

Course Goals:

Welcome to Becoming a Self-Advocate! In this course you will learn about:

- ❖ Disability terms
- ❖ Finding out about your disability and accommodation needs
- ❖ Finding careers of interest
- ❖ Learning laws and your legal rights
- ❖ Setting goals
- ❖ Planning for school and work

When you are done, you will better know how to do well in school and work!

Keep in Mind!

This course is designed to let you read at your own pace. You can always go back and review the material if you need a refresher.

Chapter 6: Talking About Disability

Hi there, Ms. Jordan here again. I'm going to walk you through this chapter. What is your name?

Overview:

Develop a plan about talking about your disability. This is known as disclosure. You need to know if it is okay to talk about your disability, when to talk about your disability and how to talk about your disability.

Learning Objectives:

- ❖ Define disclosure terms.
- ❖ Research the "if", "when" and "how" of disclosure.
- ❖ Create a plan for disclosure.
- ❖ Apply self-advocacy principles related to disclosure.

What are some important terms you should understand related to disclosure?

Disclosure Related Terms

Barriers to Employment: *Barriers to employment* are those difficulties that an individual has that could prevent him or her from getting a job.

Essential Functions: *Essential functions* are the duties/responsibilities of a job that a person must be able to do with or without a reasonable accommodation in order to be considered for a job.

Disclosure: *Disclosure* is the act of making your disability known to others. In some cases, you will need to decide when and how to *disclose* information about your disability.

Hidden Disability: Some people have what can be considered *hidden disabilities*. That means that other people may not be able to tell that they have a disability just by looking at them.

Visible Disability: Some people have what can be called *visible disabilities*. This means that others may be able to see that some sort of disability exists.

Disclosure Terminology: Self-Test

Match the terms on the right to the correct definition on the left.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. A disability that other people may not be able to see just by looking. | A. Essential Functions |
| 2. The act of making your disability known to others. | B. Barriers to Employment |
| 3. The duties of a job that a person must be able to do with or without a reasonable accommodation. | C. Disclosure |
| 4. Difficulties that an individual has that could prevent him or her from getting a job. | D. Hidden Disability |

Answers to the matching review of terms can be found on page 8.

Great work! These terms are important for any self-advocate to understand as you consider when and how to disclose your disability to others.

Fabulous! Now you've mastered some vocabulary. I want you to revisit my friend Mr. Drake. He is going to walk you through some ways to develop a plan for disclosure.

Remember me? I'm Mr. Drake. I know that sometime it is difficult for individuals with disabilities to know when and how to disclose their disabilities.

Follow along as I outline for you some issues that can help you know the advantages and disadvantages of disclosing your disabilities.

You may need to tell others about (disclose) your disability if:

- People can see you have a disability.
- You need help in school or work (accommodation is needed).
- You need help working with others.
- You want to tell others about your disability.

When to tell others about (disclose) your disability:

College

- When you apply.
- When you visit a school, you can talk about your disability with a counselor or disability specialist.
- If you need help in class.
- When you have problems in class. **Remember:** if you wait to ask for help and you get a bad grade, colleges do not have to remove bad grades from transcripts. Postsecondary institutions are not required to cut poor performances from transcripts before you have asked for an accommodation.

Work

- When you apply.
- At the job interview.
- After getting the job and before you start work.
- After you start working but before you have a problem at work.

Why Disclose?

- You can get the help you need. You have rights to accommodations.
- You have rights. You are protected under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Telling others about your disability gives you a chance to tell your teacher or employer about what you can do. This can stop, limit or prevent stereotypes.

Why not Disclose?

- Teachers or employers may focus on your disability and not on what you can do.
- Teachers or employers may have unreal ideas of the disability (e.g., always sick, slow worker, etc.)
- You may be cut in the first stages of the selection process.

One good way to tell others about your disability is to write about your disability and give it to them. You can set up a meeting to talk about your disability. You can tell the person what problems you have because of your disability or talk about what you do well in the class or on the job.

Disclosure Outline

Purpose: Sometimes it is difficult for individuals with disabilities to know when to disclose their disabilities or not to disclose at all. It is also difficult to know how much to disclose. Do individuals with disabilities just say, “I have a disability” or do they explain more about their disability. It is important to know the advantages and disadvantages of disclosing as well as knowing when and how to disclose. Disclosing or not disclosing can determine individuals with disabilities success at school or the job site.

If to disclose

- ☆ Disability is visible.
- ☆ Accommodation is needed.
- ☆ Working relationships may be jeopardized.
- ☆ Individuals with disabilities feel they want to disclose.

Opportunities for Disclosure

Postsecondary setting

- ☆ In the application process.
- ☆ At the interview with the counselor.
- ☆ In a personal meeting with a disabilities specialist for the college.
- ☆ During the courses when problems are encountered. **Remember:** postsecondary institutions are not required to eliminate poor performances from transcript prior to asking for an accommodation.

Employment

- ☆ In the application.
- ☆ At the interview.
- ☆ After getting the job and before you start work.
- ☆ After beginning a job but before encountering problems.

How to disclose

- ☆ A written document or a personal meeting explaining your disability; how you meet the challenges of the disability; and your strengths and your abilities to complete the course, program or do the job.

Advantages of Disclosing

- ☆ You have rights to accommodations.
- ☆ You are protected under Americans with Disability Act.
- ☆ Disclosing gives individuals with disabilities an opportunity to explain to the instructor/employer their abilities and eliminate stereotyping.
- ☆ Disclosing gains trust from the instructor/employer.

Disadvantages of Disclosing

- ☆ Instructors/Employers focus on the disability not the ability.
- ☆ Instructors/Employer may have unreal perceptions of the disability. (Examples: Always sick, slow worker, etc.)
- ☆ May be eliminated in the initial stages of the selection process.

Disclosure Problem Solving: Academic Course

Take a moment and write down the following information. This will help you decide whether or not to talk about your disability with your teacher.

1. List the things you need to do as a student in your class. Divide the list by the things you can do and the things you need help with.
 - Do you need help (an accommodation?) Yes or No
 - Is your disability visible? Yes or No

2. List what help you need.
 - Why should you tell your teacher about your disability?
 - Why should you not tell your teacher about your disability?
 - Will you tell your teacher about your disability? Yes or No

Thank you! These are important decisions to make in any academic situation. Sometimes disclosure is important, sometimes not. You can use the above problem solving example above for any course you may take in the future.

For more information about disclosure, visit the following website for the Interviewing Guide.

<https://cla.umn.edu/student-services-advising/career-internship-services/job-search-resources/interviewing-guide>

Now try looking on the internet for a job opening that you would like to apply for. Fill out the same problem solving example above, but this time thinking about the duties of that job.

Plans for Disclosure

Write a plan for talking about your disability. Write what you would tell a teacher or an employer about your disability. Explain your disability. Explain what you can do in class or on the job. Write about what you will do and what you will need (accommodations) in order to do things in class or on the job. View the work and school examples on pages 9 & 10.

Outstanding work! You are almost done with chapter 6 of Becoming a Self-Advocate. Keep up the good work.

Congratulations:

You have now completed Chapter 6 of Becoming a Self-Advocate. Be sure to complete the corresponding Chapter 6 survey located on the survey page.

Click the link below when you are ready to complete the chapter 6 survey:

<https://svrirtc.instructure.com/courses/680365/assignments/5718762>

Click on the link below to return to home page:

<https://svrirtc.instructure.com/courses/250296>

Answer Key

Review of Terms

1. A disability that other people may not be able to see just by looking.

The correct answer is **Hidden Disability**

2. The act of making your disability known to other.

The correct answer is **Disclosure**

3. The duties of a job that a person must be able to do with or without a reasonable accommodation.

The correct answer is **Essential Functions**

4. Difficulties that an individual has that could prevent him or her from getting a job.

The correct answer is **Barriers to Employment**

Excellent Job!

Example Job Description: Cashier

Receive and disburse money

Use of electronic scanners, cash registers, or related equipment

Process credit or debit card transactions and validating checks

Script for disclosing:

I have a specific learning disability. I do have the skills and ability to do this job, however because of my disability I will need to have these accommodations:

1. During training, any manuals will need to be scanned for me to comprehend material. I have a program on my computer that will allow me to listen to these documents in order to fully grasp the information.
2. For any writing tasks, I will either need to use a computer or need to take any documents home as they will require additional time for me to complete.

I am confident I can do the job, however I know from my past experiences that these accommodations will allow me to be the best employee. I look forward to the opportunity to contribute to your company.

Example Course Description: English 101

The main purpose of English 101 is to introduce you to the conventions of academic writing and critical thinking. And while academic writing means different things to different people, there are some common elements. We write to communicate to others-whether they are colleagues, professionals in their fields, or friends. We write to convince others that our position has validity. We write to discover new things about our world as well as ourselves. For that matter, the process of writing is epistemological-a way of coming to know. Writing can become a medium for self-reflection, self-expression, and communication, a means of coming to know for both the writer and reader.

Script for Disclosing

I have a specific learning disability. I do have the skills and ability to complete the requirements for this course, however because of my disability I will need to have these specific accommodations:

1. Extended time-It takes me at least twice the time of my friends to read and understand any material that is given to me.
2. Reader/Recorded material-Since it takes so much time for me to decode and understand the written word, I struggle with comprehension. However when I am able to listen to information I can better understand what is being stated.
3. Computer use for written assignments-I struggle with spelling and word choice, so computer programs such as Word is a vital tool for me to write in a way so that others will understand.

I am confident I can do well in this course, however I know from my past experiences that these accommodations will allow me to access the necessary information. I'm looking forward to this course.