

Invisible Disabilities and Employment - Barriers and Solutions

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Rough outline for today

1. Autism Ontario: Who we are, Where we fit in
2. What is an invisible disability?
3. Job Seekers with Invisible Disabilities:
 - Barriers
 - Knowledge & Solutions

A little introduction

Who are we, and why are we here today?

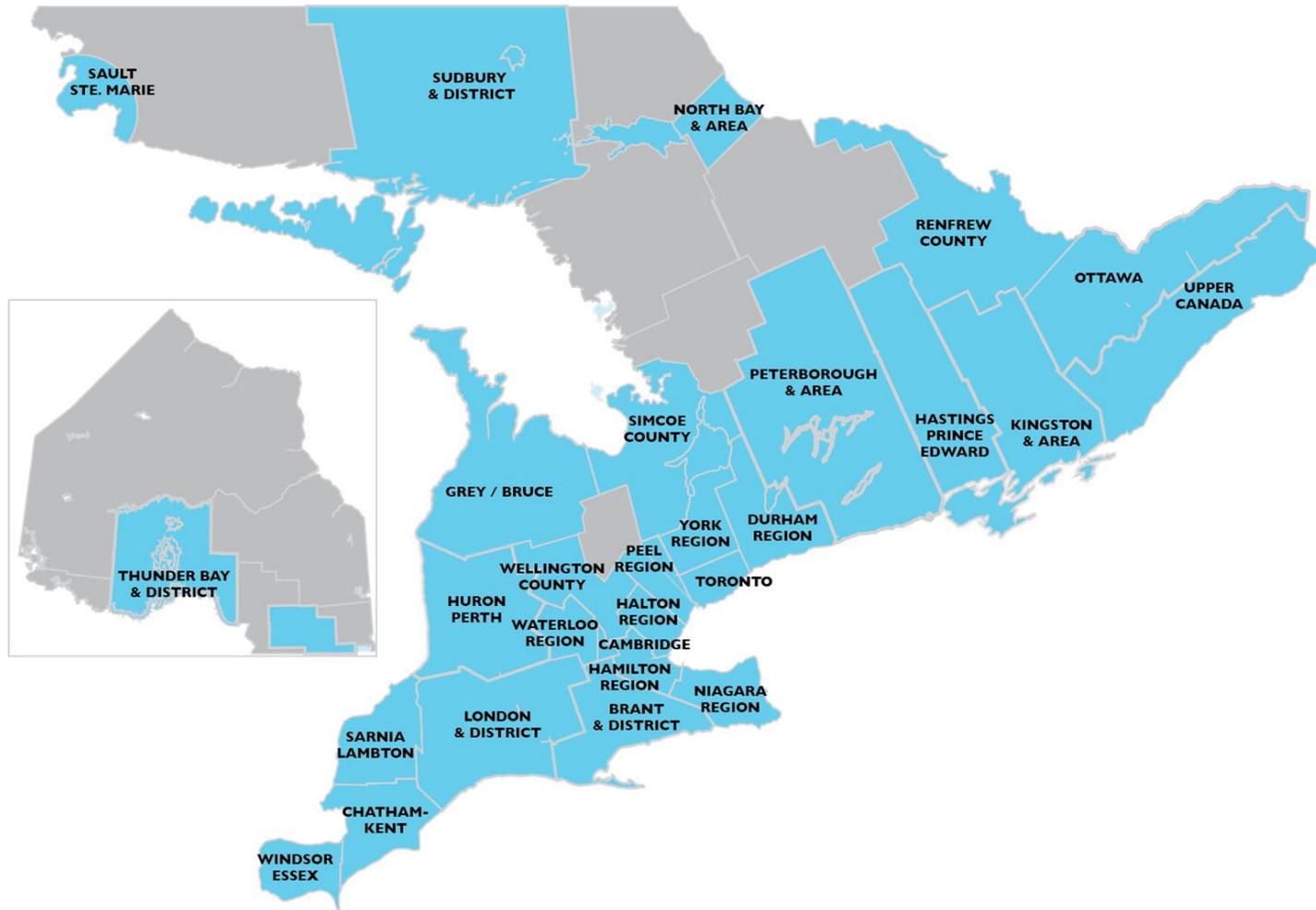
Who is Autism Ontario?

- Charitable organization established since **1973** – 47 years!
- 12 member public board of directors
- 25 Ontario Chapters
- VOLUNTEERS – approximately 300 elected leaders
- Parents and families of children on the Autism Spectrum, adults on the spectrum and professionals
- Approximately 2200 member households;
- 50,000 supporters
- 50 staff province wide, many camp staff (100+)
- www.autismontario.com

What do we do?

- Autism Ontario advocates alongside people on the spectrum and their families, providing services & programs, raising awareness, and promoting acceptance and opportunities.

Autism Ontario Chapters



Autism Ontario strives to:

- Reflect the lives of families and people on the spectrum across the lifespan in all public awareness activities
- Support families, children and adults in local communities
- Inform public policy and programs, locally & provincially
- Promote evidence-based practice
- Support research (participation, evaluation of our own programs, some funding of other initiatives)
- Assist in building or creating community capacity
- Offer reimbursement program and scholarships to adults on the spectrum

ASD: The basics

- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a lifelong neurological disorder that affects the way a person communicates and relates to the people and world around them.
- Current prevalence rate in Canada is 1:66*
- Autism crosses all cultural, ethnic, geographic, and socioeconomic boundaries.



What is an Invisible Disability?

- Definition:
 - A disability that is not immediately noticeable
 - Acquired brain injuries
 - Chronic pain
 - Autism
 - ADHD
 - Fibromyalgia
 - Arthritis
 - Crohn's Disease
 - Hearing loss
 - Epilepsy

Invisible Disabilities and Employment

Disability and how disability is experienced varies from person to person. Over 15% of Ontario's population identifies as having a disability.

People with “invisible” disabilities – autism and other developmental disorders, learning disabilities, mental health challenges – often face unique barriers to accessing and maintaining employment.

Invisible Disabilities and Employment

In 2017, Canadians with disabilities and higher levels of education had a lower employment rate than people with lower levels of education who did not have disabilities.

59% of adults with disabilities were employed compared to around 80% of those without disabilities.

Of youth 15-24 years who were neither in school nor employed, 87% had a mental health issue, a learning disability, or both.

Mental health issues and/or learning disabilities accounted for 77% of youth with disabilities.

Challenges for Adults with Disabilities

- Employment rate of Canadians between the ages of 25 and 64 with disabilities was 59 % (Statistics Canada, 2017).
- 12 % of people with disabilities report having been refused a job in the preceding five years as a result of their disability (Statistics Canada, 2012).



Job Challenges for Adults with ASD

1. In a 2013 study, 75% of the autistic adults surveyed 20 years and older had an annual income under \$30,000.
2. Only 14.3% of people with ASD were employed (2012 StatsCan Survey on Disability).
 - a. Massive income inequality for adults with ASD vs. Canadian average.
 - b. Employer knowledge-base
3. Knowledge, experience and comfort with self-advocacy to negotiate duty to accommodate, pay raises, workplace safety
4. Adults on the spectrum in the workplace can face social communication issues regarding job instructions, adjusting social norms, and team-work.
5. Managing the job-search process.



Human Resources Law

Let's test our knowledge!

Take out your phones, and go to this webpage:

www.menti.com

Enter your digit code: 71 83 24

Human Resources Law and Disabilities

1. Human Rights Code prohibits discrimination based on “disability” which includes but is not limited to:
 - a. a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
 - b. a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
 - c. a mental disorder

Employer Duty to Accommodate

The employer has a duty for reasonable accommodation – that they have to cover the cost of the accommodation so long as it does not pose an undue hardship on the employer – Ontario Human Rights Code.

- modifying job duties
- making changes to the building
- providing job coaching
- referring someone to an employee assistance program
- providing alternative supervision arrangements
- providing alternative ways of communicating with the employee
- job bundling
- long-term and short-term disability leave

Employee Obligations for Accommodation Process

As an employee requesting accommodation for a disability in the workplace you have a duty to :

1. Inform/Request
2. Provide information including information from healthcare providers
3. Cooperate with your employer
4. Accept reasonable accommodation
5. Meet performance and job standards once accommodated
6. Maintain confidentiality

Some Solutions: Inclusive Workplaces

Communication - how are you encouraging people with invisible disabilities to apply?

Work together with agencies who find talent to fill positions

Remove barriers to application

Learn about different interviewing styles

Support interviewing/hiring staff to be aware of bias

Some Solutions: Inclusive Workplaces

Inclusive workplaces start with company/agency culture

Provide clear expectations and boundaries in employment/employer relationships in both policy and practice

Provide concise, context specific instructions and positive feedback

Provide sensitive and direct feedback

Support employees during stressful situations and when introducing change

Some Solutions: Inclusive Workplaces

Consider sensory stimuli in your workplace

- Fragrances
- Climate
- Lighting
- Sound
- Visual distractions

Knowledge to Solutions: Information About Resumes

- The Chronological Resume:
 - Good if you have experience.
 - Shows career progression.
 - May not be ideal.

SAMPLE CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME

JANE SMITH

7982 Central Park Avenue, Apt. 8
Phoenix, AZ 85018

Phone: 602-555-5050
E-mail: janesmith@synmax.com

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- 10+ years experience in administrative and clerical work
- Ability to work independently or in a team setting
- Proficient in Microsoft WindowsXP, including MS Word, Excel and Outlook
- Excellent telephone, customer service and people skills
- Transcription experience with typing skills of 70 wpm

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Administrative Assistant**, Blackwood Systems, Inc., Scottsdale, AZ 12/02-12/07
- Oversaw \$600+ expense budget and used funds for purchasing supplies
 - Stocked and maintained office supplies in order to provide a neat and organized workplace
 - Maintained front desk and served as company gatekeeper to ensure that employees could work without being disturbed
 - Accurately and efficiently inventoried, documented and transported confidential information to an off-site storage facility
- Consultant Assistant**, McDougal Littell, Phoenix, AZ 09/00-12/02
- Used professional phone skills to listen to customers' needs and determine the necessary action
 - Reviewed and processed expense reports to ensure accuracy before submitting to corporate headquarters
 - Assisted with the planning and coordination of regional sales meetings
 - Assisted Consultant Manager by compiling and preparing a detailed monthly report of the attendance records of 23 sales consultants categorized by individual, regional and national spreadsheets
- Sales Assistant**, The Trane Company, Phoenix, AZ 04/98-07/00
- Supported sales engineers by ordering, tracking and scheduling deliveries of heating and air conditioning equipment in a precise manner
 - Prepared literature and submitted proposals to customers to describe the equipment and its cost
 - Determined installation sites for equipment by reading and interpreting plans and blueprints
- Administrative Assistant**, Professional Career Consultants, Scottsdale, AZ 06/96-04/98
- Greeted customers and referred them to their consultant by answered incoming calls
 - Handled all customer correspondence for 4 recruiters in a busy office setting
 - Entered 30+ candidates into database daily, submitting qualified candidates to national recruiting network and retyping resumes when necessary. Prepared and sent invoices to companies that hired our candidates

EDUCATION

Mesa Community College, Mesa Arizona



Information About Resumes:

- The Functional Resume:
 - Focuses on what you can do.
 - Shows skills and abilities.
 - Good for minimizing any employment gaps.
 - Good for when you're starting out or making a career change.

JAMIE WALKER

100 Broadway Lane, New Cityland, CA 91010 | (H) (555) 987-1234 | example-email@example.com

Summary

Enterprising Sales Associate with more than seven years of retail experience. Committed to increasing sales and maximizing profits while retaining exemplary customer service standards. Specialize in tracking sales, creating attractive merchandise displays, tracking inventories and assisting customers in a friendly, courteous manner.

Skills

- Thorough knowledge of retail sales trends
- Sound understanding of basic financial concepts
- Ability to track sales and prepare budgets
- Excellent conflict resolution skills
- Proven time management abilities
- Strong interpersonal skills

Experience

Sales Associate 02/2014 to Present

Waterfront Fashions – CA

- Promoted certain brands without pressuring customers.
- Made recommendations on what products to stock.
- Consistently monitored retail market trends.
- Helped customers make purchasing decisions.
- Worked to anticipate customer needs.
- Provided administrative assistance.

Sales Associate 03/2009 to 02/2014

New Cityland Retail Shop – CA

- Inventoried merchandise supplies and placed orders as necessary.
- Worked with marketing department to develop online strategies.
- Processed transactions in an efficient and courteous manner.
- Kept merchandise and work areas neat and clean.
- Adjusted merchandise on a regular basis.
- Ensured that cash registered balanced.

Sales Associate 10/2007 to 01/2009



Information About Resumes:

- The Hybrid Resume:
 - The best of both.
 - Lets you focus on skills and abilities.
 - Still shows career growth.
 - Keywords!

Harper Kent City, State Zip • (555) 555-1234
harperkent@email.com • linkedin.com/in/your-name-here

Skills

- **Key Skill** - Brief description of the skill and how you use it.
- **Key Skill** - For management, you'll be expected to have technical hard skills and interpersonal soft skills.
- **Key Skill** - Include hard skills that show off domain knowledge and expertise.
- **Key Skill** - Include people and task-management skills that show you know how to lead a team.

Experience

Company 4, Location (MM/YYYY)-Present
Job Title

When writing your experience section for a management position, be sure to focus on the teams you managed and the outcomes they were able to achieve. Tailor your resume by focusing on skills and accomplishments that relate to the job description, rather than simply listing your day-to-day duties.

Company 3, Location (MM/YYYY)-(MM/YYYY)
Job Title

Try replacing some of your duties with measurable results and accomplishments rather than duties. Remember, "duties tell, accomplishments sell." To create a strong measurable result, try this format: [Action verb] [brief explanation of accomplishment] resulting in [quantifiable outcome. Using %, \$, etc. will draw the eye and make an impact].

Company 2, Location (MM/YYYY)-(MM/YYYY)
Job Title

Keep your sentences short and to the point. This will make it easier for a recruiter or hiring manager to read or skim. For your more recent positions, really play up your management skills. Your older positions will give you an opportunity to delve deeper into your technical know-how and hard skills.

Company 1, Location (MM/YYYY)-(MM/YYYY)
Job Title

Recruiters like to see the arc of your career. Make sure your resume conveys how your responsibilities have increased from one stop to the next. It's OK to leave positions off your resume if they aren't relevant to the job you're pursuing. Unless the experience is crucial, you can also go into fewer details on older positions.

Education and Certifications

- Degree, Graduation Year (YYYY)
College Name, Location
- List additional certifications obtained or management trainings completed



Disclosing Your Disability

- Disclosure is the best route to workplace accommodation and is in best interest of the employee.
- It can be very risky decision.



Disclosing Your Disability

- You are not required to disclose.
- If and when you disclose is up to you.
- Know your comfort level.
- You are not lying if you don't disclose.
- Research the company – what is the culture?



When to Disclose?

During the Interview:

- “Tell me about yourself?”
- If you do - be positive, be honest... and move on!



When to Disclose?

During the Interview:

- Not a good idea.
- By disclosing at this early stage you risk:
 - Being discriminated against
 - Being labelled
 - Loss of privacy
 - Not getting the job (true story!)



When to Disclose?

After the Offer:

- If there are possible safety risks.
- If you must pass a health exam.
- You may wait until after you received written offer.
- If you choose not to disclose, get a written note from your doctor that you were deemed fit to work at this time.



When to Disclose?

On the Job:

- If you need time off for medical appointments
- Be sure to loop in Manager and HR
- When? When you're comfortable



When to Disclose?

On the Job:

- You might chose to have an information session with colleagues.
- Be as open as you want.
- You may not want to name your condition, just some of the things that describe it and any accommodation you need.
- You are not lying or misleading anyone.



Autism Ontario Educational Resources

Visit our learning portal on our main page to view helpful articles and webinars created by people on the spectrum, caregivers and professionals.

<https://www.autismontario.com/programs-services/webinars>

Contact us

Michael@autismontario.com

Tobi@autismontario.com

THANK YOU!