

Interviewing Applicants with Disabilities

Grand Valley State University must provide accommodations, if requested, to give an applicant an equal opportunity in the interview process. Hiring departments may find it helpful to state in an initial job notice that if an accommodation is needed for an interview, the candidate should request this in advance.

Universal practices for interviewing applicants, including those with disabilities, are essential in fostering an equitable and inclusive hiring process. Implementing standardized, accessible, and non-discriminatory interview practices ensures that all candidates are evaluated based on their skills and qualifications. Additionally, universal practices foster a positive workplace culture that values inclusivity, making it more likely that all employees feel respected and supported, ultimately benefiting the overall success and innovation of the organization. GVSU will use universal accessibility practices for all interviews. Proper Universal design may eliminate or reduce the need for individualized accommodations.

Important Considerations:

- **Confidentiality:** Maintain privacy when discussing disability-related needs.
 - Please do not ask questions about the nature or severity of the disability
- **Professionalism:** Treat all applicants respectfully and focus on their abilities, not limitations.
- **Collaboration with HR:** Consult with your HR department to ensure compliance with ADA regulations and appropriate accommodation implementation.
- **Focus on the ability of an applicant to perform the job, not on the disability.**

Providing Individual, Reasonable Accommodations:

Hiring departments may find it helpful to state in an initial job notice that candidates should request this in advance if an accommodation is needed for an interview.

Individual accommodations may include but are not limited to...

- Live captions or sign language interpretation.
- Braille copies of the job posting or other documents,

Universal Design for Hiring:

Pre-interview communication:

- **Openly discussing needs:** Actively ask applicants if they require any accommodations for the interview process.
- **Information sharing:** Provide details about the interview format, platforms, and accessibility features beforehand.

Communication Adaptations:

- **Sign language interpreters:** For applicants who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- **Live transcription services:** To provide real-time text captions of the conversation.
- **Written communication options:** Allowing for questions and answers to be submitted in writing if needed.
- **Accessible electronic documents:** Job postings, interview questions, and other essential information should be available as accessible websites, PDFs or DOCX files to allow candidates to use assistive technology during the hiring process.
- **Interviewing questions** may or may not be requested in advance

Technology Adjustments:

- **Screen reader compatibility:** Ensuring all interview materials and platforms are accessible with screen readers.
- **Large text options:** Providing larger font sizes for documents and presentations.
- **Adjustable interface features:** Utilizing video conferencing platforms with features like live captions or customizable color schemes.

Scheduling Flexibility:

- **Flexible interview times:** Accommodating different time zones or personal schedules
- **Break options:** Allowing for breaks during the interview if needed

Mobility Options:

- **Interview space:** Ensure the interview space is accessible, and offer to adjust seating arrangements, if necessary. Ensure limited walking and elevators are accessible.
- **Transportation:** Arrange for transportation if there will be a lot of walking or tours.

Search committees may ask if the disability is voluntarily disclosed:

- Whether a job task can be performed with or without accommodation.
- How would the individual perform the tasks, and with what accommodations?
- The applicant to demonstrate how certain job functions would be performed, but only if every applicant is required to do so, regardless of the disability. If an applicant has a known disability that could interfere with a job task, the employer may ask that they show how the task would be performed, even if others were not required to do so.
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- Whether the individual can meet the job's work-hour requirements, provided the hours apply to the job.

Search committees may not ask job applicants with or without a disability:

- Have you ever had any of the following conditions or diseases?
- Please list any conditions or diseases you have been treated for in the past five years."
- Have you ever been hospitalized?
- Have you ever been treated by a psychiatrist or psychologist?
- Would any health-related reason prevent you from doing the work you are applying for?
- Have you had any major illnesses in the last five years?
- Do any physical conditions prevent you from performing certain kinds of work?
- How many days were you absent from work last year because of illness?
- Are you taking any prescribed drugs?
- Have you ever been treated for drug addiction or alcoholism?
- Have you ever filed for workers' compensation?
- Do you expect to need time off for medical treatment?

Interviewing Etiquette

1. Focus on abilities, not limitations
2. Ask job-related questions only
3. Respect privacy
4. Be sensitive and respectful
5. Respect silence
6. Be yourself



Contact Information

Employee Accessibility Resources

Office of Civil Rights and Title IX

4015 James H. Zumberge Hall

1 Campus Drive

Allendale, Michigan 49401

Website: www.gvsu.edu/employee-accessibility-resources

Phone: (616) 331-9530