

# The Current State of Small Business Accessibility in BC

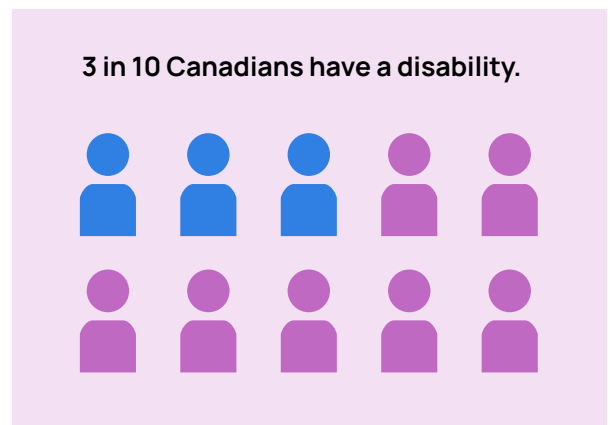
## WHAT IS ACCESSIBILITY IN THE WORKPLACE?

Statistics Canada, 2022

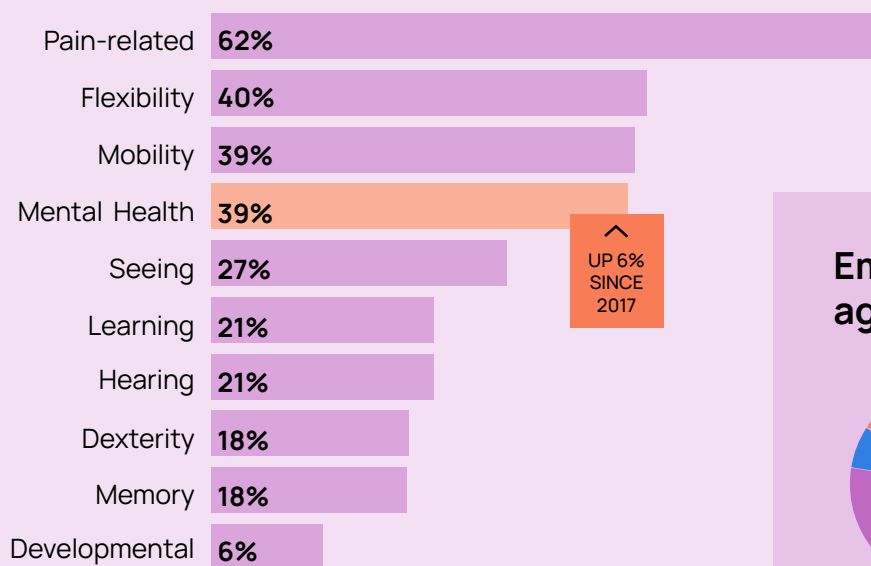
Accessibility in the workplace means efforts have been made to remove barriers in workspaces, employment practices, and workplace culture.

Barriers are anything in an environment that limits functioning and creates obstacles. For example, negative attitudes toward disability and a lack of assistive technology are both barriers.

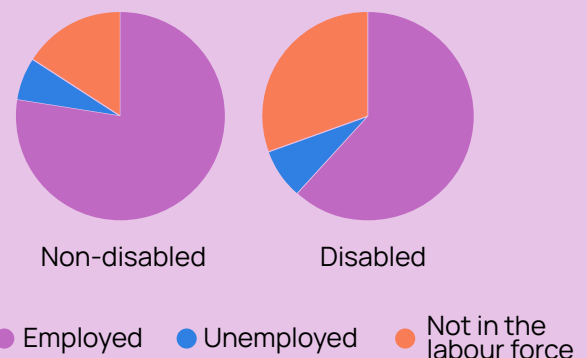
By removing and preventing barriers, employers can create an inclusive workplace accommodating employees and candidates of all abilities.



## Disability Types Among People Aged 15+



## Employment status for ages 25 to 64 years



## ABOUT THE ACCESSIBILITY RESEARCH

*Lux Insights, 2023*

Part of our research included a 10-minute online survey. It was open to select key decision-makers (either owners or senior leaders) in small businesses based in BC.

Overall, the results showed that respondents were aware of and supportive of accessibility in the workplace.

But more work must be done to create a more equitable workplace.

### Our research set out to gauge the following amongst small businesses:



**Awareness of accessibility issues**

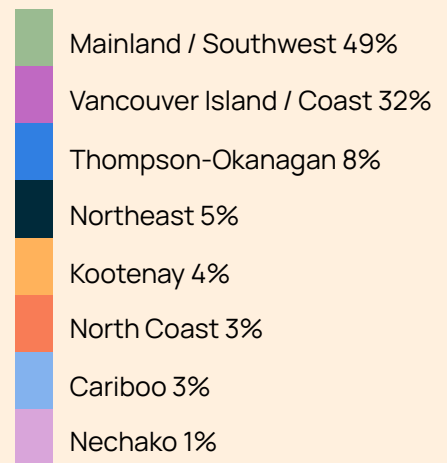
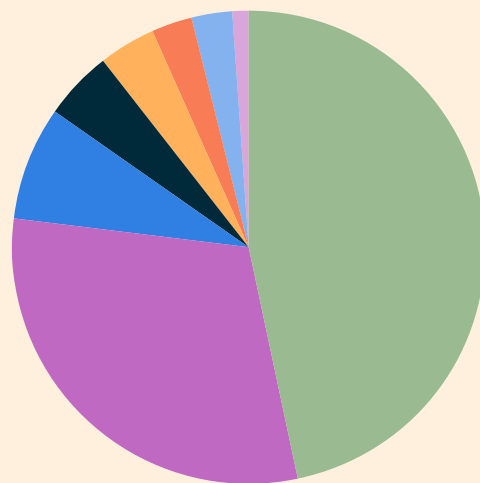


**Comfort level with accessibility**



**Attitudes toward key accessibility issues**

### Location of Research Participants in BC



## START WITH OPTIMISM AND CONSIDER THE BENEFITS

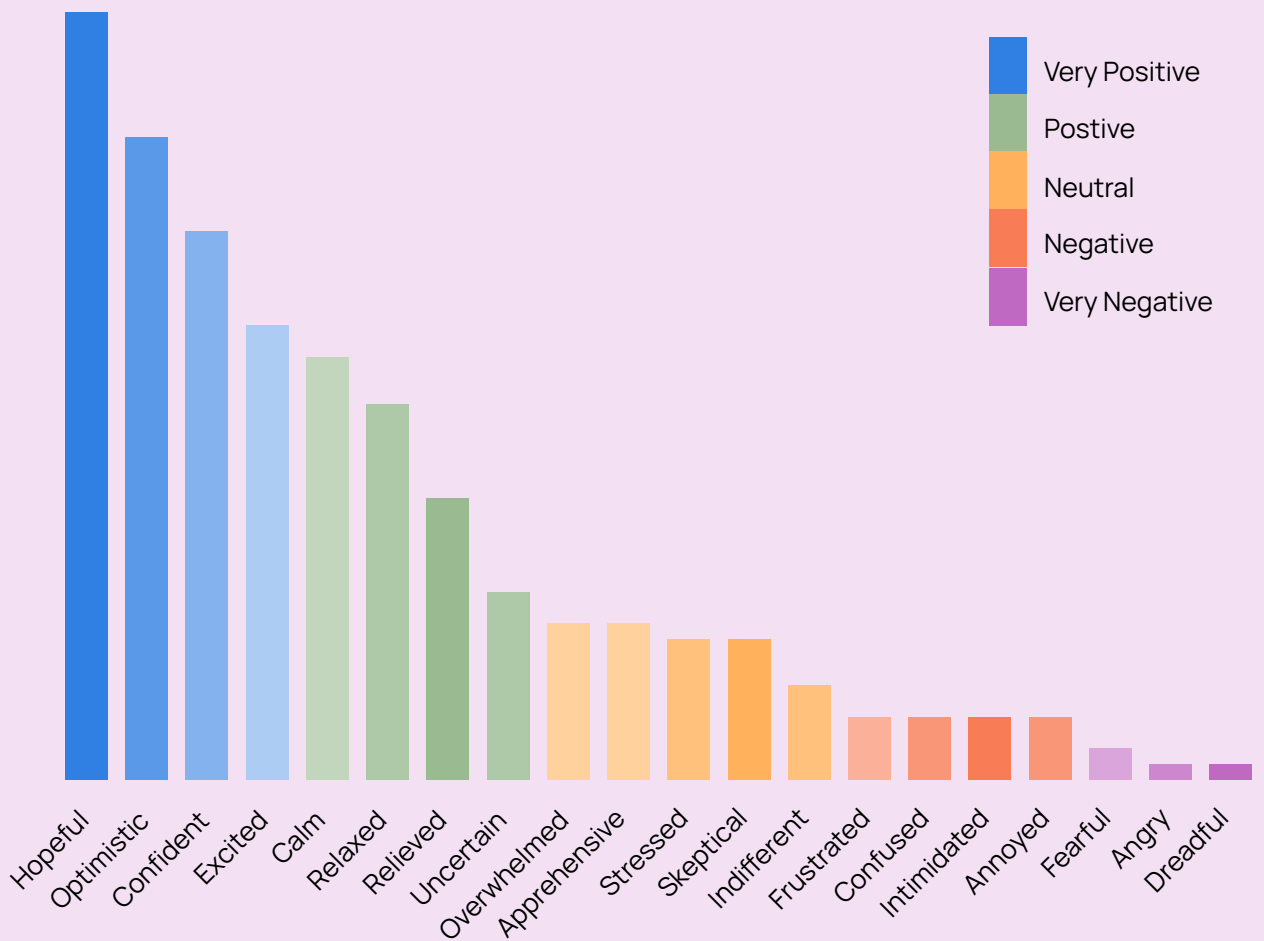
*Lux Insights, 2023*

Your feelings and attitudes toward creating a more accessible workplace matter. Start from a place of hope and optimism to help ensure your success.

According to our research, business owners who felt positively about imagining a more accessible workplace were more likely to place greater importance on accessibility.

**48%** of research participants were curious about how better accessibility leads to improved job performance and satisfaction.

### Emotions Tied to More Accessible Workplaces



## PRIORITIZING ACCESSIBILITY

*Lux Insights, 2023*

Workplace accessibility was low on the list of priorities. This is mainly because participants were not aware of the positive impacts of accessibility on their business.

The more questions researchers asked, the more participants pieced together how accessibility can help them reach their goals.

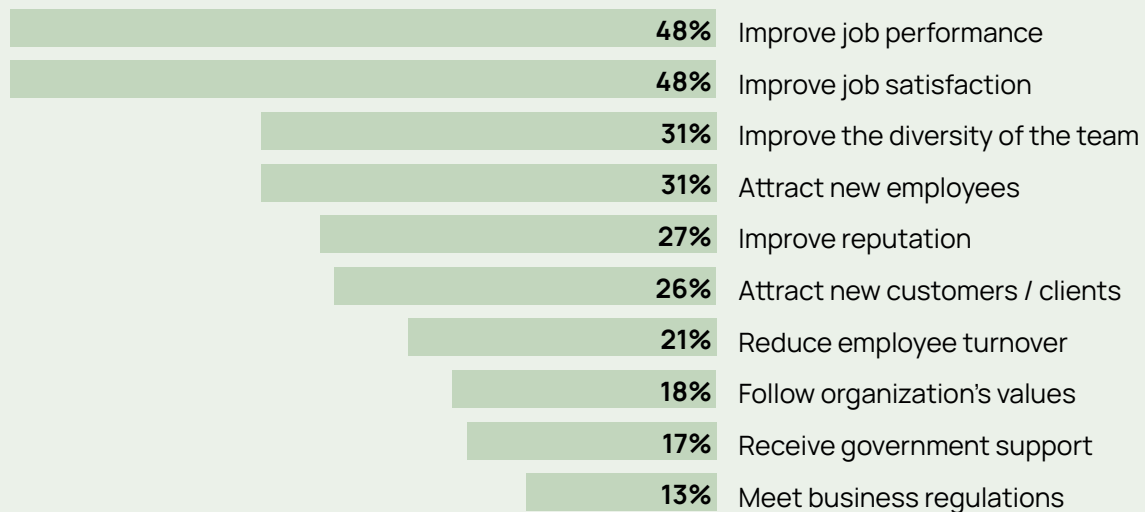
For example, respondents began to see how, by having an accessible workplace, they could attract a broader talent pool, reduce employee turnover, increase employee satisfaction and performance, and help staff feel safe and empowered.

**Takeaways:** Small business owners can make the connection between workplace accessibility and a positive impact on their business by engaging in conversations and questions about disability, accessibility, and inclusion.

**“My employees feel better able to do their job with ease, I encounter less workplace related issues due to lack of accessibility, and everything runs more smoothly.”**

Vancouver Island / Coast, 2-5 employees

### Benefits of More Accessible Workplaces for Small Business Owners



## SUPPORTING LIMITATIONS

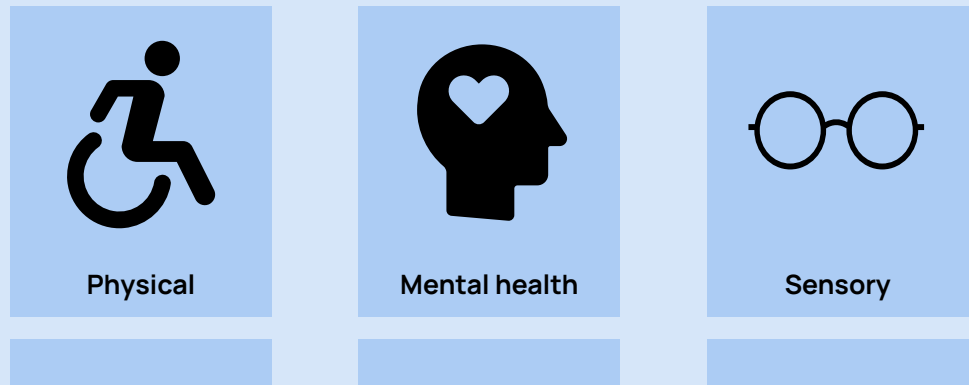
*Lux Insights, 2023*

Disability is the result of the interaction between a person's functional limitations and barriers in the environment.

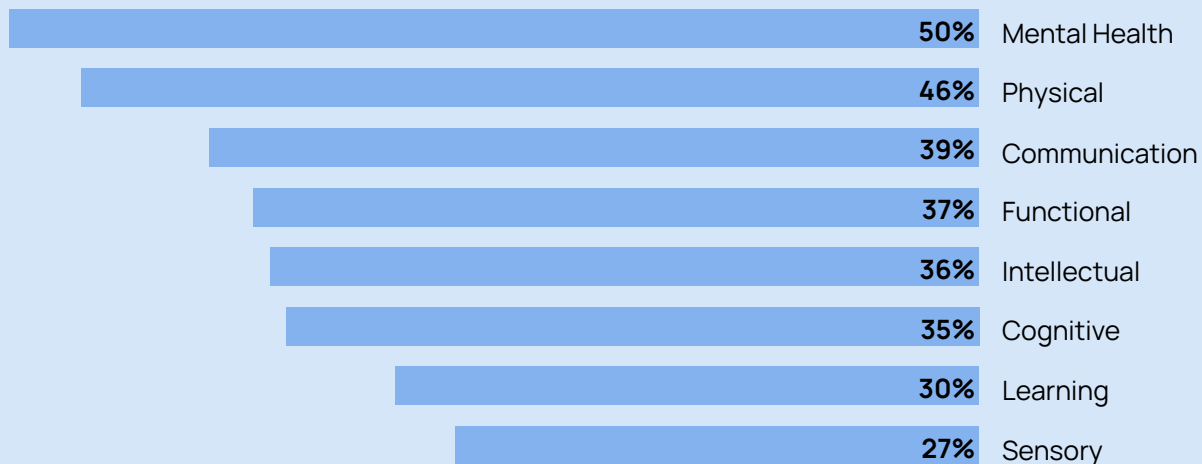
Limitations can be a result of physical or mental impairments that lead to lower levels of participation in the workplace.

In our research, interview respondents said they were willing to accommodate limitations to the extent that they do not compromise the capacity to perform work.

### Three Limitations Stood Out for Respondents:



### Most Important Limitations to Support



## CHALLENGING BARRIERS

*Lux Insights, 2023*

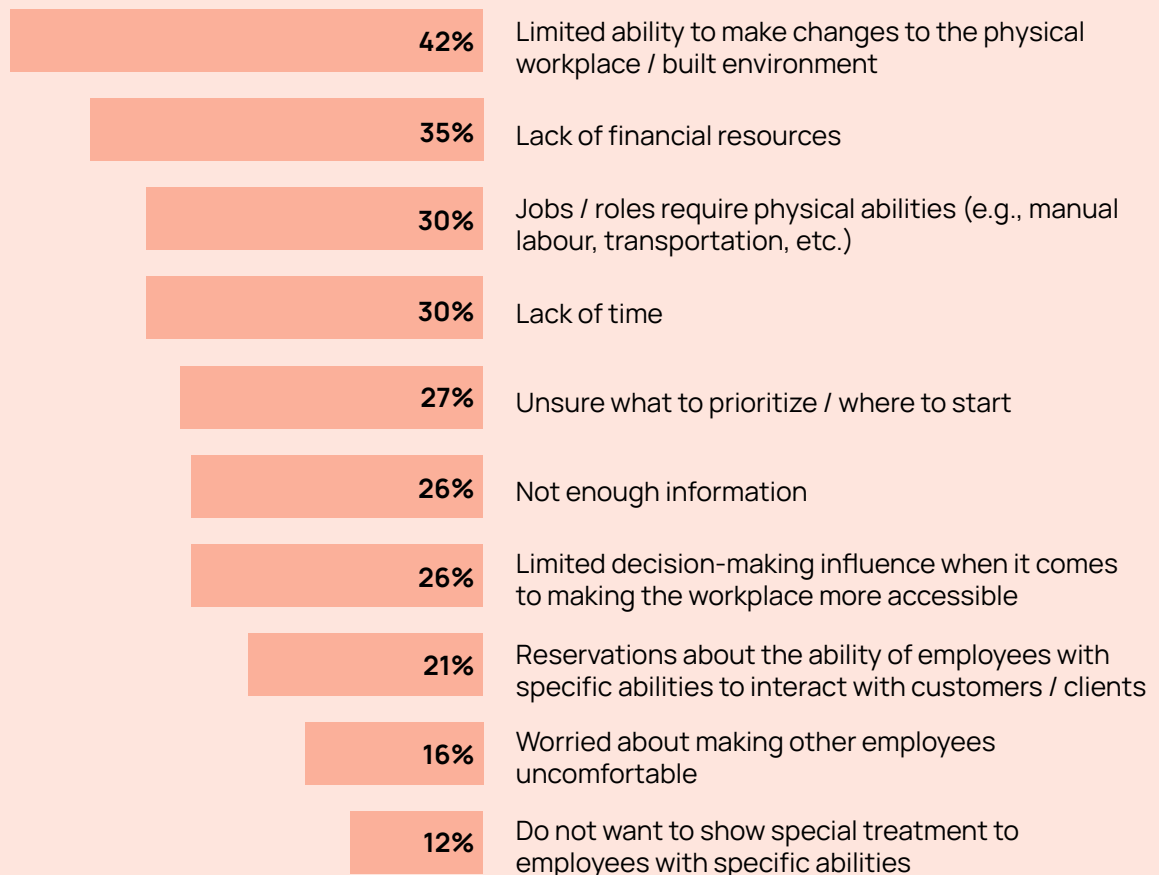
According to our research, respondents find it difficult to prioritize accessibility due to their limited ability to change the physical workplace and built environment.

Respondents cited limited financial resources, jobs requiring physical abilities, and lack of time as perceived barriers to accessibility. “Not knowing where to start” was a concern of participants. They did not know where to find available resources on accessibility topics.

**“The biggest barrier is deciding where to start. There are so many areas to consider. It can be overwhelming. I think it’s a matter of picking one and moving forward with it which is hard.”**

Mainland /Southwest, 10-49 Employees

### Barriers to Making Workplaces More Accessible

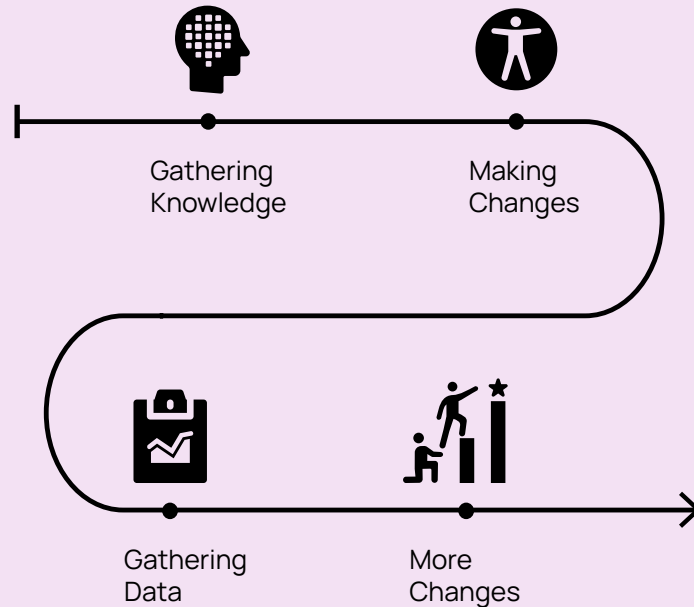


## CONTINUING THE ACCESSIBILITY JOURNEY

Start by improving your understanding of disability to increase your disability confidence. Then, work to find ways to remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities. Remember, we're in this together!

You can learn more about the ABC (Accessible BC) Act and see how organizations are increasing their disability confidence today.

Accessibility isn't a destination—it's a journey.



### CONTINUE YOUR ACCESSIBILITY JOURNEY WITH SBBC

Small Business BC is a non-profit resource centre for BC-based small businesses. [www.smallbusinessbc.ca/accessibility-business-resources](http://www.smallbusinessbc.ca/accessibility-business-resources) is full of tips, tools, and more to support your next stage.



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