

FAQ's and Misconceptions

The following are some common questions and misconceptions that employers have had when it comes to hiring people with disabilities. ¹

- 1. I hired somebody with a disability once and it didn't work out. Why would I try it again?**
 - Everybody is different and has different skills and abilities whether they have a disability or not.
 - The key is finding the right person for the right job and focusing on their skills and how they can contribute to the success of your team.
- 2. What happens if we hire somebody with a disability and they cannot do the job? We won't be able to fire them if they aren't the right fit.**
 - Regular performance process and guidelines apply to all employees whether they have a disability or not.
 - Having disclosure and accommodation processes and guidelines can help all members of your team with performance discussions and what to do when/if an employee discloses.
 - If you've taken all reasonable measures to support an individual in being successful in their position and they aren't able to do the job, you can take the measures needed to terminate their employment.
- 3. How do you talk to somebody about their disability? I know there are questions we cannot ask employees or potential candidates.**
 - Focus on the duties of the job and if they require any specific accommodations.
 - Ask about the accommodations they use at home, or have used in past employment positions.
 - If an employee shares their specific disability, ask them for suggestions on where you could learn more information about their disability to better understand and support them.
- 4. We are a small team and cannot afford to have people only do a partial job.**
 - While customized tasks may be needed for some individuals, most people are able to do the full job – maybe just with some minor accommodations.
 - It's important to hire the right person for the job, this also applies to employees with disabilities.
 - There are grants such as [the Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities \(OF\) program](#) ² which can help subsidize employment opportunities.

5. We cannot make any accommodations (i.e. adjustments to the job or office)

- You might already be making accommodations for your team such as: letting people leave for personal appointments, taking lunch at different times or working from home, offering flex time, letting people have their morning coffee before talking to them, etc. We do this often and frequently without even thinking of it
- Many employees may do their jobs differently than others based on their experiences. Often, employees with disabilities are innovative and come up with creative solutions to problems based on their lived experiences. These problem-solving skills can actually impact your entire teams' productivity in a positive way while also enriching your culture.

6. What if we don't have a budget to provide accommodations?

- Many people with disabilities don't require any accommodations from their employer
- Many accommodations do not involve a cost.
- For accommodations that may have a cost involved, most are under \$500.
- There are programs such as [Technology@Work](#)³ that can provide funding and accommodations for assistive equipment and devices at work.

Adapted from from Champions Career Centre.

¹ championscareercentre.org. (2017). *Talking About Disabilities; Employers Are Asking*. Retrieved from <http://www.championscareercentre.org/services-for-employers/employer-faqs/>

Link References:

² Government of Canada (2017) *Funding: Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities – Overview*. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/funding/disability-opportunity.html>

³ Neil Squire Society (2017) *Technology@Work*. Retrieved from <http://www.neilsquire.ca/individual-programs-services/technologywork/>