

Managing your career strategies for graduates with disabilities

Module five: Workplace accommodations

Video three: Potential accommodations

Welcome to module 5 of our Career and Disability series brought to you by the UTSC Accessibility services and the Academic Advising and Career Centre.

This module focuses on workplace accommodations. The previous video, we discussed the human rights code and the responsibilities of the employee, you, as well as the responsibility of the employer.

This video will discuss potential accommodations that can be put in place to help you perform assigned job tasks. Please keep in mind that there are other accommodations that you may require besides the ones presented in this module. Before we begin, download the activity worksheets at <https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/aacc/students-disabilities> and find the workplace accommodation activity. The job accommodation network has an excellent database that you can search for accommodations that may help you to perform your job tasks. Please see the resources guide to find the link to their database.

Did you know that academic accommodations and work accommodations are similar? Many of the accommodations, learning strategies and assistive technology that you use in university can be transferred to the workplace. Many people with and without disabilities benefit from adaptive tools. In the workplace, you may use assistive technology to help you be more productive with certain tasks such as reading or organizing your thoughts in written format. The good news is that if you already own assistive technology you should be able to use those items on the job. Examples of such technology that you can use to help you perform your job include text-to-speech software, which can help you read written reports and speech-to-text software that can help you to write reports.

We are now going to take a look at some examples of accommodations for a range of impacts. First, we will discuss auditory processing difficulties. Auditory processing is the ability to hear information such as instructions and having a challenge in this area may mean that you have difficulties hearing and processing that information. Some disabilities that may cause auditory processing difficulties include attention deficit disorder, alerting disability, an acquired brain injury, hearing loss or mental health disability. Examples of possible job accommodations that could be put in place to help minimize the impact could be adding an electric lighting device to the telephone ringer which lights up when the phone rings, having information repeated or paraphrased, asking for written copy of instructions or using a fan or white noise machine to provide white noise.

A person may have visual processing difficulties because of the impact of a disability. Examples of disabilities that may cause difficulties with visual processing are a learning disability, acquired brain injury or low vision. The functional impact may be difficulty taking in or processing

information from the sense of sight. Possible accommodations to help minimize the impact include the use of assistive technology to read print material, electronic dictionaries, being provided with verbal instructions instead of written instructions, using a talking calculator, using a voice activated computer or using closed circuit television, working in a room with minimal distractions or using noise cancelling headphones.

For employees who are impacted by fatigue or have decreased stamina and reduced tolerance for physical activities such as standing, lifting, pushing, pulling and sitting for extended periods of time. Examples of accommodations for people with physical disabilities include alternate input devices when using computers, a flexible work schedule, a sit and stand desk, rest breaks away from the workstation or a parking space close to the entrance of the building where you work.

Some people have difficulties maintaining stamina or concentration because they have a cognitive processing difficulty, such difficulties can be caused by attention deficit disorder, an acquired brain injury, a mental health disability or a chronic health condition. There are many accommodations that may help. Examples include working from home, rest breaks away from your workstation, breaking up larger projects into smaller tasks, use of white noise or reducing distractions in the work area.

Memory attention, concentration, recalling information and stress tolerance may be a challenge for some employees. This may be caused by an acquired brain injury, attention deficit disorder, a learning disability or mental health disability. You may require accommodations such as being provided with noise cancelling headphones, typed written minutes of meetings and instructions using written checklists or to-do lists, using a digital recorder in meetings or getting extra time for learning new material. The employer may look at your environment to determine for example, if an alternate workstation may reduce distraction. Finally, you may benefit from a structured break schedule.

You can also apply strategies to manage your disability without the need for accommodations. This may include using electronic organizers with reminders, using apps on your phone to keep you on tasks and apps for anxiety and stress.

It's time to complete the last activity on workplace accommodations. We would like to thank you for your time and wish you the best of luck in your job search. If you would like to provide feedback on these videos or if you have questions or concerns please contact the academic advising and career center at <https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/aacc/academic-advising-career-centre> or the accessibility services at <https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/ability/welcome-accessability-services>.