

# DISCLOSING DYSLEXIA

Disclosure is the process of informing a potential employer that you have dyslexia. It can be difficult to know whether to tell an employer and also to know when and how information should be given. The decision is a personal one but the following points may help you to decide.

## Should you disclose ?

- You may not want to disclose having dyslexia as you may be concerned about being rejected automatically
- You may feel that having dyslexia does not actually affect your ability to do the job that you have applied for.

## Advantages of Disclosure

- The employer will make adjustments for you in the selection process (e.g. give you more time with tests and other skills exercises)
- The employer has a legal obligation to make adjustments in the workplace (e.g. extra computer software).

## How to Disclose - Marketing Yourself Effectively

*It is important to think about all the skills that you can offer an employer:*

### Strengths from dyslexia can include:

- Good at ideas and innovative thinking.
- Creative in the way they make links and connections.
- Good problem solver and lateral thinker.
- Have excellent visual and spatial awareness.
- Good with practical tasks and creative in many ways.
- Strong in the areas of art, music, design, architecture and engineering.

*Think about how you have developed strategies and alternative learning methods to overcome difficulties:*

### Difficulties from dyslexia can include:

- ◆ Poor handwriting.    ◆ Inaccurate number work.    ◆ Difficulties with sequences e.g. date order.
- ◆ Erratic spelling.    ◆ Misreading, leading to comprehension difficulties.
- ◆ Ability to solve problems but inability to show process.

(Source: British Dyslexia Association)

Hot Tips Series

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## **When to Disclose?**

There are several appropriate times you may choose to disclose to a potential employer:

- **Covering Letter**

You may wish to mention dyslexia in the letter accompanying your CV. It should be done in a positive manner and could highlight any achievements e.g. successful past employment

- **Application Form**

Do not just say you have dyslexia - explain how it will not restrict your ability to work. Remember, not everyone knows what dyslexia is about. How you have managed dyslexia can be used as an example when answering questions about e.g. problem solving or where you have faced challenges and overcome them.

- **Interview**

Always present yourself in a positive manner. If you have disclosed dyslexia, the interviewer may be unsure and want clarification. The employer is looking for reassurance and evidence that you can do the job.

- Be very positive about skills and abilities – do not allow room for doubts
- Provide evidence that is related to your ability to do the job. If you talk about dyslexia, do so in a positive light - what you have learnt and how you have developed. Get help with how to do this from a Careers Adviser or your Dyslexia tutor.
- Don't let dyslexia become the focus of the interview
- Don't assume that an employer will view you in a negative way

## **The Legal Position - Equality Act 2010**

### **Questions you can be asked when applying for jobs:**

When people are recruiting staff, there are limits on the health or disability-related enquiries they can make during the recruitment process. These limits apply up to the point where you are offered a job or placed in a pool of people to be offered a job.

- Before you are offered a job or placed in a pool of successful people, you can only be asked about your health or disability:
- to help the person recruiting to find out whether you can take part in an assessment
- to help them decide whether they need to make reasonable adjustments for you in a selection process, like an interview or test
- to help them decide whether you can carry out a task that is an essential part of the work
- to help them to monitor diversity among people applying for their jobs
- if they want to know you are disabled because they want to increase the number of disabled people they employ
- if they want to know you are disabled because it is a requirement of the job that you have a disability

You may be asked whether you have a health condition or disability on an application form or in an interview. You then need to think about whether the question is one that is allowed to be asked at that stage of recruitment.

### **What to do if the question is not allowed**

If you're asked a question that you think is not allowed under the Equality Act 2010, you can tell the employer. Or you can tell the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC). The EHRC can then carry out an investigation or take other appropriate action.