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Tip Sheet for Professionals

The tips below are based on conversations with experts, interviews with students and graduates as well as their answers to our questionnaires. Although our project focused on postsecondary students and recently-employed graduates with disabilities, we feel that many of these tips could also be helpful to all students. We are grateful to the Entente Canada-Quebec for funding this work.

Note. You may revise this tip sheet to include it in an email or PowerPoint, for example. In all cases, please include the publication and copyright information. Keep in mind that the Word version of this tip sheet was specifically formatted to be accessible to professionals with disabilities who may be using adaptive technologies.

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Tip Sheet for Professionals

- 1) No one college service is best suited to help students with disabilities look for employment. Consider a collaborative approach, including career counsellors, employment counsellors and /or disability service providers.
- 2) Career planning can be an important first step for many students who are job hunting. It can help them to see themselves as potential members of the work force and define the kind of job they are looking for.
- 3) Disability service providers and employment counsellors can work together to offer workshops for students on resume / CV writing, mock interviews, human relations skills in the workplace, etc. Disability service providers often know their students and have their confidence but employment counsellors are experts in job hunting.
- 4) Address questions that are disability-related. There may not be any easy answers as a lot depends on the student and their specific situation. However, students need to consider these issues ahead of time, and are often looking for guidance and may not be aware of existing resources.
 - If and when should one disclose a disability?
 - If and when should one request accommodations?
 - How can one be proactive and address an interviewer's potential concerns about their disability?
- 5) Provide an accessible and updated list of online resources and an online job bank.

- 6) There are a number of activities that you don't have to do on your own and that can best be organized through collaboration with other college personnel.
 - Host job fairs and include representatives from government, community organizations and other employers who have a history of equity employment.
 - Organize job shadowing and on-site visits to various work settings.
 - Establish connections with potential employers through alumni, external board members, etc.
 - Seek out individuals with disabilities who have had work experience to act as mentors.
 - Hire students, including those with disabilities, for part-time work on campus.
 - Create opportunities on campus for all students to participate in volunteer work and find a mechanism to acknowledge their involvement.
 - Publicize programs such as the Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) which provides wage subsidies to employers to create employment for those who are in underrepresented groups, including youth with disabilities.
 - Before graduation, refer students with disabilities to community resources that support those looking for work.

- 7) Find the means to create a support network for recent graduates who no longer have access to college services.
 - Allow recent graduates to check the college employment website for information on job opportunities.

- 8) Make sure you publicize the great things you are doing to help students and recent graduates obtain employment in an accessible manner so that all students, including those with disabilities, are aware of what is available to them in the college.