

GET THE JOB

MANAGE THE IMPRESSION YOU AND YOUR DISABILITY MAKE DURING THE JOB INTERVIEW

Impression management strategies and self disclosure can be used to dispel myths about disability, and strengthen your presentation during the interview.

TO DO WELL IN AN INTERVIEW

Know about

- The company
- The position
- How you meet the requirements
- Possible biases of the interviewer
- How you may confront bias with IM

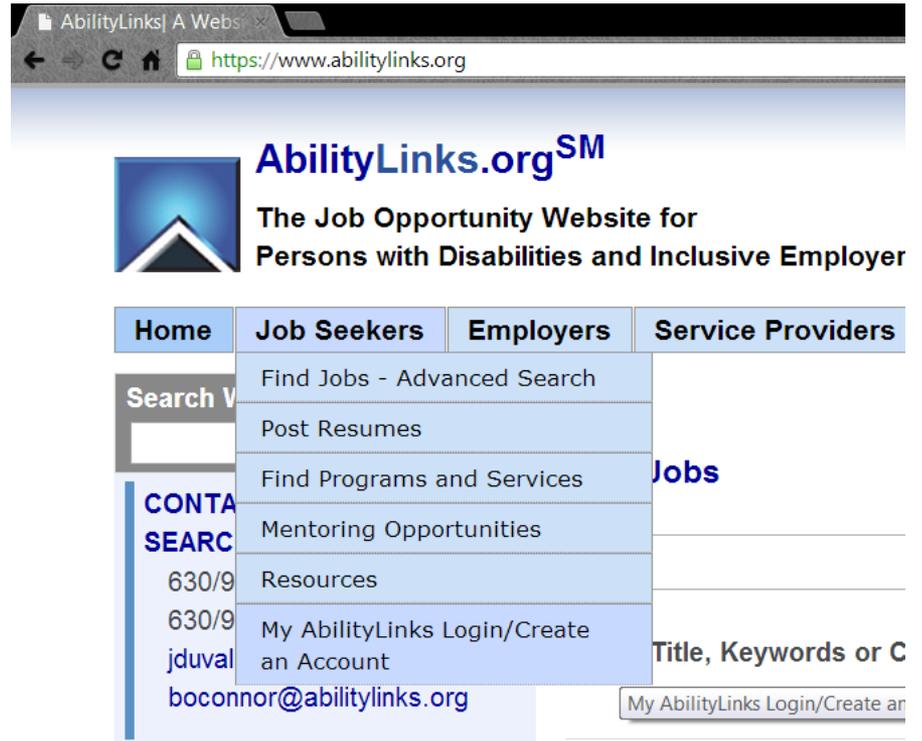
IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT

- Employer perspectives
- Premise of IM
- What employers can ask
- Disclosure / Non-Disclosure
- IM Techniques
- Strategies
- Other considerations



ABILITYLINKS

- Web-based
- Nationwide
- Live person support



The screenshot shows the homepage of AbilityLinks.org. The browser address bar displays "https://www.abilitylinks.org". The site header includes the logo and the text "AbilityLinks.orgSM The Job Opportunity Website for Persons with Disabilities and Inclusive Employer". A navigation menu contains "Home", "Job Seekers", "Employers", and "Service Providers". A search bar is visible with the text "Search V". A sidebar on the left contains the text "CONTACT SEARCH" and a phone number "630/9630/9630". The main content area features a list of links: "Find Jobs - Advanced Search", "Post Resumes", "Find Programs and Services", "Mentoring Opportunities", and "Resources". A "Jobs" section is partially visible on the right, with a search input field containing "Title, Keywords or C". At the bottom, there is a link for "My AbilityLinks Login/Create an Account" and a contact email "boconnor@abilitylinks.org".

www.abilitylinks.org

THE MODERATOR



Mark Williams

- Low Vision Disability
- AbilityLinks
- Disability Employment Initiative
- Chicagoland Business Leadership Network
- Family Resource Center on Disabilities
- Cohen Institute for Mental Health Education
- Professional Assistant Center for Education
- Access Living



THE CONTEXT

- Visible disability
- Voluntarily discloses disability
- Interviewer's reaction ("An Accident?")
- Asset-based disclosure ("I learned discipline; how to adjust")

THE CONTEXT

- Impressions you make play a major role
- Interviewer may show anxiety or discomfort
- Interviewers may be more concerned about “invisible” disabilities

THE CONTEXT

- Knowledge may/may not change attitudes
- Subjective impressions more than credentials and skills
- Work to shape the interviewer's impression of YOU

THE RESEARCH

- Practical information to dispel concerns
- What employers believe about the work people with disabilities can do
- Costs
- Fear of litigation

OTHER MISPERCEPTIONS ABOUT EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES

- They require extra time to learn new tasks
- Always require expensive accommodations
- Can't get work done on time and need help
- Make their co-workers uncomfortable
- Call in sick more often
- Have trouble getting along with others

THE PREMISE OF IM

- Individuals strive to control the impression that others form of them
- IM can be used to offset negative perception of employers about your potential as a productive worker

WHAT DOES THE ADA SAY?

- An application may not seek information about health status or ask disability-related questions
- An employer may not ask a job applicant disability-related questions or questions likely to solicit information about a disability
- An employer may not ask an applicant to submit to a medical examination before an offer is made
- An employer may, however, ask the applicant questions during the interview about the applicant's ability to perform specific job functions

WHAT DOES THE ADA SAY?

- An employer may condition a job offer on the satisfactory outcome of a post-offer medical examination or medical inquiry, if such medical examination or inquiry is required of all entering employees in the same job category
- if the employer withdraws a job offer because the post-offer medical examination or inquiry reveals a disability, the reason(s) for not hiring must be job-related and consistent with business necessity.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

- You are not obligated to disclose your disability during the job interview or on the job
- However, if you need an accommodation to perform a job or to apply for one, you will need to disclose your disability at some point
- If your employer is unaware of your disability, they have no legal obligation to provide you with a reasonable accommodation

CHOOSING TO DISCLOSE (OR NOT)

- Has the company hired people with disabilities
- Does their website or hiring materials include a diversity statement that mentions disabilities
- Has the company posted openings to disability-focused jobs sites like AbilityLinks
- Is their office or worksite accessible
- Are they a federal contractor or federal government employer

CHOOSING TO DISCLOSE (OR NOT)

- Telecommuting
- Flexible work schedules

Make informed decisions.

COMMON IM TOOLS

- Assertiveness
- Self promotion
- Ingratiation
- Reflected glory
- Opinion conformity
- Excuses/Justification
- Apologies

COMMON IM TOOLS--ASSERTIVENESS

Assertiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confident declaration• Affirms your point of view• Is not ignored or denied• Used to<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Share information or opinions<input type="checkbox"/> Highlight specific skills and abilities<input type="checkbox"/> Portraying yourself as a competent individual
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“Tell me about your success in writing code that doesn’t need a lot of debugging.”

COMMON IM TOOLS--ASSERTIVENESS

“Tell me about your success in writing code that doesn’t need a lot of debugging.”

Assertiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I’ve honed my attention to detail to a very high level because of the extra attention I give to visual work• In my last position I was the go-to person proofing
Misperception	People with disabilities need help to finish their work
Replaced with	Visual disability is the driver for a higher standard of quality

COMMON IM TOOLS—SELF PROMOTION

Self-Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promoting your accomplishments, achievements, contributions, talents, qualities• Important for higher level professional positions• Frequent self-promoting themes<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Hardworking/energetic<input type="checkbox"/> Successful/confident<input type="checkbox"/> Interpersonally skilled<input type="checkbox"/> Growth oriented and flexible<input type="checkbox"/> Goal and result oriented<input type="checkbox"/> An effective leader<input type="checkbox"/> Ability to manage disability issues
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WE'RE LOOKING FOR
SOMEONE WHO CAN FLY
WITH THE EAGLES, SWIM
WITH THE SHARKS AND
RUN WITH THE WOLVES.

I CAN'T FLY, SWIM OR RUN,
BUT AN EAGLE CAN'T CLOSE
A DEAL, A SHARK CAN'T
CHARM A CLIENT AND A WOLF
CAN'T INSPIRE A SALES TEAM!



EXAMPLE: DISCLOSURE WITH SELF PROMOTION

Position:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer Programmer
Candidate's Disability:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memory deficit
Interview Question	"How do you organize and manage the knowledge and detail required for applications that work seamlessly across multiple platforms?"
ANSWERS	
ANSWER 1	+ ANSWER 2: DISCLOSURE W/ SELF PROMOTION
<p>"Once I understand the requirements of the application, I draw upon my knowledge of multiple languages and ensure that I am up to date on all of them. Then I frame out a flowchart for each module of the application, and a consolidated flowchart to show how the various components will work together on each platform. At each step, I develop, test, and document the efficiency of each routine. As a result, each module can be easily understood by colleagues, and the development process is documented for future revisions."</p>	<p>"This is a highly disciplined process that I developed early in my career. It has been well received and even duplicated by colleagues. It's a process to ensure accuracy and thoroughness. While I developed this approach to compensate for memory deficit that I sometimes experience due to epilepsy, prior employers have said that it leads to measurably better deliverables than those of my peers. Epilepsy resulting from illness can strike anyone at anytime, I'm fortunate that my rehabilitation from the illness made me a better organized, more highly disciplined professional."</p>

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<p>CONSIDERATIONS</p>	
<p>NON-DISCLOSING</p>	<p>DISCLOSING W/ SELF PROMOTION</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While you have a disability, you've never needed a reasonable accommodation • You believe that disclosure will have a negative impact on your chances • The company has no history of outreach to the disability community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You know the company is a federal contractor • The company reaches out to the disability community and you see or know other employees with disabilities who work there • The company appears to be disability friendly in other ways (flextime, affinity groups, work-from-home) • You need an accommodation for the interview. • You know you'll need an accommodation to do the job • You believe the interviewer suspects your disability and your disclosure can allay concerns

DISCLOSURE: NEED / ADVANTAGE

CONSIDERATIONS	
NEED	ADVANTAGE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To secure an accommodation• Disability is apparent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A disability friendly company• Disability can be leveraged as a unique strength

COMMON IM TOOLS—INGRATIATION

Ingratiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gets the interviewer to like you• Complimenting the company, their products or services, and the interviewer• Says that you are aware of social and contextual factors
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“Tell me about what it takes to be a successful team player.”

COMMON IM TOOLS—REFLECTED GLORY

Basking in reflected glory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Associating yourself with another's success• Underscores socially connectedness• May reduce employer's stigma and negative views of disability• Interviewer understands that others have recognized your abilities• Negative outcomes in using this technique may include the interviewer viewing you as a name-dropper
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COMMON IM TOOLS—OPINION CONFORMITY

Opinion Conformity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To adopt and validate the beliefs of the interviewer• Strengthens the bond between applicant and organization• Stresses similarities over differences• Opinion conformity includes<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Showing how your values are a good fit with the employer's<input type="checkbox"/> Describing personal experiences that may be similar to those of the interviewer
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“We’re a fast-paced and competitive workplace. How do you sell your ideas to the opposition?”

COMMON IM TOOLS—EXCUSES/JUSTIFICATION

Excuses Justification	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establishes distance from negative outcomes or behaviors• Used when a prior employer or organization was involved in negative behaviors that received attention• Implies that the employer would have acted the same way if in a similar situation
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COMMON IM TOOLS—APOLOGIES

Apologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A self-protective technique• Validates the impact of negative events• Accepts responsibility• May be followed by reassurance in order to retain credibility
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“Tell me about a time when you think your participation on a team could have been better, why and how you addressed it.”

WHAT HAVE PEOPLE SAID ABOUT YOU THAT REFLECT THEIR OWN ASSUMPTIONS

- Older than you look
- Hard to understand
- Surprised that you (fill in the blank)

USING IM STRATEGICALLY

Example Goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You want to adjust the perception that your communications skills may be viewed as weak because of a speech impediment
Example Techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assertiveness—Questioning: “Are written or electronic communication acceptable in this position?”• Assertiveness—Volunteering Information: “I use a human voice synthesizer that allows me to participate in planned and spontaneous dialogue.”• Assertiveness—Volunteering Information: “Even with my speech impediment, I host a weekly podcast—listeners have said that they get used to my “accent”.• Ingratiation—“I know how important communication is to this company’s brand, which is why I wanted to tell you how I communicate as effectively as anyone.”• Basking in Reflected Glory—“My local professional association has called on me several times to present at their well attended regional conferences.”

GOALS AND CHOICES

- What are your goals
- What IM tools will help you to meet those goals
- Do your tools reflect
 - Your strengths
 - What you know about the job
 - What you know about the environment
 - What you know about the interviewer

FEEDBACK

- Once applied, seek feedback
- How did the interviewer accept your effort
- Make adjustments (immediately or in future meetings)

NONVERBAL BEHAVIOR

- Interviewers may value more than what you say
- IM extends to nonverbal behavior as well
- Congruency: verbal=nonverbal
- Develop IM goals to compensate for nonverbal that may be perceived as detrimental when compared to peers without disabilities
 - Resumes
 - Narratives--Letters
 - Other media

SELF MONITORING

- The ability to observe cues and adjust
- Maintain congruence between presentation and your inner feelings and beliefs

PHYSICAL ATTRACTIVENESS

- Choice of clothing, hairstyles, grooming
- Choice of IM tools can address challenges of physical attractiveness



Shelley Baer, “The Beauty of Disability”

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xX1Job6O60E>

TRUSTWORTHINESS

- Behavior that shows
 - Interest in the position
 - Ability to retain confidential information
 - Integrity
 - Candor
 - Ability to admit mistakes

PERCEPTION OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- Addresses stigma of disability
- Promotes positive attitudes
- Demonstrates physical capabilities

INTERVIEWS VIA TELEPHONE OR SKYPE

- More verbal strategies
- Diminished perception of nonverbal behavior and cues

STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

- Do not reduce the impact of IM unless
 - Rating scales anchored in behavior
 - Use of multiple interviewers
 - Rater training
 - Statistical prediction

OVERUSE / OVERFOCUS

- Overly trying to create a particular view
- Interferes with authenticity

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Not an inherent threat to fairness
- Ability to “sell” yourself is a desirable attribute

CONCLUSION

- Enhances interview performance
- Helps to dispel misperceptions about disability
- Puts your interviewer at ease
- Increases self-esteem
- Increases autonomy
- Improves retention

Q & A