Managing Your Career: Strategies for Graduates with DisAbilities

Self-Advocacy and Disclosure

Video 2: When to Disclose a Disability
1. Career Planning
2. Understanding Employment Equity
3. Addressing Employment Barriers
4. **Self-Advocacy and Disclosure**
5. Workplace Accommodations
Module 4: Self-Advocacy and Disclosure
Video 2: When to Disclose a Disability
What is Disclosure?

A conversation with your employer about your disability and what you need to be an effective employee

- Only necessary if you think you require accommodations
- Highlight strengths and skills as well!
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A conversation with your employer about your disability and what you need to be an effective employee

• Only necessary if you think your require accommodations
• Highlight strengths and skills as well!
To Disclose or Not to Disclose?

To help you decide if disclosure is appropriate:
• You need to understand your disability related needs
• Determine if there are systemic barriers that can be removed
• There may be job tasks related to your disability that can be resolved by accommodations

**Example:**
• You experience muscle stiffness if you have to sit for long periods with a break

**Accommodation option 1:**
Shorter but more frequent breaks to stretch

**Accommodation option 2:**
Assign you a standing desk so you can alternate sitting and standing while continuing to work
Reasons to Disclose

- Need for accommodations
- Breakdown Stereotypes
- Highlight Strengths
Reasons Not to Disclose

Concerns about…
- Negative reaction or fear
- Disability will be disclosed to others
- Not ready to disclose
- No clear policy on disability and accommodation

And sometimes…
- No need to disclose!
Reasons Not to Disclose

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• Negative reaction or fear
• Disability will be disclosed to others
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And sometimes…
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Disclosure Decision

A major concern about disclosure is a negative reaction from future employers and colleagues, or the fear that it will impact hiring decisions. There may be no need to disclose as the disability does not impact job performance.

See our “To Disclose or Not to Disclose?” activity
Worksheets: uoft.me/careeranddisability
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When to Disclose

- At the time of the application
- When offered an interview
- During an interview
- At the time of a job offer
- After starting the job
- Change on the job
- Never
### At the Time of the Application

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When</th>
<th>Why</th>
<th>How</th>
<th>Potential Concerns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There is an employment equity program in place</td>
<td>Your application will likely be considered ahead of other applications</td>
<td>On the cover letter or over the phone</td>
<td>May not know why you weren’t selected for an interview</td>
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</table>
### When Offered an Interview

<table>
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<tr>
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<td>Accommodations are needed to participate optimally in the interview</td>
<td>Provide employer time to put the accommodations in place for the interview</td>
<td>Using the same method of contact used to offer you the interview</td>
<td>Employer may develop preconceived notions about your disability and your skills and abilities before meeting you</td>
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<td>Opportunity presents itself and you know accommodations are required</td>
<td>Allows you to explain in person why employer should hire you and provide accommodations</td>
<td>Same method being used to interview you (in-person or over-the-phone)</td>
<td>Timing of disclosure is essential to make certain there is sufficient time to address questions</td>
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### At the Time of the Job Offer

<table>
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<td>After you’ve accepted the offer and if you know for certain you require accommodations</td>
<td>Provides time for the employer to put the accommodations in place</td>
<td>In-person or over-the-phone, with solutions (accommodations) ready to discuss</td>
<td>Employer may feel resentful they weren’t informed during the interview; they may rescind the offer</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>After performing the job tasks, you realize accommodations are needed</td>
<td>Help you to perform the tasks better and reduce stress</td>
<td>In-person to the appropriate person (human resource manager or direct supervisor)</td>
<td>Could impact your relationship with your boss and coworkers; job performance may have already been impacted</td>
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<td>New job tasks were added to current job or moved to new position in the company</td>
<td>Require accommodations to perform new job tasks</td>
<td>In-person to the appropriate person (human resource manager or direct supervisor)</td>
<td>Could impact your relationship with your boss and coworkers</td>
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When

Job tasks can be performed without accommodations

Potential Concerns

May not realize you’re not performing well so ask for regular feedback on your job performance
Legal Obligation to Disclose

The Ontario Human Rights Commission has noted disclosure of a disability is required if:

- It threatens the safety or property of others
- Prevents the applicant from safe and adequate job performance even when reasonable efforts are made to accommodate the disability

Example: must disclose seizure disorder to Ministry of Transportation

Source: Ontario Human Rights Commission
http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/issues/disability
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If you would like to provide feedback on these videos or if you have questions or concerns, please contact:

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