

Youth Leadership

Disability Disclosure on the Job

Every job seeker with a disability is faced with the same decision: “Should I or shouldn’t I disclose information about my disability?” Ultimately, the decision of whether or not to disclose is entirely personal. It is a decision to make only after weighing the personal advantages and disadvantages of disclosure.

If you have a disability, you must consider the supports and services that you may need to be successful in the job of your choice. Remember that accommodations in the workplace are only provided when a worker discloses his or her disability and requests job accommodations.

Some reasons you might choose to disclose

- to obtain information to assist you in developing a career plan that addresses possible barriers and accommodations
- to identify disability-specific employment services and support networks
- to discuss employment requirements with recruiters or other professionals
- to discuss disability issues with prospective employers to determine whether the requirements of the position can be met, with or without reasonable accommodations
- to investigate the supports available at the workplace
- to develop mentoring and peer support structures with employees and employers with disabilities.

When do I disclose?

There is no one “right” time and place to practice disclosure (it will depend on your individual situation), but being proactive is strongly encouraged. Consider the following possibilities: In your letter of application or resume; In your cover letter; On the employment application; At the interview; After you’ve been offered a job; During your course of employment; Never.

For more information about accommodations in the workplace, check out the Job Accommodation Network, <http://askjan.org/index.html>

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