50.0%), and (5) common workplace accommodations (49.5%). HCAA has already begun providing additional information about these topics using different approaches to meet the needs of people with hearing loss.

To learn more and get involved, please visit HCAA's Employees web page: hearingloss.org/hearing-help/communities/employees/. **HL**

Carrie Johnson is the senior communications manager and Editor-in-Chief at the Hearing Loss Association of America. Email Carrie at cjohnson@hearingloss.org.

HCAA Employment Task Force Members

Kelly Tremblay, Ph.D., FAAA, CEC, HCAA Employment Task Force Chair, neuroscientist/consultant/advocate, clinical audiologist and professor

Marilyn DiGiacobbe, HCAA director of development, HCAA staff liaison to the task force

David Baldrige, Ph.D., MBA, professor of management, Oregon State University

Carmen Bruce, vice president, diversity recruiting adviser, PNC Bank

Shari Eberts, member, HCAA board of directors, founder, LivingWithHearingLoss.com, co-author, *Hear & Beyond: Live Skillfully with Hearing Loss*, executive producer, *We Hear You, Now Hear Us*

Zina Jawadi, member, HCAA board of directors, M.D. candidate, University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), B.S. and M.S. in Bioengineering, Stanford University

Cheri Perazzoli, assistant treasurer, member, HCAA board of directors, founder, Let's Loop Seattle, president, HCAA-Washington State Association

Theodore Shomsky, business systems analyst, PNC Bank
Lisa Yuan, press officer/public health analyst, National Institutes of Health

Lisa Yuan, press officer / public health analyst, National Institutes of Health

Are you interested in joining the HCAA Employment Task Force? Email Dr. Kelly Tremblay at drkellytremblay@gmail.com.

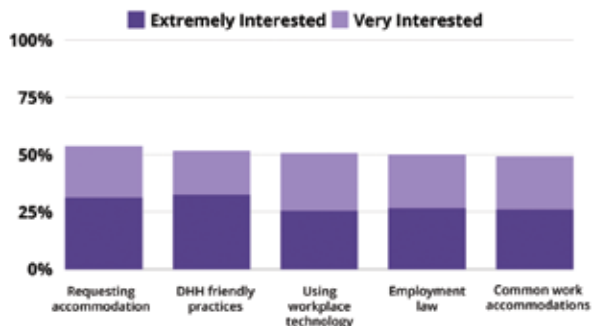
Do you (or have you) experience(d) challenges in the workplace related to your hearing loss?



What is your experience with communication tools in the workplace?



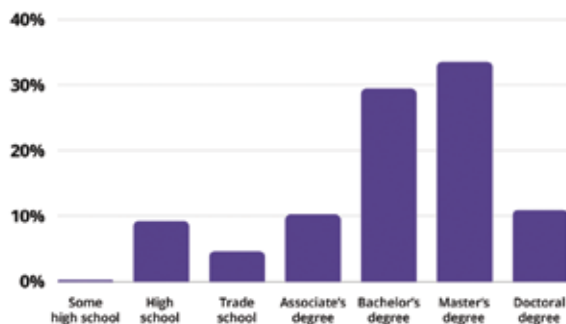
How interested are you in learning more about these employment related topics?



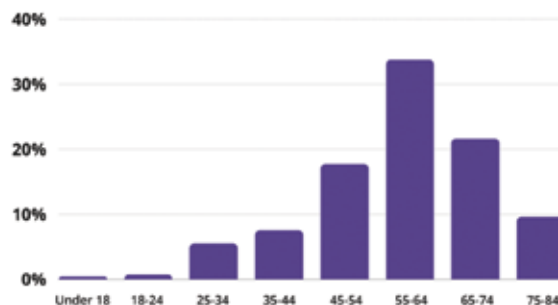
What resources and initiatives would you find helpful?



What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed?



What is your age?



Thanks to Tim Browning, HLAA Digital Communications and Web Specialist, for all his work creating the survey, these graphs and for his support of HLAA's Employment Research.