

DISCLOSING YOUR DISABILITY

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Disclosing your disability to an employer or admissions committee is a personal choice and an important and complex decision. Only you can decide when and if you want to share this information with a current or prospective employer or school.

“I wish for a world that views disability, mental or physical, not as a hindrance, but as unique attributes that can be seen as powerful assets if given the right opportunities”

– Oliver Sacks

WHEN TO DISCLOSE

Should you choose to disclose your disability, you may do so at any of the following times:

- When applying to a job or program
- At the time of an interview offer
- During an interview
- At the time of a job or admission offer
- Once you begin work or the program
- After a problem or change is encountered

CONSIDERATIONS WHEN DECIDING WHETHER OR NOT TO DISCLOSE

- Will your disability impact your job performance or performance in the program?
- Deciding to disclose in one instance does not necessarily mean disclosing in every situation.
- Your qualifications and the nature of the work, employer, school, policies and culture all play a role.
- Current trends in the environment, including the experiences of others who share a similar situation are also important to consider.

ADVANTAGES OF DISCLOSING

- Prepares the employer or school for situations that may arise.
- Allows you access to accommodations.
- If there are any changes to your employment due to disability-related reasons, you may be protected by the law.

DISADVANTAGES OF DISCLOSING

- May exclude you from opportunities.
- May lead to discrimination from supervisors, co-workers or peers.
- Your employer or school may focus more on potential issues than your actual work performance.



TIPS AND ADVICE ON DISCLOSING

If you decide to disclose your disability to an employer or committee, here are a few things to consider ahead of time:

- Be positive — focus on your skills, qualifications and ability to do the job (don't present your disability as a weakness), and practice what you will share and how you will explain it. Practice in the mirror and connect with a [Career Access Professional Services \(CAPS\)](#) team member for feedback.
- Identify any accommodations you may need. Include pertinent information regarding necessary resources, costs and procedures for accommodation.
- Understand the position requirements to assess your functional limitations within the job.

ACCOMMODATIONS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Consider what informal adjustments could be arranged to support your success (longer breaks, more frequent breaks, having meeting notes taken or copied for you, etc.)
- An employer or school must accommodate the needs of people with disabilities short of causing undue hardship; however, if you choose not to disclose, an employer or institution will not be able to provide assistance or know how to assist you.
- If you choose to disclose your disability, schools and employers do not have the right to know what the disability is or any specific information, including your diagnosis.
- If you request specific accommodations, it is your responsibility to inform the other party of your needs, to cooperate in obtaining necessary information, to participate in discussions about solutions and to work with the employer, union (if applicable) or school on an ongoing basis to manage the accommodation process.
- If you choose not to disclose, and a situation arises, you may not be covered under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

HAVE QUESTIONS?

MEET WITH A PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBER:

- **By Appointment:** Book on OSCARplus > Student Success Centre > Appointments > Careers > Diversity/CAPS.

Career Access Professional Services (CAPS) provides a customized approach to skill-building and career development for students and alumni who identify as: a person with disabilities; First Nations, Métis or Inuit; a member of a racialized community; a first-generation student; and/or a member of the LGBTQ+ community.

