

WHEN TO DISCLOSE A DISABILITY

ON A RESUME OR APPLICATION

- Advantages: Honesty and peace of mind- Lets employer decide if disability is an issue.
- Disadvantages: Might disqualify you with no opportunity to present yourself & your qualifications.
- Issues to Consider: You may have a harder time finding work, but usually have no disability related problems.

OPTIONAL HR DISCLOSURE FORM (AFTER APPLICATION)

- Advantages: Included in federal count of employees with disabilities.
- Disadvantages: Chance the information does not stay confidential within the HR department.
- Issues to Consider: Still must decide whether to disclose during the hiring process/on the job.

EMPLOYER CALLS FOR AN INTERVIEW

- Advantages: Honesty and peace of mind- Reduces “Shock Value” upon initial meeting.
- Disadvantages: May not get interview or receive serious consideration during interview.
- Issues to Consider: Without “Shock Value” employer may feel more comfortable.

INTERVIEW: MOMENT OF MEETING

- Advantages: Demonstrates to employer your positive self-perception.
- Disadvantages: “Shock Factor” that makes employers uncomfortable-may have to refocus employer.
- Issues to Consider: Employer may be distracted by your disability.

DURING THE INTERVIEW

- Advantages: Honesty: Opportunity to respond briefly & positively in person to specific disability issues. Discrimination less likely face-to-face.
- Disadvantages: Puts responsibility on you to handle disability issues in a clear, non- threatening way. Too much emphasis on issue indicates possible problem: you are not being evaluated on your abilities.
- Issues to Consider: How comfortable are you discussing your disability? Are you too preoccupied with disability? Prepare to answer.

INTERVIEW- PREEFFER

- Advantages: Honesty: Lets employer know prior to offer.
- Disadvantages: Employer may feel person has been less than honest waiting this long.
- Issues to Consider: If a person requires accommodations, they need to consider disclosing at this point.

INTERVIEW - POSTOFFER, PREACCEPTANCE

- Advantages: Honesty-If the disability information changes the hiring decision, there is legal recourse.
- Disadvantages: Employer may feel you should have told before hiring decision was made. Could lead to distrust.
- Issues to Consider: Need to evaluate disability & explain that it will not interfere with ability to perform job.

AFTER YOU START WORK

- Advantages: Opportunity to prove yourself on a job before disclosure. Allows you to respond to disability questions with peers at work. If disclosure affects employment status & the condition doesn't affect your ability to perform your job, you may be protected by law.
- Disadvantages: Nervousness on the job. Possible employer accusation of falsifying your application. Could change interactions with peers. May not have legal recourse.
- Issues to Consider: The longer you put off disclosing, the harder it becomes. It may be difficult to identify who to tell.

AFTER A PROBLEM ON THE JOB

- Advantages: Opportunity to prove yourself on the job before disclosure.
- Disadvantages: Possible employer accusation of falsifying your application. Can perpetuate disability myths and misunderstandings. May not have legal recourse.
- Issues to Consider: Relationships with your co-workers may be hurt if they feel you have not been truthful with them. It may be difficult to reestablish trust.

NEVER

- Advantages: Employer can't respond to your disability unless you choose to disclose.
- Disadvantages: If disability is discovered, you run the risk of being dismissed and possibly having no legal recourse. Can perpetuate disability myths and misunderstandings.
- Issues to Consider: If you are sure your disability will not be an issue for your job performance, the issue of disclosure becomes less critical.