



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO
SCARBOROUGH

Academic Advising
& Career Centre

AccessAbility Services

Managing Your Career:

Strategies for Graduates with *DisAbilities*

Self-Advocacy and Disclosure

Video 2: When to Disclose a Disability

Modules

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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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

The background of the slide is a photograph of a person with long hair, seen from the side, sitting at a desk and working on a laptop. The room is dimly lit, with light coming from a window on the right, which shows a view of a city skyline. The overall color scheme is dark blue and black.

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!

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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

There is an
employment
equity program
in place

Why

Your application
will likely be
considered
ahead of other
applications

How

On the cover
letter or over
the phone

Potential Concerns

May not know
why you weren't
selected for an
interview

When Offered an interview

When

Accommodations
are needed to
participate
optimally in the
interview

Why

Provide
employer time to
put the
accommodations
in place for the
interview

How

Using the same
method of
contact used to
offer you the
interview

Potential Concerns

Employer may
develop
preconceived
notions about
your disability
and your skills
and abilities
before meeting
you

During an Interview

When

Opportunity presents itself and you know accommodations are required

Why

Allows you to explain in person why employer should hire you and provide accommodations

How

Same method being used to interview you (in-person or over-the-phone)

Potential Concerns

Timing of disclosure is essential to make certain there is sufficient time to address questions

At the Time of the Job Offer

When

After you've accepted the offer and if you know for certain you require accommodations

Why

Provides time for the employer to put the accommodations in place

How

In-person or over-the-phone, with solutions (accommodations) ready to discuss

Potential Concerns

Employer may feel resentful they weren't informed during the interview; they may rescind the offer

After Starting the Job

When

After performing the job tasks, you realize accommodations are needed

Why

Help you to perform the tasks better and reduce stress

How

In-person to the appropriate person (human resource manager or direct supervisor)

Potential Concerns

Could impact your relationship with your boss and coworkers; job performance may have already been impacted

Change in the Job

When

New job tasks were added to current job or moved to new position in the company

Why

Require accommodations to perform new job tasks

How

In-person to the appropriate person (human resource manager or direct supervisor)

Potential Concerns

Could impact your relationship with your boss and coworkers

Never

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:

AA&CC: aacc.utsc@utoronto.ca

AccessAbility Services: ability.utsc@utoronto.ca