

Returning to Work after Transplant

Celebrating a Second Chance at Life
Survivorship Symposium

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CANCER AND CAREERS

Cancer and Careers, founded in 2001, is a national nonprofit that empowers and educates people with cancer to thrive in their work environment by providing expert advice, interactive tools and educational events. All programs and services provided to patients, survivors, healthcare professionals and caregivers are offered free of charge.

- CancerAndCareers.org
- Publications in English and Spanish
- Job Search Tools and Resume Review
- Professional Development Micro-Grants
- Accredited Programs for Healthcare Professionals
- Balancing Work & Cancer Webinars
- Community Events
- National and Regional Conferences
- Career Coaching



RESEARCH: WORK & CANCER

- More than 70% of cancer diagnoses are made in adults between the ages of 20 and 74 i.e. “prime employment years.” (*Tracy, et al., 2018*)
- Cancer survivors are 1.4 times more likely to be unemployed than people who have never been diagnosed. (*de Boer, et al., 2018*)
- 20% of cancer survivors still report work limitations affected by cancer-related problems 1-5 years after diagnosis (*Work & Cancer Survivors*)
- 75% of employed survivors surveyed reported that working during treatment helped them cope. (*Cancer and Careers/Harris Poll 2019*)
- In 2019, EEOC received 807 cancer discrimination claims (www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/statistics/enforcement/ada-receipts.cfm)

KEY LAW: AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

To access the ADA:

- Your employer (or prospective employer) must be big enough that the ADA applies to them
- You must have the required skills, experience, degree, training, license, etc. to do the job
- Your disability must meet the criteria determined by the ADA

Benefits may include:

- Protection from discrimination
- Access to Reasonable Accommodations

More resources:

<http://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/at-work/legal-and-financial>

<http://tragecancer.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/2016-ADA-Quick-Guide-Triage-Cancer.pdf>

**YOU MAY BE
FURTHER
PROTECTED BY A
STATE FAIR
EMPLOYMENT
LAW**

DO I HAVE TO SHARE THE NEWS OF MY DIAGNOSIS AT WORK?

More resources:

<http://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/at-work/where-to-start/sharing-the-news>

<https://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/community/videos/bwc/2019-webinar-online>

RESEARCH: EMPLOYERS & SOCIAL MEDIA

70% of employers use social media to screen candidates

Prospective Employers

- 47% are less likely to interview a candidate they can't find online
- 57% have found content that caused them **not** to hire candidates
- 37% have found content online that supported the candidate's qualifications that caused them **to** hire the candidate

Current Employers

- 48% of employers check current employees' social media profiles
- 34% have reprimanded or fired an employee for inappropriate content

Source: <http://press.careerbuilder.com/2018-08-09-More-Than-Half-of-Employers-Have-Found-Content-on-Social-Media-That-Caused-Them-NOT-to-Hire-a-Candidate-According-to-Recent-CareerBuilder-Survey>

UNDERSTANDING INTERNET PRIVACY

For Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.: Personal Information = Money

- It's a good idea to review privacy policies before sharing personal info on any website
- Sites with greater privacy: MyLifeline or CaringBridge
 - Straightforward privacy settings
 - *You* invite friends & loved ones into your network
 - **Be aware** of option to share posts to mainstream social media sites

More Resources

<http://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/resource/charts-and-checklists>



YOUR ONLINE PRESENCE

- Develop a disclosure plan
 - Deliberately decide what & where to share
 - Consider long-term impact
 - Communicate preferences to your family, friends and anyone else you choose to disclose to
- Monitor what others post about you
- Consider how you present any cancer community involvement

BUILDING A PROFESSIONAL ONLINE BRAND

- Google yourself
- Use popular social media websites to strategically increase your online presence
 - LinkedIn – Instagram
 - Twitter – Pinterest
- Set up a professional webpage or blog
- Delete old posts that no longer represent your interests
 - Though they may still exist somewhere online, they become harder to find
- Think deliberately about what you post
 - Would I want a boss — current or future — or coworkers to know this?
 - Would I want this on the front page of a newspaper (or the homepage of my favorite news site)?
 - Would I want my grandmother or mother to see this?

RETURNING TO AN EXISTING JOB

- What kind of flexibility exists in your former job?
- Can you still do the work?
- Do you still want to do the work?
- What if they always see you as a person with cancer?

THE SWIVEL

My uncle had cancer . . .

- “I’m sorry to hear that, it must have been hard . . . (AND) . . . What did you think about the meeting that we had yesterday?”

How are you feeling?

- “Really excited to be back! In fact, I have a few questions about the new time-card system. Do you have a minute to answer them?”

ADDRESSING COMMENTS & QUESTIONS: THE WELL-INTENDED

Your boss says: “You’ve been looking so exhausted recently, I didn’t want to overwhelm you by adding more to your plate.”

- **Response:** *“I appreciate your concern, but work is a key part of my overall well-being. In fact, last night I had some ideas about the project that I’d love to share with you.”*

ADDRESSING COMMENTS & QUESTIONS: THE OUTRIGHT INSENSITIVE

After disclosing your diagnosis, your supervisor says: “Did you smoke?” (or “Did you drink?” or “Did you tan?”)

- **Response:** *“There is a lot of confusion, complexity and fear around cancer so I can understand that you’d be curious about whether I somehow brought this on myself. However what is important now is how we can work together to make sure that all our goals are still met while I balance both work and treatment. My job is incredibly important to me so I hope we can collaborate to come up with the best plan of attack.”*

STRATEGIES AT WORK: REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

- Modifications to your job, your schedule or the environment that you work in that makes it possible for you to perform your essential duties
- Also available during the job search process

More resources:

<https://askjan.org/index.html>

<https://tragecancer.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2018-Reasonable-Accommodations-Quick-Guide.pdf>

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS: MEET SUE

- Sue is a hospital social worker diagnosed with cancer in her late 20s.
- Continuing to work throughout treatment and recovery is incredibly important to her.
- One of Sue's treatment side effects is nausea which becomes debilitating whenever she is at work.
- However, she does **not** feel the same degree of nausea at home after work, or on the weekends during the same hours she normally works at the hospital.

What can be done to help Sue get back to her job?

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS: MEET FRANK

- Frank's big challenge while working through cancer treatment is fatigue.
- He is on the finance and operations team at his company and his role requires him to print, copy and scan *many* documents each day.
- The room with all of the printers, scanners, etc. is located two floors down from Frank's desk, and the easiest way to get back and forth is via the stairs.
- Walking up and down all day exacerbates Frank's fatigue and is making it hard for him to stay on-the-job.

What can be done to help Frank?

QUESTIONS TO IDENTIFY POTENTIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Is it reasonable in your job to:

- **Work the same number of hours every week, but at different times?** (e.g. instead of 9-5 work 7-3)
- **Do some or all your work from home?**
- **Move to a different work station?** (e.g. closer to the restroom, or further away from entrance door)
- **Ask for special furniture?** (e.g. a movie theater ticket taker who is given a chair to sit in while working)
- **Ask for special equipment?** (e.g. an anti-glare screen for your computer or a cooling vest to help balance heat sensitivity)

QUESTIONS TO HELP IDENTIFY POTENTIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Is it reasonable in your job to:

- **Request more frequent breaks?**
- **Reassign job responsibilities?** (e.g. a teacher has recess duty covered by coworkers so he can rest)
- **Ask if an exception can be made to a policy?** (e.g. being allowed to use headphones at your work station to help reduce distractions)
- **Change to working an open role that you are qualified for?**
- **Work in a different location?** (e.g. moving to a different restaurant within the same chain that is closer to home)

RESEARCH: JOB SEARCH

- Among cancer patients and survivors looking for work:
 - 49% feel prospective employers will treat them differently if they disclose their cancer
 - 31% feel their diagnosis has limited their job prospects and ability to get hired
 - 50% express at least some concern about getting hired if a potential employer finds out about their diagnosis (*Cancer and Careers/Harris Poll 2019*)
- In a study with fake cover letters, researchers found that employers expressed 26% less interest in candidates who disclosed a disability than in candidates who did not (www.nber.org/papers/w21560)
- Applicants who disclosed a cancer history received fewer callbacks from managers (21%) than the applicants who did not disclose a cancer history (37%) (*HR and Employment Law News 11/17/15*)

JOB SEARCH

- Things to think about:
 - Emotional highs/lows
 - Being strategic
 - Holding yourself to a higher standard
- The steps of a job search are the same as the steps to build any relationship—*consider what you reveal, and when.*

More resources – Job Search Toolkit:

http://www.cancerandcareers.org/publication_orders/new

JOB BOARDS

- Only a small percentage of job seekers find employment on job boards
- Great articles and surveys
- Useful for researching job descriptions & companies

NETWORKING

- 85% of jobs are found through networking
- Networking sources:
 - Websites such as LinkedIn
 - Write a compelling profile; include photo
 - Ask for substantive recommendations
 - Post status updates regularly
 - Join “groups” and participate actively
 - Former colleagues and vendors
 - Friends, neighbors, fellow volunteers, members of support groups
 - Professional associations
 - Doctors, lawyers, dentists, accountants

<http://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/community/videos/bwc/linkedin>

WRITING A RESUME

- Crafted with the audience in mind
 - A succinct summary of capabilities and accomplishments
 - Two pages; one for a recent college grad
 - Must have a profile or summary at the top
 - Must have keywords for scanning software to pick up
 - Put your education and credentials after your work experience
 - Include professional memberships and volunteer/community service
 - Easy to read and understand
 - Job titles don't have universal meaning, so explain in terms of responsibility
 - Future focused and targeted toward career goal
- *CAC Free Resume Review Service



DISCLOSURE & JOB SEARCH

- Should you disclose your cancer history...
 - on your resume?
 - in your cover letter?
 - during an interview?

EMPLOYMENT GAPS: WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Strategies to consider:

- Fill the gap with educational activities, professional development, part-time/temporary work or volunteering when possible.
- Consider acknowledging the gap if it is current– with the understanding that you don't need to go into great detail.
- Network your way into job opportunities.
- Master the swivel to direct their attention back to what makes you a good candidate.

THE SWIVEL

Can you tell me what you were doing during this gap on your resume?

- “I was dealing with a family issue that is resolved now AND I am thrilled to discuss how my management skills can build the team and grow your business.”
- “I realized that what I was doing didn’t fulfill me so I took a step back to think about what would make me happy AND I think my tech background would really be an asset not just for this role but for the company as a whole.”

More resources:

<http://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/looking-for-work/interviewing/mock-interviews>

MORE SWIVELING

- I noticed on your resume that you have done a lot of volunteering in the cancer community. Do you have cancer?
 - “Like most people, I’ve been touched by cancer, and finding a way to give back is very important to me. Plus, all my volunteer work has given me the opportunity to develop some valuable skills that I think would be applicable here, including X, Y, Z.”
- When I Googled your name, an interview you gave about being diagnosed with cancer was one of the top results. Are you still in treatment?
 - “Thank you for taking so much interest in me. The opportunity to speak to the press gave me some incredible new skills that I think would be very relevant to this role, including X,Y, Z.”

RESEARCHING AN EMPLOYER

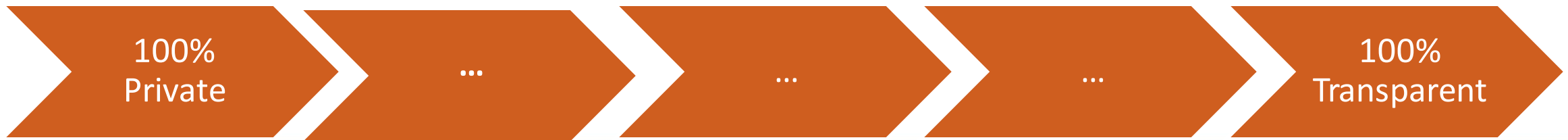
- Company benefits
- How have they treated other employees in the past?
- How large is the company? Will the ADA or other laws apply?
- Discrimination lawsuits
- Do they have employee programs? (e.g., EAP, affinity programs)
- Other information that can help identify their workplace culture (e.g., www.glassdoor.com, www.linkedin.com)

WORKING IN A NEW JOB WITH A NEW EMPLOYER

- How do you assimilate?
- How do you handle it if you are still in treatment?
- Managing your energy
- How can you succeed?
- Asking for accommodations

DISCLOSURE IS A SPECTRUM

- **Whether to disclose is a personal decision**
 - How do you feel about privacy?
 - What benefits or legal protections might be available if you disclose? And, how much information is necessary to access them?
- **The amount you disclose may evolve, but that doesn't mean it ever has to be every detail**
 - Remember you can always choose to share more, but it is not possible to “un-share”
- **Consider timing—and circumstance—before starting a conversation**
 - Are you working during treatment and/or recovery?
 - Are you looking for a new job?



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Triage Cancer

- Educational Blog
(<http://TriageCancer.org/Blog>)
- Events
(<http://TriageCancer.org/Events-Calendar>)
- Cancer Survivorship Webinar Series
(<http://TriageCancer.org/Webinars>)
- State Resources
(<http://TriageCancer.org/Resources/StateResources>)
 - Quick Guides
 - State Resource Contact Information

Employment Rights & Options:

- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission www.EEOC.gov
- Job Accommodation Network
www.AskJan.org
- U.S. Department of Labor (COBRA)
www.dol.gov/EBSA
- U.S. Department of Labor (FMLA)
www.DOL.gov/WHD
- FlexJobs www.flexjobs.com
- Workplace Transitions:
www.workplacetransitions.org

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Legal Assistance:

- National Cancer Legal Services Network www.NCLSN.org
- Cancer Advocacy Project – City Bar Justice Center
<http://www.citybarjusticecenter.org/projects/cancer-advocacy-project/>
- LawHelp www.lawhelp.org
- Lawyer Referral Service
<http://apps.americanbar.org/legalservices/lris/directory>

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Newsletter





Questions?



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