

LEADS Framework for Disability Inclusion

A Bottom-Up, Employee-Centered Assessment Framework

25 items · 5 domains · 10 context questions · Grounded in Canadian and U.S. disability law

WHAT IS LEADS

LEADS is an open-access, bottom-up, employee-centered disability inclusion assessment framework. It is designed to be answered by all employees regardless of disability status, and administered by employees, Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), and inclusion leaders.

LEADS is designed to supplement existing tools by giving a voice to employees with disabilities. It does not seek to replace any existing framework or assessment.

WHY LEADS

Existing corporate disability inclusion assessments primarily rely on organizations and company leadership to evaluate their own policies, practices, and accommodations. They do not directly ask employees with disabilities about their lived experience with disability inclusion during day-to-day work.

Research consistently shows that this top-down approach overstates disability inclusion outcomes relative to the actual experiences of employees with disabilities.

The only reliable signal is the lived experience of the employees themselves.

FIVE DOMAINS

L Leadership Support

Does my manager actively support my workplace accommodation needs?

5 items · 5-pt Likert

E Equity in Opportunity

Do I have equal access to career development, promotion, and recognition?

5 items · 5-pt Likert

A Accommodation Adequacy

Are my accommodation needs met in an effective, timely, and dignified way?

5 items · 5-pt Likert

D Disclosure and Dignity

Do I feel safe disclosing my disability without fear of discrimination or privacy concerns?

5 items · 5-pt Likert

S Systemic and Cultural Inclusion

Does the culture of my organization actively support disability inclusion?

5 items · 5-pt Likert

RESPONSE SCORING RUBRIC

RATING	AVERAGE SCORE
Exemplary	4.5 – 5.0
Adequate	3.5 – 4.4
Needs Improvement	2.5 – 3.4
Critical	1.0 – 2.4

WHO SHOULD USE THIS

LEADS is designed to be openly available for use and implementation by employees, disability ERGs, and inclusion leaders within Canadian and U.S. organizations — at no cost and with no external party or consultant required. The framework can also be adapted for organizations outside Canada and the U.S.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT LEADS

01 Get the Survey Template

Use the ready-to-use 35-question Microsoft Forms template. Review and adapt items as needed while preserving the core five-domain structure.

• [Survey Template](#) → [leadsframework.org](#)

02 Configure and Distribute

Set up on an enterprise platform with a Data Processing Agreement (e.g., Microsoft 365 for Business or Google Workspace). Distribute an anonymous link to all employees.

• [Survey Template](#) → [forms.cloud.microsoft](#)

03 Score and Analyze

Calculate the average Likert score for each item across everyone who answered. Use the free online Score Calculator to compute domain averages and a full LEADS report automatically.

• [Score Calculator](#) → [leadsframework.org/calculator](#)

04 Report and Act

Prepare a report with domain results, low-scoring items, key findings, and recommended actions. Present to senior leadership with a 90-day action plan and KPIs. Consider sharing your findings in the post-deployment feedback form.

• [Feedback Form](#) → [forms.cloud.microsoft](#)

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Employee-Centered

LEADS items are answered by employees, not organizations or leadership teams.

Supplementary by Design

Intended to be used alongside existing assessments, not as a replacement.

Universal Participation

All employees respond regardless of disability status, enabling comparison across groups.

Adaptable

Items and language can be adapted for your organization while preserving the core five-domain structure.