



Job seeking after brain injury

- Where to find available jobs
- Injury disclosure and addressing employer concerns
- How to get additional help with job seeking

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Presentation for



Where to find available jobs

- Websites and online job boards (set up a profile to make applications easier)
 - www.seek.com.au
 - au.indeed.com
 - au.jora.com
 - jobsearch.gov.au
 - www.gumtree.com.au
 - iworkforNSW.gov.au
- Recruitment agencies
 - They will help market you to employers
 - Can be a great source of advice
- Labour hire companies
 - Great source of casual work
- Newspapers
 - Small businesses tend to advertise in free local papers
 - If you buy a paper in a language other than English check there too
- Company websites
 - Hint: look for the careers tab at the bottom or top of the screen
- Social media
 - Follow the companies you would like to work for, they often advertise on social media
- Asking family and friends
 - Do you know someone who works where you want to work? Ask them to put in a good word for you or see if they can get you a trial for a few days
- Contacting businesses directly
 - Makes you look really proactive
 - If nothing available right now, ask them to keep your resume on file
- Volunteering or work experience
 - Offer to work unpaid for a short period to prove your worth to the employer
 - Can be a great way to gain experience
 - Ask your supervisor at the volunteer workplace to be an employment reference
- Networking
 - Find an interest group or professional body for the industry you are interested in
 - Speak to someone you know who works in the industry and ask for advice
 - Contact old employers, they might not have anything available but may know someone who does.

Injury disclosure and addressing employer concerns

When to disclose your injury

There is no wrong or right time to disclose an injury, if at all, to a potential employer. However, below are some suggestions for when and how to disclose your injury.

The job application

You may choose to disclose your injury on a job application. This action can be seen as being open and honest about your injury. It does however focus attention only on your injury, not your rehabilitation and activities to get you back to paid employment. It also focuses attention away from your skills and assets. For some employers it can be enough not to give you an interview.

If there is a question on an application form, we suggest that you can:

- Leave it blank, or
- Write that you will discuss at interview.

During the interview

Disclosing during the interview allows you to respond briefly, positively and may reassure an employer that your injury does not hinder you in performing the duties of the job.

If you disclose at interview, you need to have developed an injury disclosure spiel to assist you in the process. This allows you to control the information that is presented and to restate your skills and assets.

We suggest waiting until towards the end of the interview to let the employer know about the injury. You want them to be impressed by your skills and abilities rather than worried about your injury.

After the interview

The decision to disclose after the interview can lead to questions being asked about your honesty. An employer may feel that you have misled or lied to them. Many companies clearly state that if you intentionally lie or falsify your application documents they can terminate your employment.

After the job has commenced




Disclosing after commencing your new employment may result in the following:




- It allows you to prove that you are capable of doing the job and that there is little likelihood of re-injury, or it can lead an employer to distrust you.

Never

The decision to never disclose an injury is an option for any worker. However, failure to disclose an injury does not allow an employer to ensure that you undertake work that is not likely to re-injure you. It may also lead to an increase in your stress levels.

Injury Disclosure - Advantages and Disadvantages

TIME OF DISCLOSURE	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
<p>On a job application</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Appears honest ◦ Piece of mind ◦ Lets an employer decide if your injury will be an issue to your employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Risk of discrimination ◦ May decrease the chances you have to present your skills/explain the effects of your injury
<p>During an interview</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Appears honest ◦ Piece of mind ◦ Chance to present your skills/ explain the effects of your injury in person ◦ Discrimination less likely in a face to face situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ May not get a job offer ◦ May change the focus of the interview from your abilities to your injury ◦ You may not handle your injury/limitations in a positive way
<p>After the interview</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Appears honest ◦ Peace of mind ◦ Chance to present your skills/explain the effects of your injury in person ◦ Discrimination less likely in a face to face situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Employer may feel that you should have let them know before a decision was made ◦ May lead to your employer distrusting you

<p>After you start work</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Opportunity to prove yourself and your abilities ◦ Allows you to answer workmates' questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Employer may feel that you falsified your application ◦ Employer has no opportunity to provide suitable duties or modify the workplace to ensure no re-aggravation ◦ You may feel nervous/afraid about a relapse on the job ◦ Employer/co-workers may not know how to react if you re-injure yourself ◦ You may be treated different
<p>After a relapse at work</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Opportunity to prove yourself and your abilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Employer may feel that you falsified your application ◦ Employer/co-workers may not know how to react if you re-injure yourself
<p>Never</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ No discrimination in favour of non-injured workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Employer can not provide suitable duties or modify workplace to ensure no re-aggravation ◦ If you have not disclosed your injury and you re-aggravate, you run the risk of being fired ◦ May not get the support you need, when it is required

Injury related questions you may be asked at a job interview

- Have you ever had a work related injury?
- What have you been doing since your last job?
- Why are you looking for work now?
- What can you tell me about your injury?
- How do you know you can do this type of work?
- Why didn't you return to work with your previous employer?

Common concerns relating to return to work after brain injury

- Uncertainty about whether you will be able to manage the new job. Asking the right questions in the job interview will help you to determine whether the position you are applying for is within your capacity and therefore whether you will be able to manage the job.
- Feeling that you are being dishonest with the employer if you do not disclose your injury. If the job is physically appropriate, you are being honest about your capacity to perform the duties.
- Fear of re-injuring should you return to work. Prior to returning to work, approval would be obtained from your doctor for that type of employment to ensure the suitability of the role and to prevent any aggravations or further injury.
- That the employer will discriminate against you. The employer will only discriminate against you if your injury will impact on your ability to perform the role. If the job is physically appropriate for you and within your current abilities, you should be able to perform the role to the same or similar capacity to your colleagues. If in doubt, ask for a trial or to volunteer first to test your capacity.
- That co-workers may not be supportive when you need assistance. Once again, if the position is appropriate, you will not have to rely on colleagues any more than your colleagues will rely upon you. It is normal to need some assistance from colleagues when first learning a new job.

Addressing common employer concerns

- If you need to fill out an application form and it asks you whether you have been on Worker's Insurance, you need to answer "yes". This is normally a legal document, as you need to sign the application form.
- If you are asked verbally about whether you have previously had a Worker's Insurance Claim, it is best to answer the question truthfully. But normalize the injury in the context of your work.
- All you need to say is that you have injured your _____ and that you have completed your required medical treatment.
- Be positive and talk about what you can do, without focusing on your restrictions. Lead each injury conversation with a positive statement about your previous work/team/industry.
- See your skills as separate to your injury - try to show the employer they need you because of your skills, training, good work ethic, etc.
- If you do not get asked and there is no application form, then there is no need to volunteer the information. If you have done the research on the company and the position and feel that you would

be physically capable of completing the job, your prior injury becomes irrelevant to the position you are applying for.

- Consider asking to work for a trial period initially so that you and the employer can test whether the job will be the right fit for you.

How to get additional help with job seeking

Not sure where to start? Maybe you can't return to the same type of job you did pre brain injury. There are lots of options for job seeking support available, for most of which there is no out of pocket cost for the job seeker. If the funding is available, consider asking for a vocational assessment to assist in developing some goals around returning to work and a plan to achieve these.

- NDIS – speak to your plan manager or support coordinator, ask about referral for a vocational assessment and development of a job seeking plan
- Lifetime Care, Worker's Care, Worker's Insurance, CTP – ask your case manager about referral to a rehab provider, the iCare and SIRA websites are also great sources of information
- Income protection – ask your insurer, they sometimes provide some funding for a vocational assessment with a rehab provider
- Centrelink – speak to them regarding an employment services assessment for referral to a Disability Employment Services (DES) provider. Most Australian citizens and permanent residents can access these services so long as they have capacity to work at least 15 hours per week (8 hours per week if in receipt of the DSP). You have the right to choose your own provider so consider interviewing a few before you choose one.
- Hospital BIRP and community rehab teams – have built relationships with lots of local providers and will be able to give advice on the best source of assistance for your situation.
- ASORC link to find a rehab counsellor: <https://www.asorc.org.au/memberdirectory>

Greenlight are able to service clients under all of the above funding streams. If in doubt give us a call and we can let you know if we will be able to assist.

Phone: 1300 312 049