

Quick Tips

- ✓ Prepare for Common Interview Questions
- ✓ Arrive Early
- ✓ Dress Professionally
- ✓ Bring a Copy of your Resume
- ✓ Remember to Smile
- ✓ Send a Thank You Email After the Interview

Interviews

Tips for Successful Interviewing



The person interviewing you may not have any experience interviewing people with disabilities. Part of your role is to make the interviewer feel comfortable with you.

- Interviewers expect the people they interview to walk into the interview, look them in the eyes, and give them 2-3 firm pumps of a handshake.
- If you can't do that, you can say something like: "I know you expect people to walk into this interview, look you in the eyes, and give you 2-3 firm pumps of a handshake. I can't do that but let me tell you what I can do." Then share about what you bring to the job – i.e. "I am an excellent computer programmer. I have figured out all sorts of workarounds to cut down on the number of key strokes I need to make, and these workarounds speed up the work of the whole team."

Interviewers can ask you if you can do job-related tasks during the interview. For example, "This job requires typing xx words per minute. Can you do that?"

United Spinal Association

120-34 Queens Blvd #320

Kew Gardens NY 11415

718-803-3782

askus@unitedspinal.org

unitedspinal.org/pathways-
to-employment

What if they ask about your disability?

Interviewers are not supposed to ask you questions about your disability during the interview. What do you do if they ask you a question that makes you feel uncomfortable or is a disability-related question that they wouldn't ask anyone else? For example: "How would you do this job from a wheelchair?" You have several choices:

- × You can always respond by saying "If you mean, 'Can I meet the demands of the job?' Yes, I can." Or "I'd prefer to discuss my qualifications that show I am qualified and prepared to do the job, which are _____."
- × You can briefly answer the question anyway, even though you feel uncomfortable doing so. You might want to explain how you would do the job tasks and/or how you have done them in the past, opening the interviewer's eyes to the idea that there are different ways of accomplishing the same tasks, such as accomplishing them with reasonable accommodations.
- × You can respond to the intent of the question. (i.e., "I can assure you that I am able to perform the job as you have described it in the job announcement, and I can meet all of the job demands.")
- × You can ignore the question and change the subject. (i.e., "Let me tell you about my last job.")
- × Refuse to answer the question. Tell the interviewer that the question is not legal or relevant to the specific job requirements. (This may be the last question of the interview. However, you may have already decided you do not want to work for this employer.)

*Remember, **you are the expert on you!***

Arrive prepared and confident – ready to describe your skills and experience, why you are the best candidate for the position, and how you can enhance their organization.
