

This is to prepare students and graduates for work and enhancing their ability to negotiate these barriers through the recruitment and selection process, to secure full employment.



- 1 Follow your dream ... no matter what! You might think your dream job is unattainable but it could be just within your grasp! Apply anyway – you never know what could happen.
- 2 Plan your career – remember, employees are a company's greatest asset, so you need to sell yourself as an asset!
- 3 Consider whether to disclose your disability or not to disclose. For further advice, read AHEAD's publication on Disclosure which is available to download free from our website ([www.ahead.ie](http://www.ahead.ie)).
- 4 How do you know whether an organisation is disability friendly? Research the company well to find out about their inclusion policies and schemes.
- 5 Find out how organisations encourage applications from jobseekers with disabilities. Some have other recruitment paths options; one example is the WAM Programme ([www.ahead.ie/wam](http://www.ahead.ie/wam)).
- 6 Know when you should use your contacts and friends – expand your network!
- 7 But also know when NOT to use your contacts or friends; for example as a sign language interpreter during an interview.
- 8 Companies are looking to employ someone who is passionate about the work they do – make sure to **show** them you really want the job on offer.
- 9 A CV is like a calling card: mind the gaps! Think about how you can bridge this gap by putting a positive spin on it; for example, maybe you set up a blog or learn a new skill. But always be honest!
- 10 Think about what your social media profile says about you and be conscious of what is publicly visible and available.
- 11 Don't dismiss your volunteer work or extracurricular activities as the skills and experience gained can add further weight to your CV.
- 12 When deciding on your references, think carefully about the job you are applying for and the suitable references you should use. Don't forget to ask your referees for permission to quote them as references on your CV!
- 13 It's important to think about what to wear and what not to wear to an interview. Consider the appropriate attire for the job on offer. If you are not sure, better safe than sorry – wear smart business attire.
- 14 Do your homework! Become informed on all aspects of the company by checking out their website, brochures, publications, press releases or annual reports etc...
- 15 Examine the job description thoroughly: know what skills and experience that are needed and ensure you have real life examples to demonstrate this.
- 16 Be aware of first impressions and etiquette at interview – shake their hand, introduce yourself and maintain eye contact.
- 17 Always, even when under pressure – SMILE! Treat the interview like going on a first date! Make sure that they'll want to meet you again.
- 18 Be ready to tell how you do things best; your responses are your sales pitch! Think about what you can contribute and how you will benefit the company.
- 19 Negotiating reasonable accommodations you require to do the job can wait until later in the conversation.
- 20 Keep the conversation going, prepare, prepare, prepare... You don't want the interview to end too early – have lots of things to talk about, such as your hobbies, interests and goals in life.
- 21 Look after your mental health at the interview by managing your stress levels and expectations.
- 22 At the end of the interview, be sure to say 'Thank you'. See the interview as an opportunity gained.
- 23 Learn from the interview experience – reflect on your interview responses, the preparation you did before the interview and always ask for feedback on how you can improve if the outcome was unsuccessful.
- 24 Lead the way for others! Share your good and bad experiences with friends – you'll all learn something from each other.
- 25 Remember, you should always take a chance. **Go for it!**

