

Timing Your Disclosure

In this section, learn about the advantages, disadvantages and issues that arise during the time of disclosure.

Time of Disclosure: On a resume or application.

Advantages: Honesty/peace of mind: lets employer decide if disability is an issue.

Disadvantages: Might disqualify you with no opportunity to present yourself and your qualifications.

Issues: You may have a harder time finding work but will be less likely to have disability related problems.

Time of Disclosure: Employer calls to setup an

interview. **Advantages:** Honesty/peace of mind: reduced “shock value” upon initial meeting, allows employer to make any appropriate interview accommodations.

Disadvantages: May not get the interview or receive serious consideration

Issues: Without the “shock value” employer may feel more comfortable.

Time of Disclosure: Interview: moment of meeting.

Advantages: Demonstrates to employer your positive self-perception.

Disadvantages: “Shock factor” that makes employers uncomfortable and distracted; may overshadow your qualifications.

Issues: Employer is distracted by your disability...deal with embarrassment and anger.

Time of Disclosure: During the interview.

Advantages: Honesty: opportunity to respond briefly and positively in person to specific disability issues. Discrimination less likely to be a factor.

Disadvantages: Puts responsibility on you to handle disability issues in a clear, nonthreatening way. Too much emphasis on issue indicates possible problem; you are not being evaluated on your abilities.

Issues: How comfortable are you discussing your disability? Are you preoccupied with disability? Prepare to answer.

Time of Disclosure: After interview, before offer.

Advantages: Honesty: lets employer know prior to offer.

Disadvantages: Employer may feel person has been less than honest waiting this long.

Issues: If person requires accommodations, they need to consider disclosing at this point.

Time of Disclosure: After offer, before acceptance.

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: Need to evaluate disability and explain that it will not interfere with ability to perform job.

Time of Disclosure: After you start work.

Advantages: Opportunity to prove yourself on the job before disclosure. Allows you to respond to disability questions with peers at work. If disclosure affects employment status and the condition does not 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: The longer you put off disclosing, the harder it becomes. It may be difficult to identify who to tell.

Time of Disclosure: 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: Relationships with your co-workers may be hurt if they feel you have not be truthful with them. It may be difficult to re-establish trust.

Time of Disclosure: Never.

Advantages: Employer cannot 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: If you are sure your disability will not be an issue for your job performance, the issue of disclosure becomes less critical.

Resources:

“Disclosure Options for Employment”, adapted from Aase & Smith, 1989; Witt, M.A, 1992 provided by Brock University: Bridge to Success.