

Responding to Employer Objections

Employers often have concerns about and objections to hiring job seekers with disabilities. Often, these concerns can be addressed and fears alleviated if we are prepared to respond to particular issues. The responses offered here are not comprehensive, nor do they address every potential issue. They do, however, provide a starting point for being planful in addressing possible concerns. When dealing with employers, please keep the following strategies in mind:

Strategies

1. Draw out employer concerns/previous experiences
2. Be prepared: address possible concerns in your presentation
3. Avoid questions becoming objections: answer honestly and completely
4. Rephrase concerns assuring understanding, showing empathy
5. Establish credibility: let your employers speak for you

Potential Responses

Can't afford it

- Using us as an employee pool can save advertising and/or training dollars.
- Most accommodations are of minimal to no cost. Person has funding for accommodations.
- Can't afford not to hire this qualified candidate.
- Tax incentives available

Liability

- A common myth: actually, research shows that people with disabilities don't have any more accidents on the job than other employees.

Don't have the time

- Job training is provided through our organizations. We also provide ongoing support and resources to you, such as information about hiring people with disabilities, ADA and tax credits.

Bad experiences

- It is so important to have a good job match, just as with other employees. I think (Tom) has the skills that you are looking for.
- Maybe we can talk about your experience and what the problem(s) were.

Why hire them?

- Qualified, organized, reliable, dedicated.
- Talk specific skills as identified in job description, in employer's language.

Not qualified

- Identify previous experiences candidate has had for transferable skills.
- Restructure job so that candidate can do components for which he/she is qualified.
- Clarify specific qualifications for future candidates.
- Leave door open in case future opportunities arise for this candidate.

Multi-tasked job

- Able to perform these tasks.
- Job share.
- Job restructure.

Safety issues

- Not to be placed in unsafe environment.
- Able to perform in this environment.
- There are no higher incidences of Worker's Comp claims than amongst general population.

Not wheelchair accessible

- Candidate does not require a wheelchair on the job.
- Our agency can assist you with compliance with the ADA to prevent future situation.

No driver's license

- Job share,
- Job restructure.
- Not required to perform essential functions
- Has no difficulty getting to and from work without a license

Boss hired already

- That's great. Do you anticipate a similar position opening up in the future?
- Are there other positions available for which I may have qualified candidates?
- If I can be of assistance to you re: education about ADA, tax credits, etc...

I don't make those decisions

- Could you please give me the name/number of the person who does?
- I'd love if you could speak to the person who does about (Tom's) experiences and qualifications

Call me later

- Thank you! When would be a good date/time for you?

Everyone needs to do everything

- We would be happy to do a job analysis, to examine job tasks and help you to write a job description that alleviates some of the menial tasks that you are currently paying top employees to perform.

Obvious lies

- What a shame (about your excuse), because (Tom) has proven to be a great employee with long-term job retention. I hope you find someone as qualified. If you change your mind, feel free to call.

Found someone much more qualified

- Sometimes hiring someone overqualified leads to decreased employee satisfaction and high turnover.
- If other opportunities arise, please call.
- This candidate's dedication and strong work ethic enhances the likelihood of your satisfaction with hiring him/her.

Promise the job, but then doesn't happen

- Show understanding about employers' potential fears angst. "I appreciate your ability to see the skills that (Tom) possesses. Some employers feel too intimidated to hire, because they don't understand how (Tom) communicates. You were very open to exploring this opportunity and I am glad you felt comfortable asking questions. Please keep us in mind if future opportunities arise. I know (Tom) has a lot to offer in the way of (specific job details)."

Productivity rates

- Our agency will assist (Tom) with learning how to do the job in order to increase productivity to a level that meets your needs. This will spare you the resources you typically provide new employees.

- I know you will be pleased with (Tom's) performance. He is a conscientious worker, who does not spend excessive time chatting with co-workers or taking extended lunches.
- There is no reason why (Tom) cannot perform at the rate of any of his co-workers.

Upper management said no

- I would really like to set up a meeting to speak with management. Could I have his/her name/number?

After much work, no start date

- Follow up with calls to determine the problem
- Alleviate concerns before employer verbalizes them.
- Attempt to identify next steps that would be helpful.

Not enough work now

- Job shadowing opportunities in the meantime?
- Start with job training prior to official start date?
- Begin on part-time basis?
- When will business pick up/do you anticipate an opening?

Reviewing applications

- Please note these skills and qualifications.
- Keep in mind that (Tom) brings you me as a resource for job training, information about current legislature, ADA, etc.

Lost application

- Allow me to identify (Tom's) skills that will meet your hiring needs.
- What is your fax #, I'll send one right away.

Too much supervision needed

- Our agency will provide the supervision needed to help get established in his/her new position. I will also be available anytime you have questions.
- Actually, friendly reminders from co-workers, other natural supports will suffice.
- We will have regularly scheduled supervisory meetings.

Security

- Pinpoint specific issues and address them

Need to have a perfect resume with no job gaps

- Qualified candidates often do have gaps, particularly in today's economy. Fortunately, he/she has just the skill set you are looking for.

Too short to do the job

- Allow (Tom) to demonstrate how he would accomplish that task.
- I would be happy to explore accommodations that will allow him/her to do the job

Waiting for something else to happen before hiring

- This candidate is eager to learn the job and would be happy to begin training in the interim.
- Let's get the preliminary paperwork underway so that your productivity needs do not suffer.

Union thing

- I can contact the union rep and identify exactly what the issues are so we can address them.

Disruptive to workplace

- That is what the former employer expected, but later identified what an asset he/she was to the overall dynamic of the team.
- When he/she is focused on work, behaviors subside.
- Working in a quiet environment allows him/her to be more productive.

Payroll issues (Worker's Compensation, insurance)

- There is no increase in WC claims for people with disabilities than with the general public.
- There are tax incentives that can actually save you money.

Clothing

- This will be addressed and we will be available to him/her to assist with dressing according to the work culture.
- This does not affect his/her job performance, and, his/her job duties would not require working with the public.

High Stress

- Stress is not a problem for him/her. He/she thrives in a busy environment.
- We have looked at the job site and come up with some solutions.

Fast Paced

- He/she works well/thrives under pressure and high-pace environment.
- He/she can be very flexible with hours, and may benefit from working during off-peak hours.

Can't do a part-time position

- We'd like to talk about sharing this full-time position amongst two qualified candidates. This may help your current employee, who will be on maternity leave?

Co-workers would feel weird

- As you've seen he/she has a nice way of helping people feel relaxed about the disability
- I would be happy to talk with staff to address fears.

Paranoid about people with disabilities in general

- I understand. It can be very intimidating. Help address fears, angst.

No openings at this time

- I can follow up on (a specific date) to help you maintain your staffing needs.
- When do you anticipate you will have positions opening up?

Already filled that position

- That's great. Do you have any other openings?
- How is that experience working out for you?

Did that already and it didn't work

- There is never a guarantee, is there? Now I can work with you and assist with job training, retention, etc. to ensure success.

Already have a person with a disability working here

- And how is that working out?
- Yes, there are many qualified people who may have some sort of disability.
- Often employers have a few without realizing it, as disability is often not related to how a person performs on their job.

They take too much time off

- He/she has a great attendance record. Very reliable and dedicated.
- He/she is able to work a flexible schedule to adjust for time taken off.

Can't have a job coach here

- What is the real issue here? Help employer feel at ease.
- This job trainer is skilled at blending into the environment/non-intrusive.
- I would like to leave you this literature on employment laws for you reference. If there is any information I can give you, please ask.

They wont fit in

- Employers often underestimate the flexibility of their employees. I've found that in most cases, my candidates gain credibility as they perform their job well.

Language/communication barrier

- Let me show you how we communicate.
- I understand, I was leery as to how (Tom) and I would communicate, too.