

Student disclosure

Disclosure is a complex decision and should be made with care. Below is what you might want to think about.

PREPARING TO DISCLOSE

- Explore your feelings about your disability – how comfortable are you talking about your disability?
- Identify, by yourself or with other's help, what accommodation you may need during the hiring process or on the job.
- Weigh the benefits, risks, and timing of disclosure.
- If you decide not to disclose, make sure you can perform the essential functions of the position before accepting it.
- If you decide to disclose, plan in advance:
 - Who will you tell – the interviewer, HR representative, your supervisor, etc.?
 - What you will say

When should you disclose?

Timing is important when considering your opportunities for disclosure. Always keep your main objective in mind: You want to be hired to do a job that matches your skills and qualifications.

- If your disability will not affect your ability to do the job, you are not required to disclose.
- Consider each benefit and disadvantage carefully.
- When you disclose, encourage the employer to ask questions.
- Foster an atmosphere of trust and acceptance. By presenting your disability in a positive light and being open to the interviewer's questions you can help to accomplish this.

WHEN YOU DISCLOSE

- Disclosure Before the Interview:
 - Students can choose to disclose on their cover letters or job applications
 - Deciding to disclose at this stage can be crucial. If a job posting includes statements where they welcome students with diverse needs or the posting is in an accessible format, then you know this employer welcomes your application.
 - If you have a visible disability, then you might want to disclose at this stage to ensure appropriate accommodation is in place prior to your arrival.

Disclosure At the Interview:

- If you do not need accommodation at the interview stage, it is recommended that, if possible, wait to disclose until you have received a job offer.
- If you choose to disclose during your interview, employers cannot ask you about your disability. They should only ask questions that pertain to how you will perform a certain function of the job

Disclosure when you are hired:

- Decide how you will disclose your disability
- Remember, try to use language that is informative. Be concise in your explanation and prepare brief answers for anticipated questions.
- What are some strategies that you have used or accommodations that have been beneficial to you that have assisted you to complete a particular task? Talk about

assistive devices that you use which assist you to complete a task (try to relate these examples to the tasks required for the job)

- When disclosing, return the focus to your skills, experience and enthusiasm that you bring to the position
- Describe the skills that you have that make you able to perform the essential functions of the job – what are your qualifications, technical and general work skills
- Consider preparing a script:
 - *“Hi, my name is_____. And I am a student at Brock University in the _____ program. I feel that I am the best candidate for this job because of my (skills required to complete the essential functions of this job) which relate to the _____ skills as mentioned in the posting. However, sometimes I have difficulties (concentrating, seeing plain text on the screen, difficulties with memory). I have learned to overcome these obstacles by (taking detailed notes, using Zoom software to magnify the screen, etc.) which has allowed me to be successful in my studies and previous work experiences. I can use these accommodations successfully and know that these differences will not affect my ability to do this job. And in fact, I can bring a new perspective to this role. I am happy to answer any questions that you may have”.*

Each opportunity affords different benefits and disadvantages. Consider each benefit and disadvantage carefully. Remember to foster an atmosphere of trust and acceptance. By presenting your disability in a positive light and being open to the interviewer’s questions you can help to accomplish this.

Helpful resources:

- [Disclosure Option](#)
- [Disclosure Process](#)
- [Disclosure Script](#)
- [Student Employment Resources](#)