



ACCESSIBILITY
CONFIDENT EMPLOYERS
(ACE)

Preparing for an Interview: A Tip Sheet for Job Seekers with Disabilities

Why interview preparation matters

An interview is a chance for an employer to learn more about your skills, experience, strengths, and interest in the role. It is also a chance for you to learn about the employer, the workplace, and whether the job feels like a good fit for you.

For job seekers who are Deaf, Neurodivergent, and/or have a disability, interview preparation may include more than reviewing common questions. You may also want to think about accessibility, communication needs, accommodations, transportation, sensory needs, energy levels, disclosure, and how to decide whether the workplace feels inclusive and respectful.

You do not need to share personal medical information in an interview. You also do not need to prove your worth. The goal is to prepare in a way that helps you show your strengths, ask useful questions, and understand what support you may need to participate fully.

What to know before the interview

Before the interview, try to gather as much information as you can about the role, the employer, and the interview process.

Review the job posting carefully. Look for the main duties, required skills, work hours, location, remote or hybrid options, physical or communication requirements, and any information about accessibility, accommodations, equity, diversity, or inclusion.

You can also visit the employer's website to learn more about their work, values, services, and workplace culture. Look for signs that accessibility is part of how they work. For example, do they mention accessibility on their website? Do they use plain language? Do they talk about accommodations? Do they include disability in their equity or inclusion commitments?

This research can help you prepare stronger answers and decide what questions you may want to ask.

Preparing your examples

Many interview questions ask you to give examples from your past experience. These examples do not have to come only from paid work. You can also use examples from volunteering, school, caregiving, community work, training programs, lived experience, creative projects, advocacy, or problem-solving in your daily life.

Before the interview, choose three to five examples that show your strengths. These might include:

- solving a problem
- learning something new
- working with others
- communicating clearly
- managing a challenge
- staying organized
- supporting a customer, client, coworker, or community member
- adapting to change
- using technology or tools
- advocating for yourself or others

A simple way to prepare each example is to use this structure:

Situation: What was happening?

Action: What did you do?

Result: What happened because of your action?

Learning: What did you learn or what would you do again?

You do not need to memorize full answers. It may be more helpful to write short notes or key words so you can speak naturally.

Thinking about accessibility before the interview

An accessible interview is one where you can participate in a fair and meaningful way. Depending on your needs, accessibility may include:

- a sign language interpreter
- captioning
- interview questions in advance
- extra time
- a quiet or low-sensory space
- a virtual interview option
- an accessible location
- step-free access
- a support person
- breaks during a longer interview
- plain language instructions
- flexibility with interview format
- permission to use notes, communication tools, or assistive technology

Before the interview, ask yourself:

- What do I need to participate fully?
- What helps me communicate my skills clearly?
- What barriers might come up in this interview format?
- Do I need to request an accommodation before the interview?
- Is there anything I need to confirm, such as location, parking, transit, elevator access, captions, or interview length?

You have the right to ask for interview accommodations. Asking for an accommodation is not asking for special treatment. It is asking for a fair opportunity to participate. And under the law, all employers have a Duty to Accommodate people with access needs.

Sample language for requesting an interview accommodation

You can keep the request simple. You do not need to share your diagnosis or detailed medical information.

Example 1: General accommodation request

“Thank you for inviting me to interview. I’m looking forward to speaking with you. To participate fully in the interview, I would like to request [specific accommodation]. Please let me know if you need any additional information.”

Example 2: Requesting questions in advance

“Thank you for the interview invitation. I would like to request the interview questions in advance as an accommodation. This helps me process information and communicate my experience clearly.”

Example 3: Requesting captions for a virtual interview

“Thank you for the invitation. For accessibility, could captions please be enabled for the virtual interview?”

Example 4: Asking about physical access

“Before the interview, could you please confirm whether the interview location has step-free access, accessible parking, and an accessible washroom?”

Deciding what you want to share

Some people choose to disclose that they are Deaf, Neurodivergent, and/or have a disability. Some people do not. Some people share only what is needed to request an accommodation. This is a personal decision.

You may choose to share information if:

- you need an accommodation for the interview
- your disability-related experience is connected to your strengths or work
- you want to understand how the employer responds to accessibility needs
- you feel safe and comfortable doing so

You may choose not to share information if:

- it is not relevant to the interview
- you do not need an accommodation at this stage
- you are unsure whether the employer will respond respectfully
- you prefer to wait until later in the hiring process

A helpful approach is to focus on what you need to participate or do the job, rather than sharing personal medical details.

For example, instead of saying, “I have a medical condition,” you could say:

“I do my best work when instructions are clear and provided in writing.”

Or:

“For interviews, I communicate best when I have a few moments to process each question before responding.”

Preparing questions for the employer

An interview is not only about whether the employer chooses you. It is also about whether the workplace is a good fit for your skills, needs, and goals.

You may want to ask questions such as:

- “How does your organization support accessibility during onboarding?”
- “What does training look like for someone starting in this role?”
- “How are expectations and priorities communicated?”
- “What does supervision or feedback usually look like?”
- “How does the organization respond when employees need accommodations?”
- “Is there flexibility in how work is completed, where possible?”
- “What does a successful first three months in this role look like?”
- “How does the team communicate day to day?”
- “Are instructions, schedules, and expectations usually provided in writing?”

These questions can help you learn about communication, support, flexibility, and workplace culture.

Getting ready the day before

The day before the interview, try to reduce stress by preparing practical details.

You may want to:

- confirm the interview time, location, format, and contact person
- test the video link, captions, microphone, or assistive technology
- plan transportation or confirm parking
- review the job posting
- choose your examples
- prepare your questions
- write down key points you want to remember
- gather anything you need, such as notes, water, medication, mobility aids, communication tools, or documents
- plan what you will do before and after the interview to manage energy and stress

For some people, interviews take a lot of energy. It can help to avoid scheduling too much immediately before or after the interview when possible.

During the interview

During the interview, remember that it is okay to pause, ask for clarification, or take a moment before answering.

You can say:

- “Could you please repeat the question?”
- “Could you say that another way?”
- “I’d like a moment to think about that.”
- “I have an example, but I need a second to organize my thoughts.”
- “Can I check that I understood the question correctly?”

These are normal communication strategies. They can help you answer more clearly.

Try to connect your answers to the role. Use examples that show your skills, strengths, and problem-solving. You do not need to be perfect. You are there to have a conversation about whether your experience, skills, and goals match the position.

Watching for green flags and red flags

The interview can also tell you a lot about the employer.

Green flags may include:

- they provide clear information about the interview process
- they respond respectfully to accommodation requests
- they explain the role and expectations clearly
- they allow time for your questions
- they use respectful language about disability and accessibility
- they show openness to learning
- they describe onboarding, training, and support
- they focus on your skills and how you can succeed

Red flags may include:

- they seem annoyed by accommodation requests
- they ask inappropriate medical questions
- they make assumptions about what you can or cannot do
- they are unclear about the role or expectations
- they dismiss accessibility concerns
- they use disrespectful language
- they pressure you to share personal information

- they suggest that accommodations are a burden

A red flag does not always mean you should walk away, but it may help you decide what follow-up questions to ask or whether the workplace feels safe and supportive.

After the interview

After the interview, take a few minutes to reflect. You may want to write down:

- What went well?
- What questions were difficult?
- Did I have what I needed to participate fully?
- Did the employer respond respectfully?
- What did I learn about the role?
- What did I learn about the workplace culture?
- Is there anything I want to clarify in a follow-up email?

You can also send a short thank-you email. This can be simple:

“Thank you for taking the time to meet with me today. I appreciated learning more about the role and your team. I’m still very interested in the opportunity and look forward to hearing about next steps.”

Quick interview preparation checklist

Before the interview:

- I reviewed the job posting.
- I researched the employer.
- I prepared three to five examples that show my strengths.
- I thought about whether I need an interview accommodation.
- I requested any accommodations I need.
- I prepared questions for the employer.
- I confirmed the interview time, location, format, and contact person.
- I planned transportation, technology, or accessibility supports.
- I wrote down key points I want to remember.
- I planned how to manage my energy before and after the interview.

Learn More

[The ACE Project](#)

Free accessibility training, tools, and resources to support more accessible, inclusive employment practices.

[**Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission: Duty to Accommodate**](#)

Explains accommodation under Nova Scotia's Human Rights Act, including how rules, practices, conditions, or requirements may need to be adjusted to meet individual needs.

[**New Brunswick Human Rights Commission: Requesting Accommodations in the Workplace**](#)

A plain language guide for employees and employers about accommodation conversations and the duty to accommodate under human rights law.

[**Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Commission: Understanding the Duty to Accommodate**](#)

A practical workplace guide explaining the duty to accommodate under Newfoundland and Labrador's Human Rights Act.

[**Canadian Human Rights Commission: Duty to Accommodate**](#)

Explains the duty of employers and service providers to adjust rules, policies, or practices so people can participate fully.