

# ECONOMIC (IN)JUSTICE

## FACTSHEET - STORY

Name	Jane Hatton
Details, area of experience	CEO and founder of Evenbreak
Interview date	December 2020
Issues addressed	Employment discrimination against disabled people
Injustice category (linked to economic injustice)	ability <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> age <input type="checkbox"/> class <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> faith <input type="checkbox"/> gender <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> neuro-diversity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> race <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> sexuality <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Dates mentioned	2011
Locations referenced	None
Campaigns, movements, protests	Set up Evenbreak, a job board for disabled candidates
Historical context	Long standing structural and direct discrimination in employment affecting disabled people
Tactics	<b>Writing letter</b> directly to CEOs. <b>Using support from some companies to encourage others</b> , employing only disabled people.
Key words	Accessibility Employment discrimination Intersectionality Disability pay gap Lived experience

Key points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Many who claim to be ‘equal opportunity employers’ are not in fact so</li> <li>● Disabled people can be just as productive as non-disabled and can bring additional experience and talents</li> <li>● To overcome barriers you have to be creative and innovative</li> <li>● Once a company picked up the idea and it worked, others started to reach out</li> <li>● Everyone is on their own journey even if it means not doing what is common and what other people of your age are doing</li> <li>● The disability pay gap and the need to pay the living wage – for disabled people costs can be much more</li> <li>● Movements/drive for change need to be led by people with lived experience of barriers faced</li> <li>● Having allies is important; work with a wide range of sectors</li> <li>● Having a society where everyone contributes and is rewarded fairly, talents and skills valued equally</li> <li>● Economic justice is about recognising the talents that people have; skills, abilities, quality of a job rewarded accordingly; all citizens able to afford things that are necessary to survive</li> <li>● Intersectionality: paid the same for the same work irrespective of gender, disabilities, sexual orientation etc.</li> </ul>
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Story summary	<p>Jane Hatton, tells the story of setting up Evenbreak – a UK job board connecting employers and disabled candidates. Finding discriminatory attitudes that affected disabled applicants getting jobs and becoming disabled herself, Jane was motivated to challenge employment practices. Evenbreak is a living wage employer and social business which has over 600 employers and 50,000 disabled candidates registered on the site.</p> <hr/> <p>As a diversity consultant, Jane had come across discriminatory attitudes by employers affecting disabled applicants. All said they were equal opportunities employer but most weren't. Some would say “Why would I employ them?” while others would say they recognised the problem but had no idea how to address it. Jane knew that disabled people can be just as productive as non-disabled people: indeed, their skills in overcoming barriers, creative problem solving and determination can give them additional talents. However, disabled people often are not in a position to network or build relationships to the extent that the non-disabled can.</p>
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	<p>Then Jane became disabled herself [with a degenerative spinal condition causing her to live with chronic pain]. She decided that as nothing was being done, perhaps she should. Working while severely disabled in 2011, in her bedroom lying down with her laptop suspended above her, she set up a job board for disabled candidates. To succeed, the scheme needed to have a bank of employers with jobs and candidates looking, but each would need to know the other existed before engaging. For the first six months it therefore seemed the idea might not work.</p> <p>The tipping point came when Jane wrote to the CEOs of large companies and there was a keen, positive response from Network Rail. This brought in income and encouraged other organisations – John Lewis were next to come on board. By the second year Jane could pay herself a small salary and her first employee was a 16-year-old man with ME and no qualifications or work experience who had been told to prepare for a life on benefits. “He is the ill-est person I know but has never taken a day off sick, nor made a mistake to my knowledge.”</p> <p>Evenbreak is a living wage employer and a social business that only employs disabled people. This means candidates have confidence and there is credibility with employers. Change should always be led by people with lived experience. There is now a growing staff, currently 14 people. Over 9 years they have worked with over 600 employers and have had over 50,000 candidates registered on the site. There is still a 20% disability pay gap, with intersectionality making that discrimination more acute for disabled people who are Black, gay or female.</p>
Stand-out quotations	<p>“Our vision is for the world of work to be equally accessible to disabled and non-disabled people. All work opportunities accessible to all.”</p> <p>“There is usually not just an employment gap but also a pay gap. ... You don’t go to a supermarket and they charge you less for your food because you’re disabled. ... In fact, on average, disabled people’s outgoings are £500 a month more than non-disabled people.”</p> <p>“Having credible employers who really believed in what we did and discovered quite early on that they did get good value.”</p> <p>“Our first candidate ... got to the point of feeling there wasn’t a point to her. [Getting a job] changed her life and view of herself. ‘I’m not a burden anymore. I have a purpose.’”</p> <p>“We have had decades of non-disabled people telling disabled people what disabled people need. Or men telling women what women need. Or White people telling Black people what Black</p>

	<p>people need. And I think, finally, we're reaching the point where we realise the ridiculousness of that."</p> <p>"Whilst we want lots of allies who are with us and supporting us, these drives for change need to be led by people with lived experience."</p> <p>"Employing disabled people isn't just about social justice. It's about having a society where everybody contributes, everybody is rewarded fairly for that contribution, and everybody's talents and skills and qualities are valued equally."</p> <p>"If you have the skills, ability and quality that a job requires, then it's important that you are rewarded accordingly. Economic justice is also about choice, people spending money on what they choose to spend it on without it being dictated."</p> <p>"Economic justice won't happen until ... people are paid the same for the same work, regardless of sexual orientation, disability, gender, or whatever, and that every citizen can afford the things that we all need in order to survive."</p>
Main themes for learners	<p>The ways in which employment discrimination against disabled people happens.</p> <p>Understanding how disabled people are affected by discrimination.</p> <p>The importance of having a purpose in life.</p> <p>Different ways of seeing the world: seeing barriers not a limiting your ability but as a something that can enhance your skills (here developing creative problem-solving skills in the face of barriers).</p> <p>Action for change being led by people with lived experience.</p> <p>Having a clear vision.</p> <p>Enlisting support of people in positions of power (e.g. CEOs).</p> <p>Intersectionality and economic justice.</p>

<https://www.economicinjustice.org.uk>