Disclosure — The Basics

Disclosure is not a one-size fits all concept. There is no one right way or right time to disclose a disability. You may not wish to disclose their disability (to an employer) and that is ok!

- “Disclosure” is the act of making disability known to others.
- Disclosure DOES NOT mean disclosing the nature/diagnosis of one’s disability.
- It is a very personal choice that must be an informed decision.

The “Whether” — Do I need to disclose?

There is no legal obligation to disclose information about disability unless:

- It will affect the ability to perform the essential functions of the job.
- It affects the ability to work safely and to ensure the safety of co-workers.
- Accommodations are required to be successful such as an alternate interview arrangements, modified equipment or flexible working arrangements.

The “When” — What is the best time to disclose?

There are advantages and disadvantages of identifying the disability at different stages of the employment process, such as at the time of job application, before or during the interview, on job offer, after you start work or if a problem arises. Again, this is a personal decision. Please refer to the Tipsheet “Tips and Considerations for Students when Disclosing a Disability to an Employer” for more considerations of advantages and disadvantages at each stage

The “How”? — What should I say when disclosing?

Planning and preparing for a disclosure conversation is key! This can help you feel a sense of empowerment in their job search process. Consider the following:

- Provide positive examples of when challenges were overcome.
- Demonstrate, with examples, the skills gained from managing a disability.
- Prepare a brief disclosure script and rehearse it.
**Disclosure Script**

It is highly recommended that a script be prepared and rehearsed in advance. Use the following as an example:

"I have/am (highlight your strengths/skills/abilities/qualifications relevant to the job) and can perform the essential functions of this job, but sometimes (mention your limitations) might impact my ability to (describe the duties you may have difficulty performing). I work best when (describe the specific accommodations you need to support the duties you have difficulty performing)."

**Materials adapted from the following sources:**

- Alberta Human Resources and Employment: Employment Series for Persons with Disabilities: Tips for Job Seekers
- Algonquin College: Be the Boss of Your Career: A Complete Guide for Students & Graduates
- Carleton University, Accessible Career Transitions (ACT) Program: Disclosure Script Worksheet
- University of Guelph: Disclosure Script Handout