

Disclosure Chart

This resource guide provides details regarding the time of disclosure, advantages, disadvantages, and other issues to consider. This guide was been created by Algonquin College and was adapted from the Transition Planning Resource Guide for Students with Learning Disabilities Learning Disability Association of Ontario.

Time of Disclosure – On the preliminary job application

Advantages

- May allow you to be considered for a job under a company's employment equity program (usually federal government or companies who have contracts with the federal government).

Disadvantages

- Employer may not understand what disabilities are.
- May result in your not being considered for a job which is in line with your interests and aptitudes.
- May result in uncertainty about the reasons for not being selected.
- May not have the chance to explain or describe your accommodation needs

Other Issues to Consider

- Can you present information about your disability in a succinct and comprehensible way?
- Do you have the necessary documentation if you are required to produce it?
- Do you know whether the company has a good reputation around employment equity issues or is subject to employment equity requirements?

Time of Disclosure – During your job interview

Advantages

- Allows you to raise relevant job, training and accommodation issues in a positive way, at the appropriate time.
- Allows you to present yourself and your disability in a positive way.
- Allows you to deal with questions directly.
- May reduce the chances of direct discrimination due to prejudice, ignorance or lack of understanding of disability.
- Opportunity for any employment equity policy to help you.

Disadvantages

- Might focus the whole interview on your disability rather than on you and your skills.
- Puts responsibility on you to be an effective advocate at a stressful time.
- Might disqualify you from being considered for a job that you could do well and where your disability would not interfere.

- Might force you into a defensive mode, rather than being able to market yourself and your strengths.
- You may have to cope with open or hidden prejudices on the part of the interviewer(s).

Other Issues to Consider

- Can you present your strengths and needs for accommodations in a clear, positive way?
- Do you understand how your skills, strengths and accommodation requirements relate to the demands of the job that you hope to be hired for?

Time of Disclosure – After the interview when you are offered the job but before you have begun work

Advantages

- Opportunity to discuss your accommodation needs with the person who will train and/or supervise you.
- Opportunity to find out who is the best person to approach about accommodations.
- Allows the employer to decide if your disability impact health and safety issues.

Disadvantages

- Employer may withdraw job offer if your accommodation needs are seen as complex or onerous.

Other Issues to Consider

- Do you know enough about the job duties to know if you will require accommodations?
- Do you know your legal rights under these circumstances?

Time of Disclosure – After you have begun work, but before you have run into any problems or difficulties which could relate to your disability

Advantages

- Allows you to prove your capabilities before disclosure.
- Allows you to have a feel for the optimum timing and process for disclosure.
- Allows you to identify potential allies among your fellow employees.

Disadvantages

- You may feel nervous about people thinking you are incompetent because they don't understand disability.
- You may constantly worry that any difficulty, however minor, will be attributed to your disability.
- People may be reluctant to ask you to do things

Other Issues to Consider

- When, what and whom do you tell?

- To what extent does stress influence your performance at work, and will you feel more or less stressed if you disclose?

Time of Disclosure – After you have run into difficulties which are related to your Disability

Advantages

- You have already proven yourself to some extent on the job.
- You have established some positive working relationships with your supervisor and fellow employees.
- You have a better understanding of company policies and practices.

Disadvantages

- You may have a performance issue at work
- You may hurt your working relationships, since your employer or coworkers may view you as untrustworthy.
- You may feel guilty, which could add to your stress level. This could damage your performance level even further.
- You may contribute to negative stereotypes and attitudes toward persons with disabilities.

Other Issues to Consider

- Can you present the necessary information at this stage and still avoid defensiveness and learned helplessness?
- Is this the situation that led you to resign in a previous job?
- As difficulties begin to appear, should you approach your supervisor and disclose your disability? Or should you wait a while, hoping that things will smooth over?