**EMPOWERING LEADERS WITH DISABILITIES:**

**THE THREE-LEGGED STOOL OF CAREER SUCCESS**

**Melissa Pagliaro**

CCRW recognizes Leadership Day, which takes place on February 20. CCRW continues to support persons with disabilities in advancing to leadership roles.

Let’s create a future where people with disabilities have equal opportunities to be leaders!

**THE THREE-LEGGED STOOL: A METAPHOR**

**Career self-management strategies**, **social networks**, and **societal and organizational factors** form the three-legged stool of Samosh’s\* career success model. Together, they create a strong foundation for people with disabilities to become leaders.

**PILLARS OF CAREER SUCCESS**

**01**

**Career self-management**

**Career self-management is a set of personal traits and actions such as attitudes and proactive behaviours that support career success.**

* **Attitudes** include optimism, resilience, confidence, and self-determination
* **Proactive behaviours** include setting goals, seeking opportunities for skill development, and self-advocacy

**02**

**Social networks**

**Social networks are groups of people connected by relationships like family, friends, and colleagues that support career success. Social networks can be internal or external.**

* **Internal networks** include inclusive managers, employees, mentors, and workgroup members
* **External networks** include family, friends, acquaintances, and role models

**03**

**Societal and organizational factors**

**Social and organizational factors are broader social supports as well as organizational components that support advancement to leadership.**

* **Programs and funding** include university scholarships, and career entry and advancement programs
* **Social systems** include disability-related work and leadership roles
* **Broader social supports** include disability legislation and economic policies that reduce barriers
* **Organizational policies and procedures** include flexible and proactive employers, and inclusive and accessible policies, practices, and cultures

\*Samosh, D. (2020). The three-legged stool: Synthesizing and extending our understanding of the career advancement facilitators of persons with disabilities in leadership positions. *Business & Society, 60*(7), 1773-1810. https://doi.org/10.1177/000765032090713

**Want to learn more about career advancement? Check out:**

Al-Azary, N., Sinclair, V., Bath, R., & Pagliaro, M. (2024). *Trends Report 2024*

*Shaping Tomorrow: Career Advancement Pathways for Workers with Disabilities*.

Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work.