

DISCLOSURE OPTIONS

for students with disabilities

Time of Disclosure	Advantages	Disadvantages	Issues
On a resume or application	Honesty/peace of mind: lets employer decide if disability is an issue.	Might disqualify you with no opportunity to present yourself and your qualifications.	You may have a harder time finding work, but usually have no disability related problems.
Employer calls for an interview	Honesty/peace of mind: reduced “shock value” upon initial meeting, allows employer to make any appropriate interview accommodations.	May not get interview or receive serious consideration during interview.	Without “shock value” employer may feel more comfortable.
Interview: moment of meeting	Demonstrates to employer your positive self-perception.	“Shock factor” that makes employers uncomfortable and distracted; may overshadow your qualifications.	Employer is distracted by your disability ... deal with embarrassment and anger.
During the interview	Honesty: opportunity to respond briefly and positively in person to specific disability issues. Discrimination less likely to be a factor.	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.	How comfortable are you discussing your disability? Are you too preoccupied with disability? Prepare to answer.
Interview: pre-offer	Honesty: lets employer know prior to offer.	Employer may feel person has been less than honest waiting this long.	If a person requires accommodations, they need to consider disclosing at this point.
Interview: post-offer, pre-acceptance	Honesty: if the disability information changes the hiring decision, there is legal recourse.	Employer may feel you should have told before hiring decision was made. Could lead to distrust.	Need to evaluate disability and explain that it will not interfere with ability to perform job.
After you start work	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.	Nervousness on the job. Possible employer accusation of falsifying your application; could change interactions with peers. May not have legal recourse.	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	Opportunity to prove yourself on the job before disclosure.	Possible employer accusation of falsifying your application. Can perpetuate disability myths and misunderstandings. May not have legal recourse.	Relationships with your co-workers may be hurt if they feel you have not been truthful with them. It may be difficult to re-establish trust.
Never	Employer cannot respond to your disability unless you choose to disclose.	If disability is discovered, you run the risk of being dismissed and possibly having no legal recourse. Can perpetuate disability myths and misunderstandings.	If you are sure your disability will not be an issue for your job performance, the issue of disclosure becomes less critical.