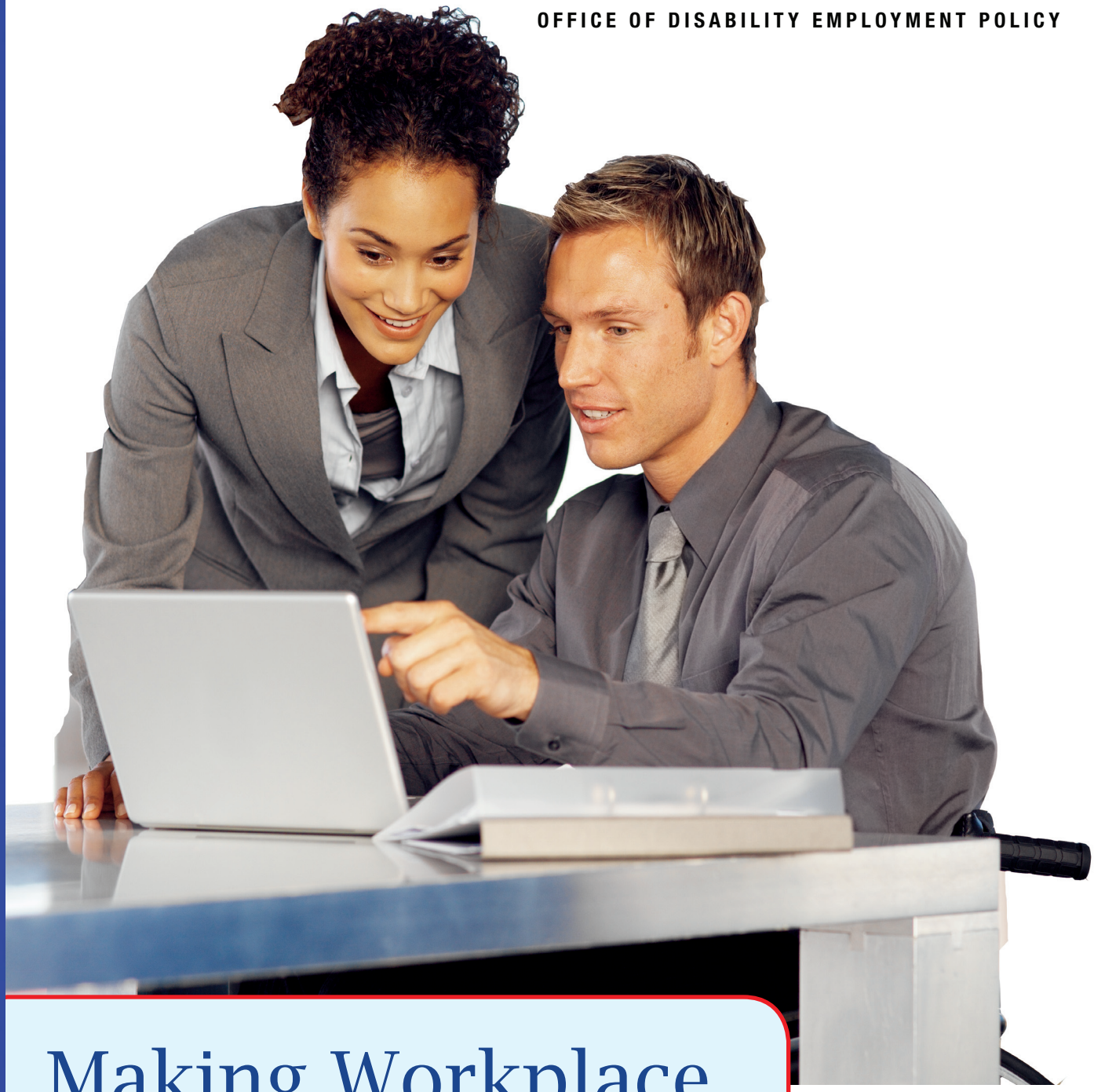

Making Workplace Accommodations:

Reasonable Costs, Big Benefits

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN), a service of the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy, facilitates the employment and retention of workers with disabilities by providing employers, people with disabilities, and other interested parties with information on job accommodations, self-employment, small business opportunities, and other related subjects. JAN represents the most comprehensive resource for job accommodations available.

As part of its recent customer service interviews, JAN conducted an examination of the costs of providing accommodations to persons with disabilities—and the benefits that those accommodations offer employers. Based on its interviews with 1,182 employers from a range of industries, JAN reported some interesting results:

- **Accommodations as a retention tool.** Results indicated that employers want to provide accommodations so they can retain valued employees. Of the employers who called JAN for information about accommodations, 80% were doing so to retain or promote a current employee.

- **Low cost or no cost accommodations.** Nearly half of the employers interviewed (46%) reported that the accommodations they implemented cost absolutely nothing. Similarly, 45% experienced a one-time cost. The median one-time expenditure for employers was only $500.

- **Accommodations are effective.** Employers who implemented accommodations were asked to indicate their effectiveness on a scale of one to five, with five indicating "extremely effective." Seventy-five percent of the respondents reported that the accommodations they implemented were either "very effective" or "extremely effective."

- **Direct and indirect benefits.** During the interviews, the most frequently mentioned direct benefits of making accommodations were:
  - Retaining a valued employee (86%);
  - Increasing the employee's productivity (71%); and
  - Eliminating the costs associated with training a new employee (56%).

The most widely reported indirect benefits were:
- Improving colleague interaction (67%);
- Increasing overall company morale (58%); and
- Increasing overall company productivity (56%).

Clearly, employers find that the benefits of making accommodations in the workplace far outweigh the costs. For little or no cost, employers can meet the needs of people with disabilities while enjoying benefits that extend to coworkers and to the company as a whole.

ODEP
Office of Disability Employment Policy

JAN
Job Accommodation Network

Job Accommodation Network (JAN)
To answer your questions about accommodations, or the ADA:
call 800-526-7234 (Voice) / 877-781-9403 (TTY) or visit
www.jan.wvu.edu

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