Managing Your Career: Strategies for Graduates with Disabilities

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Module 5: Workplace Accommodations

Agenda

- Ontario Human Rights Code:
  - Disabilities Protected under the Code
  - Definition of Accommodation
  - Legal Duty to Accommodate
  - Responsibilities in the Accommodation Process
- Benefits of Accommodations
- Examples of Work Accommodations
ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS CODE  
(A.K.A “THE CODE”)

Examples of Disabilities Protected Under the Code

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Acquired Brain Injury</th>
<th>Attention Deficit Disorder</th>
<th>Autism Spectrum Disorder</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deaf, deafened, hard-of-hearing</td>
<td>Learning Disability</td>
<td>Low vision or blind</td>
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<td>Chronic health condition</td>
<td>Mental health disability</td>
<td>Physical disability</td>
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What is an Accommodation?

- Adjustment of a rule, practice, condition or requirement of a job to take into account the specific disability-related needs of an individual

Appropriate accommodations must:
- respect the dignity of the individual
- meet individual needs
- best promotes integration and full participation
- ensures confidentiality
Duty to Accommodate

- Individuals with disabilities may need accommodations to perform their job duties and have a right to request and receive accommodations
- Employers have a legal obligation to provide accommodations to the point of undue hardship

Responsibilities in the Accommodation Process: Employees

Individuals with disabilities must:
- Tell the employer that they have disability-related needs that require accommodations on-the-job
- Help obtain necessary information about their needs including medical or other expert opinions
- Participate in discussions about solutions
- Work with the employer on an ongoing basis to manage the accommodation process

Responsibilities in the Accommodation Process: Employers

Employers must:
- Accept requests in good faith
- Request only information that is required to accommodate
- Obtain expert advice or opinion where warranted
- Take an active role in examining possible solutions
- Maintain confidentiality
- Respond to accommodation requests in a timely manner
- Pay the fee for any required medical documentation
### Employee’s Benefits of Being Accommodated

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<th>Improve work performance</th>
<th>Help to get a job</th>
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<td>Help to keep a job</td>
<td>Reduce stress &amp; anxiety</td>
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### Employer’s Benefits of Accommodating Employees

**Direct Benefits**
- Retain qualified employees
- Increase employee’s productivity
- Eliminate costs of training new employee

**Indirect Benefits**
- Improve interactions with co-workers
- Increase company diversity & productivity

### Cost of Workplace Accommodations

“Accommodating someone with a disability is seldom as expensive or difficult as is sometimes imagined. Over two-thirds of job accommodations cost under $500; many cost nothing at all.”

WORKPLACE ACCOMMODATIONS

Assistive/Adaptive Technology

Examples of Accommodations:
Auditory Processing

Difficulties hearing auditory instructions or questions
Examples of Accommodations: Visual Processing

Difficulties taking in or processing information from the sense of sight

Examples of Potential Accommodations

- Room with minimal distractions
- Verbal instructions
- Talking calculator
- Voice-activated computer
- CCTV

Examples of Accommodations: Physical Disabilities

- Alternative input device
- Flexible work scheduling
- Ergonomic workstation
- Parking space close to entrance

Examples of Accommodations: Cognitive Processing

Difficulties maintaining stamina or concentration

- Work from home
- Divide large assignments into smaller tasks
- Restructure job to include only essential tasks
- Use of white noise or sound machines
- Reduce distractions in work area
Examples of Accommodations: Cognitive Processing

- Type written minutes of: Meetings, Instructions
- Use checklists, agendas, and to-do lists
- Difficulties recalling information
- Extra time for learning new material
- Digitally record meetings and verbal instructions

Resources to Explore

Job Accommodation Network: http://askjan.org/


Youth Abilities: http://www.youthabilities.com/s_43.html

Contact Information

Thank you for reviewing this module. If you would like to provide feedback or if you have questions or concerns, please contact Shayna Golding golding@utsc.utoronto.ca or Cheryl Lepard clepard@utsc.utoronto.ca
References


Job Accommodation Network: Searchable Online Accommodation Resource.