Transcription de la session de mentorat pour l'occasion d’emploi pour les étudiants en situation de handicap : Discussion de groupe // Transcript of the Employment Opportunities for Students with Disabilities Mentorship Session: Panel Discussion

# 11 juillet 2023 // July 11th, 2023

### À noter:

À certains moments, l'événement n'a pas été correctement transcrit et/ou l'audio était inaudible. Afin de vous fournir un compte rendu aussi précis et complet que possible, **les sections qui paraphrasent ou résument ce qui a été dit par notre modérateur et nos panélistes et les questions posées aux panélistes sont indiqués dans le texte.**

### Please Note:

There were moments where the event was not properly transcribed and/or the audio was inaudible. To provide you with the most comprehensive and accurate transcript possible, **the sections that paraphrase or summarize what was said by our moderator and panelists and the questions asked to the panelists are indicated in the text.**

**Camila Das Gupta**

Hello everyone! Welcome to our event We are just waiting a few minutes to start to ensure everyone has time to log on. For those of you who are just joining, please ensure you’re on mute. We’ll officially get started in a few minutes once everyone has trickled in! My colleague will say that in French now.

**Sylvie Laliberté**

Bonjour à tous ! Bienvenue à notre événement. Nous attendons quelques minutes avant de commencer afin que tout le monde ait le temps de se connecter. Pour ceux qui viennent de nous joindre, assurez-vous que vous êtes en mode silencieux. Nous commencerons officiellement dans quelques minutes, une fois que tout le monde sera arrivé!

**Camila Das Gupta**

Hello, everyone! Thank you for joining us for the third event of our 2023 EOSD summer programming which is a Panel Discussion on Accommodations!

**Sylvie Laliberté**

Bonjour à tous. Merci de vous joindre à nous pour le troisième événement de notre programmation estivale 2023 de l’OEÉSH qui sera une discussion de groupe sur les mesures d'adaptation.

**Camila Das Gupta**

Merci! My name is Camila Das Gupta, and my pronouns are she and her. For those of you who may benefit from a visual description – I have brown skin, brown eyes, and black hair and I am currently wearing a cream-colored shirt. I work for the Public Service Commission on a team called the Diversity & Inclusion Centre of Expertise and my main responsibility is overseeing program implementation and design for EOSD. And I will be your English co-host for today’s session. I will let my colleague Sylvie introduce herself in French now!

**Sylvie Laliberté**

Alors bonjour, je m’appelle Sylvie Laliberté et mon pronom est « elle ». Pour ceux d’entre vous qui auraient besoin d’une description visuelle, j’ai la peau pâle, les yeux et les cheveux bruns et je porte une blouse noire et un vêtement gris. Je travaille pour la Commission de la fonction publique, à la division du recrutement inclusif et habilitation opérationnelle. Ma responsabilité principale est agente de projet et j’appuie l’équipe du Centre d’expertise autochtone et le Centre d’expertise sur la diversité et l’inclusion. Et je serai votre coprésentatrice en français pour la séance d'aujourd'hui.

**Camila Das Gupta**

Today will be a mentoring session in the form of a panel discussion to talk about all things accommodations. We are very lucky to have 1 moderator and 3 panelists all with lived experience in the disability community joining us today. They will be sharing their expertise, advice, and knowledge on any questions you may have during the panel discussion. A quick thank you to Joshua, Darrin, Michael, and Diane for joining us today. We’ll be introducing them officially in a few minutes once we’ve covered our opening remarks.

**Sylvie Laliberté**

La séance d'aujourd'hui sera une activité de mentorat et sera sous la forme d'un panel de discussion. Nous parlerons de tous les aspects reliés aux mesures d'adaptation.

Nous avons la chance d’avoir avec nous un modérateur et trois panélistes qui ont tous une expérience avec la communauté des personnes en situation de handicap. Ils partageront leur expertise, leurs conseils et leurs connaissances afin de pouvoir bien répondre à toutes les questions que vous pourriez avoir au cours de la discussion. Bien évidemment, je veux prendre le temps de remercier Joshua, Darrin, Michael et Diane de se joindre à nous aujourd'hui. Nous les présenterons officiellement dans quelques minutes, après notre discours d'ouverture. Nous allons maintenant passer à la diapositive numéro 2.

**Camila Das Gupta**

To open in a good way, I would like to acknowledge that I am joining you today from Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. In an era of reconciliation, land acknowledgements have been widely utilized to recognize First Nations, Inuit, and Metis Territories. These acknowledgements must be delivered with a good heart and authentic approach and style that is thoughtful and meaningful – and can be received in the same manner. I believe it’s important for us to each develop our own personal understanding of what these territorial acknowledgements mean to us and to take the time to be intentional in connecting them to our own participation in systemic change. To do this today with all of you, I would like to take 20 seconds of silence. During this time, I encourage you to do some personal reflection on your own relationship with the traditional Indigenous territory where you work and live. And to think about what efforts you can make in your everyday life to work towards decolonization and bridging awareness into action. So, we’ll start our 20 seconds now.

Thank you everyone for your respect and participation in our 20 seconds of silence. I encourage you to return to what you reflected on just now during our session this morning and find ways to draw meaningful connections for yourselves. We will now move to slide number 3.

**Sylvie Laliberté**

Tout d’abord, nous devons aborder quelques règles de base avant de passer à la partie principale de notre séance d’aujourd’hui. Notre événement se déroule en ligne, ce qui signifie que nous devons parler de quelques éléments à considérer en ce qui concerne la participation et l’étiquette.

Première chose, nous vous demandons de bien vouloir mettre votre micro en sourdine pendant que les présentateurs parlent afin de limiter les distractions et les bruits de fond. Pour le faire, cliquez sur le bouton « microphone » dans le coin supérieur droit de votre écran de MS Teams.

Deuxième chose, toujours dans le but de réduire les distractions, nous vous demandons d'éteindre votre caméra, mais vous pourrez l’ouvrir si, un peu plus tard, vous prenez la parole. Nous vous demandons également de nous faire savoir si l'arrière-plan vidéo de l'un des orateurs vous dérange ou cause aussi une distraction.

Dernière petite chose, nous voulons que la séance d’aujourd’hui soit interactive et que vous ayez la chance de poser des questions ou de faire des commentaires. Si à un moment ou à un autre, vous souhaitez prendre la parole, vous pouvez utiliser la fonction « Lever la main » et attendre qu’un présentateur vous accorde la parole et vous demande d’activer votre son.

**Camila Das Gupta**

For today’s event, we have deactivated the chat function to limit the amount of distraction it can cause. If you wish to ask a question, you have the ability to do so using the SLIDO platform. We will be explaining how to do this in further detail on the next slide.

In addition, it’s important to know that this event is being held in both English and French. There is ASL available to interpret when English is being spoken and LSQ available to interpret when French is being spoken. We would like to thank our ASL and LSQ interpreters for being here today and providing such important services. We encourage participants who may benefit from the interpretation to use the pin function to ensure they can see those frames at all times during the meeting today.

Lastly, we want to mention that we have enabled the MS Teams Live Captioning feature in case anyone wishes to use this during the meeting today. The link in the chat has written instructions on how to activate this feature. We will now move to slide number 4.

The last thing we want to cover before introducing our guest speakers for today, is how to submit questions for the panel to answer. There are three ways to do this. You can scan the QR code on the screen, you can also click the link that we shared with you in the Outlook Invite, or you can simply go to [www.slido.com](http://www.slido.com) and put in the letters “EOSD” for the event code.

**Sylvie Laliberté**

Un autre élément que nous voulons mentionner avant de présenter nos orateurs invités d'aujourd'hui, c'est comment soumettre des questions pour que le panel puisse y répondre. Il y a trois façons de le faire. Vous pouvez scanner le code QR à l'écran, vous pouvez également cliquer sur le lien que nous avons partagé avec vous dans l'invitation Outlook, ou encore, vous pouvez simplement aller sur www.slido.com et entrer les lettres "EOSD" pour le code de l'événement.

**Camila Das Gupta**

We do want to note that should there be a significant amount of questions that are left unanswered at the end of this session, we will do our best to compile them and send written responses to all our participants.

**Sylvie Laliberté**

Nous tenons à noter que si un nombre considérable de questions restent sans réponse à la fin de cette session, nous ferons de notre mieux pour les compiler et envoyer des réponses écrites à tous nos participants. Nous passons maintenant à la diapositive numéro 5.

Maintenant, passons aux choses amusantes ! Nous avons le plaisir de vous présenter notre modérateur et nos panélistes pour la discussion d'aujourd'hui. Tout d'abord, nous sommes ravis d'avoir Joshua Frame comme modérateur aujourd'hui. Joshua est le président national du Réseau des jeunes fonctionnaires fédéraux.

**Camila Das Gupta**

So, to start, we are thrilled to announce Joshua Frame as the moderator for today. Joshua is the National Chair of the Federal Youth Network.

**Sylvie Laliberté**

Joshua a commencé à travailler pour le gouvernement du Canada en 2009. Au début, étant fraîchement diplômé et étant aussi nouvel employé, il ne savait pas trop ce qui était considéré comme un handicap et il ne savait pas non plus s’il devait déclarer être une personne en situation de handicap.

**Camila Das Gupta**

Joshua entered the Government of Canada in 2009 as a recent graduate and new employee with little knowledge or understanding of what constituted a disability and whether he should self-identify.

**Sylvie Laliberté**

De 2009 à 2012, il a progressivement gravi les échelons pour se retrouver gestionnaire d’une équipe entièrement nouvelle qui était composée d’anciens fonctionnaires d’un gouvernement provincial. Être le nouveau chef d’équipe d’employés, qui sont tout aussi nouveaux que lui, a permis à Joshua de comprendre l’importance de la gestion des situations de handicap, mais aussi de comprendre les limites qu’imposait sa propre situation de handicap. Grâce à son travail avec le comité local de l’équité en matière d’emploi, Joshua a appris que : les situations de handicaps ne sont pas tous visibles, les situations de handicaps ne nécessitent pas tous des mesures d’adaptation et les besoins en matière de gestion d’un handicap peuvent évoluer avec le temps.

**Camila Das Gupta**

In progressive roles from 2009 to 2012, he moved into a management position with a team of entirely new staff who had joined the Government of Canada from a provincial government. As a new team leader with entirely new employees, he came to understand the importance of disability management and the importance of understanding his own limitations as it pertained to his disability. Through work with the local employment equity committee, he came to better understand that: not all disabilities are visible, not all disabilities require an accommodation, and one’s needs in managing a disability can change over time.

We are so pleased to have Joshua join us today in this capacity and want to thank him for taking the lead on facilitating this discussion with our three panelists.

**Sylvie Laliberté**

Les trois panélistes qui se joignent à nous aujourd'hui sont Darrin Antler, Michael Mohammed et Diane Bélanger‑Vena.

Darrin est Agent des politiques à la Direction du Service fédéral d'indemnisation des accidentés du travail dans le Programme du travail avec Emploi et Développement social Canada.

Michael est Gestionnaire pour politique et législation à la Division de la gouvernance, information et données avec le Secrétariat du Conseil du Trésor du Canada

Diane est agente de gouvernance et d’engagement au Bureau de l’accessibilité de Services publics et Approvisionnement Canada.

**Camila Das Gupta**

The three panelists that are joining us today are Darrin Antler, Michael Mohammed, and Diane Bélanger‑Vena.

Darrin is a Policy Officer with the Federal Workers’ Compensation Service with the Labour Program at the department called Employment and Social Development Canada. He is a union steward for CAPE Local 514, possesses a professional certificate in Neurodiversity in the Workplace from UBC and has accommodations in place for himself. He is very familiar with The Duty to Accommodate laws and dispute resolution processes.

Michael is currently an experienced manager for Policy and Legislation in the Information and Data Governance division with the department called Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. Michael has been in the public service for roughly 15 years and has worked both in the National Capital Region and in isolated post environments. He has worked with several different departments in both “office” and operational science environments and also has experience in the educational sector. Michael is legally blind and always up for helping out with an adventure. He is also passionate long-time volunteer for the Canadian National Institute for the Blind during his spare time.

Diane has been a Governance and Engagement Officer of the Accessibility Office at Public Services and Procurement Canada since November 2018. She has been a disability rights advocate for the past 20 years. In addition, she has worked in the field of workplace wellness for many years, striving to reduce stigma in the workplace. For the past 10 years, she has volunteered to facilitate workshops on the topics of creating a harassment-free workplace, mental health in the workplace, and respecting differences and anti-discrimination, to name just a few.

So, with that, we are very pleased to welcome our moderator and the three panelists to the stage for this session.

**Sylvie Laliberté**

Sur ce, nous avons le plaisir d'accueillir notre modérateur et nos trois panélistes pour cette séance.

**Camila Das Gupta**

We will be passing the microphone over to Joshua now to facilitate the next two parts of our session. First, we will be hearing some opening remarks from the moderator as well as the panelist. They will get a chance to introduce themselves and provide some background information on who they are and why they are participating today. The second part will then be the question-and-answer portion of today’s event.

We will now stop screen sharing the Power Point. And with that, over to you Joshua to take us away for the next two parts of today’s session!

**Joshua Frame**  
Awesome. Thanks very much.

So first off, I'll just say I'm really thrilled to be here and participate in the Employment Opportunity for students with disabilities program again this year. As mentioned earlier, I'm Joshua Frame and I'm national chair of the Federal Youth Network.

En français, je suis le président national du réseau des jeunes fonctionnaires fédéraux.

And immediate apologies to the translators, I will try to create a break between changing between languages. I'm very excited to hear from our three panelists today, so I won't take up too much time before I head to them for their intros. But definitely participate actively during today's session. Share your questions using SLIDO. And, just from our pre chat about today's panel, I was thrilled to hear the perspectives of Michael and Darrin and Diane, and I'm sure they'll provide some very interesting perspective to the questions that you've provided today. So with that, I will pass over to Darrin for introductory remarks.

Je vais passer la parole à Darrin pour les remarques introductoires, merci.

**Darrin Antler**  
Thank you, Josh.

Premièrement pour les francophones, je m’excuse, mon français est très mal au moment et je vais parler exclusivement en anglais. Je pense qu’il sera une traduction après la réunion.

Now for the English attendees: I will be speaking exclusively in English as my French is not up to snuff. I'm in training now and trying to rectify that. At the moment, I work as a policy officer with the federal Workers Compensation service, that's part of the Federal Labor program within Employment and Social Development Canada, as a policy officer. I am concerned with the reasons why federal employees get injured and prevention measures that we can enact in combination with federal departments and occupational health and safety, and one of the areas of my interest and responsibilities is duty to accommodate and return to work from injury. However, the process is the exact same as it is with a new hire, so I'm looking forward to benefiting as well from the knowledge and experience of the other panelists, and I will turn it back to Josh. Thank you.

**Joshua Frame**  
Excellent. Thanks very much, Darrin.

OK. Alors maintenant je vais passer la parole à Michael Mohammed pour les remarques introductoires.

I’ll be passing it over to Michael for introductory remarks.  
**Michael Mohammed**  
Bonjour tout le monde et merci Josh. Je m’appelle Michael Mohammed. Je parlerai principalement en anglais, mais s’il vous plait demandez les questions dans la langue official de votre choix. J’essaiera de répondre et résumer en français.

Hi everyone, I'm Michael Mohammed.I'm going to mostly speak in English. I’ll try to summarize in French where possible. For the francophones, please feel free to speak in French and I will do my best to respond in French.

So, I am the manager of the information and data policy. Sorry, the information, data, government governance policy team within Treasury Board of Canada's Office for the Information Office, Office of the Information Officer is office of the Chief Data Officer, which is I think, too much of a mouthful. What that means is basically I manage a team of small policy analysts, or small team of policy analysts, and we - I'm clearly more nervous than I thought I'd be doing this. And we write policies that affect how the entire government manages its information and data. We're responsible for such best selling kits as the standard on systems that manage information and data, and we're currently wrapping up consultations on an updated standard for managing metadata and my academic background is in environmental science and geography. And when my introduction describes me as having worked in both the NCR and isolated posts, what that means is I've spent most of my career in the National Capital Region and Ottawa and Gatineau. But I've also spent time in Iqaluit and Yellowknife, so I understand the process as somebody with a physical disability for trying to get in accommodation, both in a situation where you've got lots of resources and your manager has lots of resources, and also in a situation where you are literally out in the middle of nowhere and a senior analyst is the most senior person in the building for your part of the departments. So I understand both of those perspectives. I also understand this from the perspective as somebody who's been an employee , I've been an EC7 for more than five years, I also understand this from the perspective of a manager and having managed people umm, with both physical disabilities and various other types of disability, and also permanent disabilities, also situations where the where that disability has been transient or variable over time or depending on other circumstances.  
So that's sort of where I'm coming from and I'm really excited to be here today, although apparently again a lot more nervous than I thought I would be.

**Joshua Frame**  
All good Michael!Sorry, I didn't mean to cut you off, but no. All good.I think we it's better to be nervous and authentic than to be over prepared or over, sort of smooth in terms of delivery stuff all as well.

OK, maintenant je vais passer la parole à Diane Belanger-Vena, alors elle va dire les remarques introductoires.

**Diane Belanger-Vena**  
En français. Merci, bonjour, je m’appelle Diane Belanger-Vena. Comme on a déjà dit, je travaille au bureau d’accessibilité de services publics et approvisionnement Canada. Je défends les droits des personnes en situation de handicap depuis 20 ans.

In English. I've been an advocate for persons with disabilities for the past 20 years, and you wouldn't know this to look at me, but I have a number of invisible disabilities. I have fibromyalgia, an invisible pain condition, social anxiety disorder, clinical chronic depression, and spinal stenosis. But in addition to my own disabilities, I have a son with ADHD and autism, formerly known as Asperger's syndrome. I lost a sister a year and a half ago to mental illness.My father became legally blind after a stroke, and my husband has Crohn's disease, and the list could really go on. And I'm telling you all of this because even if you're an employee without a disability, we all know someone with a medical condition, be it permanent, temporary, episodic. So, there's no escaping it. So when I feel a little bit less than normal, I guess, I think of everyone else and they all carry some sort of baggage, whether it be themselves, a family member, and it helps me gain a little bit more confidence.

I worked for the public service for over 33 years now, so I've seen where accommodation was unheard of, to the government wanting to hire 5000 new employees in the very near future with disabilities. And really, I want to participate today because you are the future of the public service. We're working really hard to change the current culture, but with young, new, confident employees, it's sure to change - and you say “why?” Because all of you, you'll make sure that it does. So today, if I can provide you with just one word of wisdom and make a difference in your journey, that will have been worth it for me.

Alors on continuera maintenant en français. Vous ne le sauriez pas, en me regardant vous ne sauriez pas mais j’ai un certain nombre de handicaps invisibles. Plus que mes propres handicaps, j’ai un fils atteint de tDAH et autisme. J'ai perdu une sœur à cause d'une maladie de santé mentale. Mon père est devenu légalement aveugle et mon mari à la maladie de Crohns. Je vous dis toute cela parce que simplement tout le monde connait quelqu'un en situation de handicap, ça soit permanent, temporaire ou épisodique.

Et finalement je veux participer aujourd'hui parce que vous êtes l'avenir de la fonction publique. Sincèrement, vous [*inaudible*] savoir aider pour toute le monde. Ça fait plaisir de prendre les questions dans la langue officiel de votre choix

**Joshua Frame**  
Merci beaucoup Diane.

OK, so that brings us now to our period of questions and answers, and I see we already have 25 questions in Slido.

Alors, on va maintenant commencer la période de questions et réponses. Il y a déjà 25 questions dans la fonction Slido. Charger les questions. Nous essaierons de passer des questions en anglais aux questions en français. Nous ferons ensuite un résumé des réponses des panélistes dans l'autre langue.

So as we go through the question and answer period, we'll ask the question in the language that's been posted, but trying to switch between questions in English and questions in French. After the panelists will provide a response, provide a little bit of a summary, in the other language - hoping to do that while keeping to the spirit of the response.

I see our first question, or the most upvoted question is as follows; the question is: have you ever had or seen accommodations for a neurodivergent employee who has struggles with executive function? And what do such accommodations look like?

Alors la question en français c’est, avez-vous déjà eu ou vu des mesures d'adaptation pour un employé neurodivergent qui a des difficultés avec les fonctions exécutives ? À quoi ressemblent ces aménagements ?

I believe Michael, you wanted to respond on this question to get us started if that sounds good.

**Michael Mohammed**  
Yeah, sure, Josh.  
So I managed an analyst with complex post traumatic stress disorder and a few years ago, who had, in plain language, some difficulty with boundary setting in terms of their interactions and in terms of what sort of persona they presented at work and in in certain environments, especially when they were highly stressed. This person didn't want to formally identify their disability or their situation and formally request accommodations. But, at the same time, they made it fairly clear to me as their manager, and we also had a conversation as a team about what that meant for them and what that meant that they needed. And we worked to reduce the risks to this person as an employee. In terms of as their manager, I told them that if they ever needed to have a conversation with me about setting their specific priorities to just - whenever I wasn't in meeting - to find me to let me know and we would go through their priorities, or if they had a document or an email that they needed to review, we could certainly talk through that in terms of what they were going to say, and what sort of language, and what sort of level of formality they should hold. And we also noticed, both in terms of me and in terms of the management team, that this analyst was not always - and I could tell based on my interactions with the person and their describing of their personal situation - that they weren't always putting the right persona forward in meetings, in terms of the right level of professionalism or the right level of distance from potential vendors for example. So we made sure that whenever they were in meetings they had somebody senior with them and that they we wouldn't send them alone to talk to external stakeholders, because that was the situation where there was the largest risk for consequences and that was the situation where I especially didn't want them to be putting either themselves or the department, or the government for that matter, at risk by seeing or doing something potentially inappropriate with an external stakeholder.

The other thing that I would flag here is that one’s relationship with one's manager and one's relationship with one's team members is something that one has to be careful of as well. This analyst was younger than me and she was female, and she had trouble setting boundaries, and as a result, after working with her for more than a year, eventually I became concerned about some of the perception and some of the interactions we were having. I had a conversation with her, and I had a conversation with a female manager who I knew that she trusted, and I suggested that she moved to a different team doing work that was a little bit lower stress and that was a little bit more predictable. One, because it would help with her managing stress variability. And two, in terms of working with somebody who was a little bit more comfortable in terms of how she was managing boundaries, but it's really hard in a situation like this to manage somebody and to accommodate somebody when they're situation changes and their situation sometimes - like I could see her responding when she came to work in the morning based on stuff that happened the previous night or the previous weekend. And it's hard to formally set up an accommodation structure that's based on that degree of variability. But the thing to really do here is to put in place mechanism so that if something does happen or if you do something that's not entirely work appropriate that you've limited the potential risk for long term consequences. And so that's what I would suggest in terms of approaching accommodation. I hope that's helpful. But it's really a fairly broad question and there are a fairly large number of things that could be that could be covered in terms of executive function. I realize also that my answer is based on anecdotal experience as a manager, but I hope that's helpful.

**Joshua Frame**  
Yeah, absolutely. No, very, very helpful. I think, Michael, I'll just provide a bit of a summary in French.

Michael a répondu à la question et a parlé d'une expérience où il a travaillé avec une employée qui avait besoin de mesures d'adaptation pour sa fonction exécutive. Pour l'employée, pour les mesures d'adaptation en place, avoir une autre personne dans les réunions pour gérer les situations où, en raison de ses troubles de fonction exécutive, son comportement ou sa présentation n'étaient pas nécessairement corrects. [*Inaudible*] Merci beaucoup Michael pour votre réponse.

*Une section paraphrasée ou résumée ; Joshua a résumé ce qui était inclus dans la réponse de Michael :*

* *Il faut faire attention à vos relations avec votre gestionnaire et à vos relations avec les membres de votre équipe.*
* *En ce qui concerne les aménagements fondés sur la variabilité, il faut mettre en place des mesures d'adaptation pour que, si quelque chose se produit, ou si quelque chose qui n'est pas tout à fait approprié au travail se produit, le risque de conséquences à long terme soit limité.*

I will pass over to Darrin to chime in on this this question as well. So, Darrin, over to you.

**Darrin Antler**  
Thank you for the question. I myself have autism, so I do experience those challenges. But before I address the issue of executive functioning, it's a good thing to know that the accommodation process does not require any disclosure on behalf of the employee about what they're going through. All that your accommodations require is what you need to participate fully in work. So on paper, there is no need for anything beyond a conversation with your manager saying: look, I'm struggling and in order to be successful, I believe these accommodations would assist me. In an ideal world that would always work 100% of the time.  
Unfortunately, we do not live in an ideal world, so there may be a secondary step necessary where you do consult with a medical practitioner; that can be a medical doctor, that can be a psychotherapist, the psychologist, in some cases, a social worker, where all they have to provide is either a medical certificate or a letter stating that the employee cannot participate in situations X and they need these supports Y. And that's how you go about getting your accommodations, and that should be the end of it. However, we do not live in an ideal world. You may face resistance. However, I don't want any of you to think that you have to get into what your specific situation is with your employer.  
One kind of tool, not tool, but tip I will give you: document every conversation you have regarding accommodations or the way your disability affects you at work. Only disclose what you're comfortable with. If you start to feel frustrated that you're not getting anywhere, disengage from the conversation:  
just say, all right, well, perhaps we should speak about this at another time, I don't think that I'm communicating effectively what I need. Then, reach out to people that you're seeing in this network today, reach out to disability support groups, anybody that you trust - and we have 3 great mentors on the call in addition to Josh, who's moderating us, and I can't speak for them, but from what I know of themselves, or I'm sure all of us would be very, very willing to assist you if you're going through issues and give you advice and guidance. We do have a bit more networking within the government. We may know somebody within your particular organization that can be reached out to and provide you some assistance.  
So again, as far as that goes, if you do think you have a great relationship with your manager and that they'd be supportive - and I've certainly had experience with managers like that, I've also had experience with managers where I had to get my Labor Relations officer involved, but that goes to say that every interaction may be different, but there is a huge toolbox at your disposal that you're fortunate to have within the federal government that not a lot of private sector employees have. So, reach out. Don't feel that you have to take this on yourself. At the end of the day, the idea is that your employer gets full value for their dollar. You're obviously all hired for a reason, that you have skills and talent and any manager worth their salt will want that to be as exploitable in the best sense of the term as possible.  
I can't think of any manager that will want their employees productivity to suffer over things that you know, it might take some time, but things that we have the systems in place to implement and that's all I'll say on that issue.

And I believe Diane wanted to go – oh sorry Josh!

Il va résume en français.

**Joshua Frame**  
Oh, doesn’t matter!

Alors, en français. Ça me fait plaisir de résumer en français ce qu’il a dit sur les mesures accommodation. [*Inaudible*]

*Une section paraphrasée ou résumée ; Joshua a résumé ce qui était inclus dans la réponse de Darrin :*

* *La procédure d'adaptation ne nécessite aucune divulgation de la part de l'employé concernant sa situation. Tout ce que vos aménagements exigent est ce dont vous avez besoin pour participer pleinement à votre travail.*
* *En théorie, il n'y a rien d'autre à faire qu'une conversation avec votre gestionnaire. Malheureusement, nous ne vivons pas dans un monde idéal et il se peut donc qu'une deuxième étape soit nécessaire, celle de la consultation d'un médecin. Dans ce cas, le médecin doit fournir un certificat médical ou une lettre indiquant que l'employé ne peut pas participer à des situations X et qu'il a besoin de ces soutiens Y.*
* *Les conseils : documentez toutes les conversations que vous avez au sujet des aménagements ou de la manière dont votre handicap vous affecte au travail, et ne divulguez que ce qui vous met à l'aise. Si vous commencez à vous sentir frustré par la conversation, désengagez-vous, réessayez une autre fois et contactez les personnes que vous voyez dans ce réseau aujourd'hui (groupes de soutien aux personnes en situation de handicap, toute personne en qui vous avez confiance, mentors).*
* *Chaque interaction avec un gestionnaire au sujet des aménagements peut être différente.*
* *Vous avez la chance de disposer de nombreux outils pour vous aider dans votre travail au sein de du gouvernement fédéral. Ne vous sentez pas obligé de tout faire vous-même.*
* *Vous avez été embauché parce que vous avez des compétences et du talent, et les gestionnaires devraient vouloir utiliser vos compétences ; Ils ne veulent pas que la productivité de leurs employés souffert de choses que nous avons les systèmes en place pour mettre en place.*

So, I will pass the mic over to Diane for awhile.

Je passe la parole à Diane pour parler.

**Diane Belanger-Vena**  
En français. Le seul fait que j’aimerais ajouter à ce question-là c’est qu’il fausse rappeler que les personne employés, personnes en situation de handicap, ne fonctionnent pas tous de la même manière. Et puis qu’il est vraiment important de se comprendre soi-même.

*Une section paraphrasée ou résumée : Ce qui fonctionne pour l'un ne fonctionne pas pour l'autre. Si, par exemple, je ne pouvais pas marcher, je ne pourrais pas nécessairement occuper un poste facile dans une salle de courrier où je dois distribuer du courrier. Il est donc essentiel de comprendre le poste que vous acceptez. Il y a toujours un droit d'adaptation et nous y reviendrons plus tard avec d'autres questions, mais j'aurais vraiment aimé me comprendre il y a 35 ans lorsque j'ai commencé à travailler pour le gouvernement. Et si vous ne savez pas où aller pour parler, presque tous les ministères ont un programme d'aide aux employés. Ils peuvent vous guider et vous prodiguer des conseils précieux sur la manière de naviguer dans cette procédure.*

In English. So I would say that basically understanding oneself is very, very important.  
Because what works for one doesn't work for the other. And if for example, I could not walk, I would not be able to necessarily have an easy position in a mailroom where I'm required to deliver mail. So, understanding the position that you're accepting is key. There's always a right of accommodation and we'll get into those with other questions later, but I just really wanted to, you know - I wish I had understood myself some 35 years ago when I began with the government. And, also to know if you don't know where to go to talk, you know, every department pretty much has an employee assistance program. They can guide you and offer you invaluable tips on how to navigate that procedure. Thank you.

**Joshua Frame**  
Absolutely. OK.  
So moving on to our next most highly upvoted question on Slido, in English. The question is: if I am provided with accommodations, but they still do not meet my needs, has the employer fulfilled their obligation?

Alors, en français, la question demandée est : si des mesures d’accommodation me sont fournies, mais qu'ils ne répondent toujours pas à mes besoins, l'employeur a-t-il rempli son obligation?

So we will start with Darrin on this question.Darrin, over to you.

**Darrin Antler**  
Simple answer to that question is no. The idea of accommodations is that you get to the point where you can participate fully to the best of your ability, and it is known, and it's acknowledged within the internal procedures that this might be a process of refinement. Things that you thought initially may work for you may not end up working for you, and there's nothing wrong with that. And that's where once the process is ongoing, you need to have an open dialogue with your manager. And as I addressed, some managers are better than others. If you don't feel comfortable with that manager, as I said, you may have to go back to the doctor or the medical advisor. Unfortunately, that it is still a process subject to human judgment and human error, and that can't be removed at the moment. So what you have to do, and unfortunately you have to do it, is you have to be mindful of what it is that will get you to the point where you can participate fully.

So, I'll give an example, a personal example, where - it wasn't quite the question being asked - but from the time of that I joined the public service as a student, it was known that I would have to have a telework agreement. And then, incidentally, that was right before the pandemic, and the pandemic came. And for reasons related to CRA, it was more beneficial for me not to have an accommodation since I'm working from home anyway, I could get the 2200-A. That’s neither here nor there. So, my previous managers were all fine with it, and they knew that I was not going to be coming to the office on the return to office plan; I was willing, with adequate preparation time, if there was an in-person requirement like we had stakeholders coming in. Yes, I prepared myself for that. But even the two days a week, it's just not what happens to me. So that was not a problem. And then a new manager came in and they wanted to propose all these things, that you know, ostensibly would be alternatives to an ongoing telework agreement. And unfortunately, she had an autistic nephew, which is always interesting to deal with. If you've met one person with that disability, and that's just the end of it. But anyway, it was an unpleasant thing, but the accommodations that they wanted to provide as an alternative would not help me. I am a 42-year-old man. I've been working since the 80s. I was in the military. I know my limitations, I know myself. I know what I can handle, and I know what other people can handle other than me.

So back to the executive functioning question. One thing that's particularly difficult for me and other people with similar brain conditions that I've spoken to is we have to dedicate a lot of mental resources to appearing socially acceptable in our body language. The faces, the way that we look at people, the way that we deal with our voice inflections, and that takes a lot of concentration and it's very exhausting. And then when other mental efforts are required, the ability to mask, as it's known within the community, regresses significantly. So by the end of the day, I might be perceived to be an A-hole, for lack of a better term. But it's just me not able to show what people like anymore, so there's always that balance and I know right away the way that I struggle with it and I know that within three to four months of coming in, it's going to start to wear off. And what Michael said is correct, like you have to be aware of who you're dealing with and your audience and it's just, and I don't think it's a negative thing, it's just the way our society is. They have certain expectations of social protocol and it's not anybody's fault. But for me it's just difficult to match them if I can't concentrate exclusively on that. So, as I said, if I know there's a meeting of stakeholders coming in two months, I can come up with a process map in my brain to deal with this. I can start going well if this happens, I'll do this and it's never foolproof, but it allows a sense of comfort and ease. So, your accommodations exist for you to do the best job possible, and if you've tried something and it doesn't work, that's just part of the process that's part of life. Do not feel any sense of shame for just saying this isn't working for me, we're going to have to find other supplements, or maybe perhaps alternatives. You know yourself the best. Don't feel ashamed to say this is what I need to be as successful as I can.

**Joshua Frame**  
Absolutely. Thanks very much, Darrin.

Et pour ceux entrevous qui parlent français, [*Inaudible*].

*Une section paraphrasée ou résumée ; Joshua a résumé ce qui était inclus dans la réponse de Darrin :*

* *La réponse à cette question est non ; l'idée des mesures d'adaptation est que vous arriviez au point où vous pouvez participer pleinement au mieux de vos capacités, et il est connu et reconnu dans les procédures internes qu'il peut s'agir d'un processus d'amélioration. Si vous avez essayé quelque chose et que cela ne fonctionne pas, cela fait partie du processus.*
* *Les mesures d'adaptation que vous pensiez initialement efficaces peuvent ne pas l'être, et il n'y a rien de mal à cela.*
* *Vous devez être conscient de ce qui vous permettra de participer pleinement, et vous devez avoir un dialogue ouvert avec votre responsable.*
* *C'est vous qui vous connaissez le mieux. N'ayez pas honte de dire que c'est ce dont j'ai besoin pour réussir au mieux.*

I will pass over to Diane for further information on this question.

**Diane Belanger-Vena**

Merci. Je veux seulement dire que on travaille en assumant que vous savez ce dont vous avez besoin pour travailler, que vous savez les outils que vous besoin. *Une section paraphrasée ou résumée : Si ce n'est pas le cas, n'hésitez pas à faire appel à vos experts, à vos spécialistes, à vos médecins et, si vous le souhaitez, aux ressources humaines. Quelqu'un des RH ou même de la santé et de la sécurité au travail peut avoir des contacts qui pourraient vous aider à voir ce qui pourrait vous être utile.*

So just very quickly in English, if you don't know, we're making the assumption that you know what you require. If you don't, don't be afraid to reach out to your experts, your specialists, to your doctors and, another place where you may want to try is human resources. A duty to accommodate office of sorts. Somebody in HR or even occupational health and safety, they may have contacts that could help you to see what could work. That's it. Thank you.

**Michael Mohammed**  
AAACT.

**Diane Belanger-Vena**  
Definitely, I don't know how to say it in French. AAACT, definitely.

**Darrin Antler**  
May I ask a question? Just because - do we have a resource sheet for the student that are in this group of just, various links that they can go to guide them? If not, we can probably easily provide a supplement after the meeting. Sorry.

**Camila Das Gupta**  
Yeah, absolutely.

**Joshua Frame**  
Yeah, Camila.

**Camila Das Gupta**  
I'll just jump in there with the question. Thanks, Darrin. On our web page we do have links to triple AAACT, the office of Office of Public Service accessibility, those sorts of things, but, and we've got a couple of one-pagers as well, but we'll definitely make sure to send an email out to kind of promote those again and make sure to direct students in some of those areas.

**Joshua Frame**  
OK.Thanks very much. OK, moving on to our next question. This is a great one. The question is: would requiring an accommodation for remote work impact future job prospects? For example, currently remote with their current team, but looking at switching jobs and to a new team. But that new team will only take on someone who will be on site.

Alors en français. La question demandée est : est-ce que le fait d'exiger une mesure d'adaptation pour le travail à distance affecterait les possibilités d'emploi dans le futur ? Par exemple, une personne qui travaille présentement à distance avec son équipe actuelle, mais qui considère changer d'emploi et passer à une nouvelle équipe qui n'acceptera que des personnes qui seront présentes sur le site.

Over to Michael for first response on this question.

**Michael Mohammed**  
OK. Thanks Josh. So, there are a couple of issues here and I'm going to try to deal with them one at a time. First of all, there is working remotely and then there is finding other job. And then there's your accommodation. And then there's when you declare that accommodation. Depending on what sort of field you're in and which department you're dealing with, there is a fairly significant return to office move currently in the NCR. There are a lot of departments that require that their employees either be in the office or that they be at a coworking location two to three days a week, and there are also some departments where there are top secret requirements, and you need to be in the office all the time. So, your remote status, I would argue, has more of an effect on your ability to find another job than your requirement for an accommodation, which frankly shouldn't have any effect on your ability to find another job.

You don't need to declare your accommodation until after you've signed your letter of offer, so you don't need to tell your future employer within the public service anything at all about the fact that you have any sort of disability or about the fact that you require an accommodation at all. My personal opinion is that I think you should declare early and often, because if someone's going to be a \*\*\*\*\*\*\* and not hire you because you've got a disability, then you don't want to work for them anyway. And there are plenty of decent people. There are even a few decent people in management or executive positions across the government and so you can- don't work for somebody who's not going to value you and value your skills. You can choose who to work for and you can find somebody who will work with you to make sure that you can achieve the best of your potential. Don't settle for somebody who's not willing to accommodate you. And the other comments that I wanted to make on this is, as Darrin mentioned earlier and as I've experienced as a manager, one of your accommodations could be your requirement to work remotely as an example, as a manager, I had, I've had an analyst with a gastrointestinal condition who which flared up on occasion and they wanted to be able to work from home. We had a conversation. I told them to get me medical note that basically just said that they could work from home and their discretion, and that said nothing at all about their medical condition or why they were doing this. I forwarded that note to Labor Relations. I made sure it was on their file in case they went off to work for somebody else within the department, and as far as I was concerned, as far as they were concerned, as far as anyone else concerned, they were covered to come into the office when they felt up to be in the office or working from home and they felt they needed to work from home. And so that is an option as well. I think I've covered it, or I think I've covered everything I'm going to cover and if anyone else has anything to add.

**Joshua Frame**  
Yeah, absolutely.I'll just provide a quick summary in French.

*Une section paraphrasée ou résumée ; Joshua a résumé ce qui était inclus dans la réponse de Michael :*

* *De nombreux départements exigent que leurs employés soient au bureau ou dans un espace de coworking deux ou trois jours par semaine, et il y a aussi des départements qui ont des exigences très secrètes et où vous devez être au bureau tout le temps.*
* *Le statut de travailleur à distance a plus d'effet sur votre capacité à trouver un autre emploi que votre demande d'aménagement, qui ne devrait franchement pas avoir d'effet sur votre capacité à trouver un autre emploi.*
* *Vous n'avez pas besoin de déclarer vos aménagements avant d'avoir signé votre lettre d'offre, vous n'avez donc pas besoin de dire à votre futur employeur dans la fonction publique que vous avez un handicap quelconque ou que vous avez besoin d'un aménagement.*
* *Son opinion personnelle : déclarez tôt et souvent, car si quelqu'un ne vous engage pas parce que vous avez un handicap, vous n'avez de toute façon pas envie de travailler pour lui. Ne travaillez pas pour quelqu'un qui ne vous appréciera pas et qui n'appréciera pas vos compétences. Vous pouvez choisir votre employeur et trouver quelqu'un qui travaillera avec vous pour vous permettre d'exploiter au mieux votre potentiel. Ne vous contentez pas de quelqu'un qui n'est pas prêt à vous satisfaire.*
* *Une mesure d'adaptation pourrait être votre besoin de travailler à distance. À titre d'exemple, Michael a parlé de son expérience de gestion d'un analyste qui souhaitait pouvoir travailler à distance. L'analyste a fourni un certificat médical et a pu venir au bureau lorsqu'il se sentait capable d'être au bureau ou de travailler à la maison et qu'il estimait avoir besoin de travailler à la maison.*

And we'll next pass over to Diane next. Oh, sorry, Michael.

**Michael Mohammed**  
What? Yeah.

**Joshua Frame**  
Did you just want to emphasize on? Yeah.

**Michael Mohammed**  
So there are also departments or elements within departments that are allowing people to work remotely, full time for example. We're all being managed within the office of the Chief Information Officer from a Chief Information Officer who manages us from Alberta. So, we have operational flexibility with regards to remote work and I know there are other parts of government where that's also true. So being a remote is not necessarily going to kill your career either, but it may limit your options.

**Joshua Frame**  
Yeah, absolutely. OK. Onto Diane next for the question.

**Diane Belanger-Vena**  
I hate to repeat what Michael has said, but I vote you don't want to work for somebody who's not willing to accommodate you. There's a lot of people who will be retiring. There'll be a lot of positions, but also to keep in mind, for example, my son worked for the IT section and when COVID hit he had to be in the office five days a week because he was cleaning the computers and sending everybody monitors and computers and mouse and keyboards. So, while it may not have been your job due to certain situations in life, sometimes the job does change, and it can't be accommodated. So again, I mean it doesn't happen often, but I just want it to repeat what Michael said.

*Une section paraphrasée ou résumée : Je répète ce que Michael a déjà dit, mais vous ne voulez pas travailler pour quelqu'un qui n'est pas disposé à vous accommoder. De nombreuses personnes vont partir à la retraite. Il y aura beaucoup de postes à occuper. Mais il faut aussi garder à l'esprit qu'en raison de certaines situations de la vie, il arrive que le travail change et qu'il ne soit pas possible de s'adapter, même si cela n'arrive pas souvent.*

**Joshua Frame**  
Merci. OK. We'll pass over to Darrin for final thought on this question.

**Darrin Antler**  
Well, I take the point that our two panelists made about you don't want to work for somebody who won't accommodate you. I'm also coming from a different angle. I'm union steward and I'm you know, highly involved in the labor side of it. As Michael correctly said, you don't have to disclose anything, your accommodation needs, till after you sign a letter of offer. And if you're already in the government and in in determinate position, you might have a bit of a different calculus on what jobs you want to accept.  
If you kind of say, I don't think I'm going to relate to this manager, but if you're a student hoping to be bridged, if you're given the letter of offer and you sign it, you're given the letter of offer and you sign it and you have the job. Now if after that point the accommodations won't be invoked, then the employer has to show what's called undue hardship, meaning that they have to show if they accommodated you, it would negatively affect their ability to do business. And as Michael correctly said, and as Diane gave an example, there are some positions like if you are going to work for Parks Canada as a park Ranger at a National Park, so everyone won't work, isn't for you, and that is an undue hardship for the employer.  
You have to physically be in attendance to, you know, sell the tickets, open the gates; whatever it may be, but if you're doing office type of work or intellectual labor or policy work or administrative work or clerical work, where it's at a terminal, it would be very difficult for the employer to show undue hardship.

Now one great point of contact would be a union. Some of the collective agreements are very in between the different occupational classes, so I don't want to say whether or not the attendees are part of a union or not but look at what your classification is. In my case, I'm an EC economics and social science find other people within your organization that have the same classification and say who is your Union. And even if you are a student, if I have an ECF web student that communicates with me, they are not covered by the Union, for example. But we still try to help them, and most people will, even if they can't formally get involved, through the grievance process, it might turn out that you do have to go to the Canadian Human Rights Commission. I don't think it would get this far in this day and age, but it's a nice luxury to have where you feel secure in your job as I do. And I did turn down a position earlier in the year. That was one level up because I just got bad vibes from the manager, and it wasn't worth the promotion to go through what I thought I was going to go through and that's fine decision for me. But I have the luxury of being indeterminate and feeling somewhat secure in my job, economic cycles notwithstanding. But you have to make a calculation based on what's right for you, and if you do get that letter of offer, you have the job.

If you need the accommodations to be remote and 100% of the time, that's the accommodation.  
So again, don't feel shame in it. Make the choice based on your current situation and if you need any support, feel free to email myself or I'm sure the other people on the call, somebody you trust get involved with the employee with disability networks within your department or organization and you know, stand up for your rights because you have them.

**Joshua Frame**

*Paraphrased or summarized section: Joshua provided a summary of Darrin’s answer in French.*

*Une section paraphrasée ou résumée ; Joshua a résumé ce qui était inclus dans la réponse de Darrin :*

* *Darrin a répété qu'il ne faut pas travailler pour quelqu'un qui ne veut pas vous accommoder.*
* *Si vous êtes un étudiant espérant bénéficier d'une passerelle, si vous recevez la lettre d'offre et que vous la signez, vous avez le poste. Maintenant, si après cela les aménagements ne sont pas invoqués, l'employeur doit prouver ce que l'on appelle une contrainte excessive, c'est-à-dire qu'il doit montrer que s'il vous aménageait, cela affecterait négativement sa capacité à faire des affaires.*
* *Vous devez faire un calcul basé sur ce qui vous convient en termes de travail.*
* *Si vous avez besoin d'aménagements pour travailler à distance et 100 % du temps, c'est ce qu'il faut faire. N'en ayez pas honte. Faites votre choix en fonction de votre situation actuelle et si vous avez besoin d'aide, n'hésitez pas à m'envoyer un courriel ou à envoyer un courriel aux autres personnes présentes, à quelqu'un en qui vous avez confiance. Participez aux réseaux d'employés handicapés au sein de votre département ou de votre organisation et défendez vos droits parce que vous les avez.*

Thank you very much, Darrin.  
Now we're going to go through a few kind of quick questions that have been directed to each of you individually. So, we'll start with Darrin. The question is: Do you have any advice on explaining the concept of masking to your supervisor?I worry that they think that if I can mask, I don't have accommodation needs.

**Darrin Antler**

Yeah. As I kind of say, it's the idea that you're not autistic enough. I understand that myself; I hate to sound conceited, but I'm an expert masker. I mean I've had to since I was a child. I was born in 1980 in Northern Ontario. The society was very different, so I learned the skill to basically take on the social dimensions of the group with which I'm dealing with, and it's a great skill. But it's also hard because sometimes you lose sight of who you are as a person because you're putting on these performances for everybody else. And I'm sure a lot of people can relate to that. Now as far as explaining again, you have to be very selective in who you kind of discuss these things with as I said, and I know that in in my case, and for some people with my disposition, you can put misplaced trust in people because it's hard to read people's true intentions. Overall, I would have to say that most of the people I've met in the public service want to do good things for people and do right by people. That's not going to be everybody, but in describing masking you can just say that you're basically translating your personality to be understandable for other people, and it requires effort, and it requires mental concentration and that you cannot work as your true self. And I would say be aware of that and own that like my data, like my personal behavior, who I really am rarely comes out because I'm monotonic. Even now, I'm raising my voice, but I naturally speak from the back of my throat. I'm very monotonic. I have like a death stare as I've been told. I've told I can be a scary guy and I'm aware of all these things and I don't. I don't judge people for feeling those things, because to be honest, when I see some of those things too, I'm like, what's wrong with that person? But then you know, it's always the delicate dance of letting others be themselves while you try to be yourself. But I don't think that you should be naive or think that everybody can accept you for who you really are or that it's necessarily required within a professional environment. You are here selling a skill. You are not here to be you and I know that's confusing for a lot of people and those who are neurotypical can very quickly switch between the social and the professional without any thought or any requirement to do any thinking. And it's just boom, boom, boom. I don't have that ability, so I'm very deliberate and careful of who I am at work. And that's my mask. And I have told my managers this. Like, here's the thing why I can't come into the office. I can't maintain this facade at a certain point I'll get flat. I'll stare at people. I'll give one-word answers.  
I'll be you know, in their words, dismissive and curt, and I know they perceive this.  
And again, I don't feel bad that they do. It's just the way it is. So, if you're going to describe masking, my advice would be to say it's like a translation of who you really are that is acceptable in the workplace.  
Just let them know it takes a lot of thought and sometimes it slips, so please don't be judgmental.  
In the past I would have code words with people I trust, where if I was slipping, they'd say something like crayons, something innocuous that seems, you know, unnoticeable and then that gives me the self awareness to know, I'm slipping now, and I have to go back now. In an ideal world, again, we wouldn't have to do that, but it's not an ideal world and you do have to acknowledge there's other human beings that have the social upbringing they have and the social skills they have, and they are unfortunately, or fortunately in the majority. And don't sweat it. It's just what you have to do to live. It just is, and there's other people that have to do things that are a lot more challenging than asking just to get out of bed in the morning. So, uh, focus more on your skills and don't worry about things like that as much.

**Joshua Frame**   
Excellent.

*Une section paraphrasée ou résumée ; Joshua a répété la question posée à Darrin et a résumé sa réponse :*

* *La question est la suivante : Avez-vous des conseils pour expliquer le concept de masquage à votre superviseur ? Je crains qu'il ne pense que si je peux masquer, je n'ai pas besoin de mesures d'adaptation.*
* *Décrivant son expérience en matière de masquage : il s'agit d'une compétence acquise qui permet d'assumer les dimensions sociales du groupe auquel on a affaire, et c'est une excellente compétence. Mais c'est aussi difficile parce qu'on perd parfois de vue qui on est en tant que personne parce qu'on fait ces représentations pour tout le monde.*
* *Il faut être très sélectif quant aux personnes avec lesquelles on discute de ces choses, parce que Darrin et les personnes comme lui peuvent accorder une confiance mal placée aux gens, parce qu'il est difficile de lire les véritables intentions des gens. Cependant, il affirme que la plupart des personnes qu'il a rencontrées dans le service public veulent faire de bonnes choses pour les gens et faire ce qu'il faut pour les gens.*
* *Pour décrire le masquage, on peut simplement dire que l'on traduit sa personnalité pour la rendre compréhensible par d'autres personnes, que cela demande des efforts et de la concentration mentale et que l'on ne peut pas travailler comme on est vraiment soi-même.*
* *Tout le monde ne peut pas/ne veut pas vous accepter tel que vous êtes et ce n'est pas nécessairement nécessaire dans un environnement professionnel. Vous êtes ici pour vendre une compétence.*
* *Beaucoup de gens peuvent passer très rapidement de la vie sociale à la vie professionnelle sans y penser ou sans avoir besoin d'y penser. Il n'a pas cette capacité et fait donc très attention à qui il est au travail, ce qui est son masque.*
* *Soyez conscient de l'effet du masque sur la façon dont vous vous présentez aux autres. Dans le passé, Darrin avait des mots de code avec des personnes en qui il avait confiance. S'il dérapait, elles lui disaient quelque chose comme "crayons de couleur", quelque chose qui passait inaperçu, ce qui lui permettait de se rendre compte qu'il devait quitter la situation. Dans un monde idéal, nous n'aurions pas à faire cela, mais ce n'est pas un monde idéal et vous devez reconnaître qu'il y a d'autres êtres humains qui ont l'éducation sociale qu'ils ont et les compétences sociales qu'ils ont, et ils sont malheureusement, ou heureusement, dans la majorité.*

OK, that said, I will pass over to Diane for the next question.   
The question is: I don't know whether my supervisor knows that I have a disability. Should I tell them that I have ADHD? How would I say it? I'm worried to be a disappointment.

La question est la suivante : je ne sais pas si mon supérieur hiérarchique sait que j'ai un handicap. Dois-je lui dire que je souffre de TDAH ? Comment dois-je le dire ? J'ai peur de leur décevoir.

**Diane Belanger-Vena**  
I love this question. It hits so many different things on different levels.  
First of all, the person who may have asked this has spent a lifetime worrying what others think of them, as I have. We talk about masking a mental health disability because it's called just getting on with life.

The question whether to tell them you have ADHD or not. It's very personal, but if you have I guess a pronounced ADHD, I would recommend that you at least have a discussion with regards to functional limitations. And I say that as a new employee, if you wait until there's a performance issue, it becomes very difficult at that point. You want to be able to hopefully have a good relationship with your manager and advise them on what works best for you and how it works best for you before you have any issues. Now, if your ADHD is very mild, that's a whole other situation as well.  
But I wanted to address the “I'm worried to be a disappointment.” You know what? You’re valuable. You have value. You have skills, as I've heard earlier, and really that should not be your biggest concern, how your employer is feeling.

*Une section paraphrasée ou résumée :*

* *Tout d'abord, la personne qui a posé cette question a passé sa vie à s'inquiéter de ce que les autres pensent d'elle, tout comme Diane.*
* *La question est de savoir si vous devez leur dire que vous avez un TDAH ou non. C'est très personnel, mais si vous avez un TDAH prononcé, Diane recommande d'avoir au moins une discussion sur les limitations fonctionnelles.*
* *En tant que nouvel employé, si vous attendez qu'il y ait un problème de performance, il devient très difficile d'avoir une conversation à ce sujet à ce moment-là. Vous voulez avoir une bonne relation avec votre responsable et le conseiller sur ce qui fonctionne le mieux pour vous et comment cela fonctionne le mieux pour vous avant que vous n'ayez des problèmes.*
* *En ce qui concerne la question "J'ai peur de leur décevoir" : Vous avez de la valeur. Vous avez de la valeur. Vous avez des compétences. Le sentiment de votre employeur ne doit pas être votre principale préoccupation.*

**Joshua Frame**  
OK, merci Diane. I think the concept of it, you know, being something that's better to raise at the outset is very key and certainly in my time as a manager I've had situations where an employee’s disability came out later on in the performance management process - six months eight months later - and it was something that I would have liked to have known at day one so that we could put in measures of accommodation, we could figure it out together, rather than having that employee struggle with that situation on their own. Definitely raise that as soon as you feel comfortable but as soon as you can to be able to be judged fairly in that situation.

Our next question is: I've heard mixed things about disclosing my disability when applying for jobs, would disclosing impact my chances of getting a job?

En français. La question demandée est: J'ai entendu des commentaires mitigés au sujet de la déclaration de mon handicap lorsque je postule à un emploi. Cette déclaration aurait-elle une conséquence sur mes chances d'obtenir un emploi ?

We will go to Michael in a sec, and I'll just say first off, we've talked a bit on this panel about that the Government of Canada as a whole is looking to hire more persons with disabilities to have greater representation. There are a ton of targeted processes for persons with disabilities, both to join the public service and then advancement processes within it. So definitely it should not be a hindrance, but Michael over to you.

**Michael Mohammed**  
So that announcement about hiring 5000 additional public servants with disabilities was made in, if I remember, the first time I heard that it was in 2019 under Michael. And then I think the announcement was made again in either 2021 or 20, yeah, in 2020 or 2021 under the new clerk. And last I'd heard, which was last fall, we were at 100 and net gain of 138. So we're not doing a very good job, and I wanna say that first. The next thing I'm gonna say is that disclosing that you have a disability and checking the boxes on the form on jobs.gc.ca and identifying yourself as being a member of an employment equity group is not supposed to make a difference in the hiring process at all - like it is legally not supposed to make a difference. And it is illegal in this country to discriminate against somebody with a disability.  
That being said, I can personally tell you about times when I've been in seven different pools and nobody's pulled me out of any of those pools. I don't know whether that's because I have brown skin and the last name that is clearly not Anglo Saxon, or whether that's because I have self-identified as having a disability, or whether that's because I just applied to the wrong jobs at the wrong time and it's all just coincidence. My feeling is that you should disclose early because if somebody is going to not pull you out of a pool or not offer you a job because of a disability, they're probably not somebody you're going to work well with anyway, and they're probably not somebody who's going to value you for your skills. But, at the same time I can understand the comments that Darrin made earlier, that if you need a job, you need a job, and maybe the best thing to do in order to get that job is to not disclose until after you've signed your letter of offer.

**Joshua Frame**

*Une section paraphrasée ou résumée ; Joshua a résumé la réponse de Michael:*

* *L'annonce de l'embauche de 5 000 fonctionnaires handicapés supplémentaires a donc été faite vers 2020 ou 2021.*
* *Divulguer que vous avez un handicap et cocher les cases du formulaire sur jobs.gc.ca et vous identifier comme membre d'un groupe d'équité en matière d'emploi n'est pas du tout censé faire une différence dans le processus d'embauche.*
* *Vous devriez le révéler tôt, car si quelqu'un ne vous retire pas d'un pool ou ne vous offre pas un emploi à cause d'un handicap, ce n'est probablement pas quelqu'un avec qui vous travaillerez bien de toute façon, et ce n'est probablement pas quelqu'un qui vous valorisera pour vos compétences.*

I will pass over to Darrin, and I think we're at sort of a few minutes left. So maybe a quick response and then we'll maybe give everyone sort of a last chance to provide their final closing thoughts. Darrin, over to you.

**Darrin Antler**  
For the sake of brevity, I can merge the two activities, but I would recommend always self declaring, and I may be mistaken, or I may have misunderstood Michael, but there are certain conditions where certain equity groups can be prioritized in the hiring pool.

**Michael Mohammed**  
Yeah.

**Darrin Antler**  
So for example, there was a position, some positions, with the Chief Accessibility Officer and priority was given to disabled employees of the public service. So, it sometimes it can be an advantage, but as Michael correctly said, it helps a lot in demographic gathering within the federal public service to kind of look at the composition of who's applying for jobs and who's getting jobs. And as we've kind of stressed, it's an imperfect system, but at some point in time, those numbers should be equivalent. And they should be. You know if there's 30% of the employee pool that's disabled, 30% of the hires should be disabled by just extending the logic of the situation. So I would say always self declare, that's not necessarily going to go to your employer unless you are going into one of those priority pools.  
If you want to summarize that Joshua often say and then I can transition to my closing or if I have taken your power away from you, I apologize and we'll do whatever you think is best.

**Joshua Frame**  
No, that's perfect.

*Une section paraphrasée ou résumée ; Joshua a résumé la réponse de Darrin :*

* *Recommande de toujours se déclarer.*
* *Il existe certaines conditions dans lesquelles certains groupes d'équité peuvent être prioritaires dans le bassin d'embauche. Cela peut parfois constituer un avantage.*
* *C'est un système imparfait, mais à un moment donné, ces chiffres devraient être équivalents. Si 30 % des employés sont handicapés, 30 % des personnes recrutées devraient l'être aussi, si l'on s'en tient à la logique de la situation.*
* *Lorsque vous vous déclarez, votre employeur n'en bénéficiera pas nécessairement, à moins que vous ne fassiez partie de l'un de ces groupes prioritaires.*

Back to you for closing and then we'll go on to Michael.

**Darrin Antler**  
Alright, to those in attendance and I had read some of the Slido questions, and the question that somebody had asked about ADHD regarding being a disappointment. I wanted to kind of try to provide people with a bit of reframing here. Some of us that face physical or nonphysical barriers that other people don't face and have/are currently in the position we're all in right now, whether that's at the beginning as a student or you know we have multiple managers on this call- I'm not quite there yet and I'm too much of a of a militant labor advocate, I guess, but the point being that you've all demonstrated how you can accomplish things that other people will never have to. You fight adversity every day in your life and you're able to get to the same level if not higher than the average person, whether that be in school, whether that be in work. Secondly, you are not lucky to have the jobs you have, and you're not lucky if you get an indeterminate job, and you're not lucky if you get a good private sector job or whatever your future holds. You are the asset; you are the talent. So, a way to reframe this is the way I do it: I have autism, which I've identified some challenges, but I also know what I can do well. I can write like a 2000-page document within three hours that will be almost professional quality with only minor revisions needed. I can handle quick turn around work of high complexities. I can very easily run multiple data simulations and come up with the narratives that other people can't find, and so when you are interviewing for positions, say that. And I know that for a lot of people humility has been beaten into them. But know you're an asset here, and when you interview, you're trying to say here's why you would your organization would benefit by hiring me. So, if you can do very complex data analysis very quickly, say that, and if you wanted, declare that you have ADHD, say sometimes my focus may go a bit off the goal, but as long as I have a manager that can keep me focused with regular deadlines, my output can be much greater than most people that I've ever worked with. So, know who you are. Sell yourself. Don't worry about your challenges and your interviews. Say here's why you're going to get full value for your money by hiring me. And then, as noted, if the letter of offer comes and you feel that that's the time to, you know, declare after you've accepted it, there's nothing wrong with that. Say OK, you have my skills. Here's what I need to be the best I can so that you're getting full value for your dollar. I will say with my current manager that was kind of a bit of a challenge and I did have to get my union’s Labor Relations involved. But now she understands what she's getting; I do work that's way above my classification. I do work that most people in my level don't get to see because she knows that I can get it done to a high standard and I can do it very quickly. So, it's a learning process for everybody, but don't ever feel like feel grateful in the global sense that you happen to live in a relatively stable, peaceful country. You do work for an organization that, even if they don't meet all their goals, at least they have the goals. But you are they are lucky to have us, not the other way around. And don't ever forget that, and that's all I'll say.

As I've noted, if anybody does want to contact me to discuss issues of accommodation, disability, workload management, anything, even if I'm not the right person to talk to, I probably know a few people that I can put you in touch with that we'll be able to give you better advice than I if I don't know what I'm doing. And that's one final thing. If you don't know what you're doing, tell the person who gave you the work or who's responsible for you that you don't know what you're doing, because most people here are very willing to teach you, and nothing’s really as complicated as you make it. And sorry I lied.  
The last thing I'll say is when your workday ends and your workday, that is the best piece of advice that I can give for your mental health, for your stamina, for your, your stress levels. At if you're done at 5, your day is done at 5. Go do pet a dog. Eat an ice cream. Do whatever you got to do, but work is over. Thank you.

**Joshua Frame**  
Thanks very much, Darrin.

*Une section paraphrasée ou résumée ; Joshua a résumé la réponse de Darrin :*

* *Vous avez tous démontré que vous pouvez accomplir des choses que d'autres n'auront jamais à faire. Vous luttez contre l'adversité tous les jours dans votre vie et vous êtes capables d'atteindre le même niveau, si ce n'est plus, que la moyenne des gens, que ce soit à l'école ou au travail.*
* *Vous êtes l'atout, vous êtes le talent.*
* *Sachez que vous êtes un atout et connaissez vos talents. Lorsque vous passez un entretien, vous essayez de dire pourquoi votre organisation aurait intérêt à m'embaucher. Sachez qui vous êtes et vendez-vous.*
* *Si quelqu'un souhaite contacter Darrin pour discuter de questions d'adaptation, de handicap, de gestion de la charge de travail, ou de quoi que ce soit d'autre, qu'il le fasse. S'il n'est pas la bonne personne à qui parler, il peut essayer de vous mettre en contact avec d'autres personnes qui peuvent vous aider.*
* *Si vous ne savez pas ce que vous faites, parlez-en à la personne qui vous a confié le travail ou qui est responsable de vous. La plupart des gens sont tout à fait disposés à vous enseigner, et rien n'est plus compliqué que ce que vous en faites.*
* *Lorsque votre journée de travail se termine, terminez-la. Il en va de votre santé mentale, de votre endurance et de votre niveau de stress.*

**Michael Mohammed**  
Yeah.

**Joshua Frame**

I will pass over to Michael very, very quickly for final thought and then at the end we'll pass back to Camila for closing.

**Michael Mohammed**  
No, that was good advice from Darrin. So, a couple of things. One is that I remember I showed up in a meeting a few years ago when I went on this rant about how I was tired of being the only person like me in scientific and technical environments. I ended up getting quoted in the federal accessibility strategy.  
I'm still tired of being one of the few people like me in management positions or in more technical positions and I am excited and hopeful that some of the people on this call will move up through the ranks and will move into to senior analyst positions and to senior science positions, and will move into management, and that we can move towards having a public service that reflects the people that we serve. I know that sounds cheesy, but it's true. And the other thing that I want to say is that it's not about you and you should not feel grateful for your job. It's about the work that you do and the deliverables that you produce, and if you cannot produce those deliverables make sure you talk to your manager about getting the appropriate tools to get those deliverables, whether that's through an accommodation or whether that's because you need specific software to get something done or specific hardware to get something done, or make sure that you talk to your manager about having the appropriate training to get your work done. Yeah, and don't make this about you. Make this about the work.

**Joshua Frame**  
It's like, OK, thanks very much Michael. Diane, we’ll pass over you quickly and then over to Camila.

**Diane Belanger-Vena**  
Two things. I'll make this very, very brief. Public service surveys happen every - I think it's every three or four years. If things aren't as they should be, clearly indicate, take the time to respond because the Government of Canada does seriously take a look at these things and please try to get involved with your network of persons with disabilities. Every department has one, and those are the best 2 tips I can give you. Thank you.

**Joshua Frame**  
Welcome. Thanks very much, Diane. I thank you very much everyone for your participation today to our amazing panel and back to you, Camila and fully.

**Camila Das Gupta**  
Thank you so much. I don't want to leave it, I want to leave the microphone for everyone. I think we could have continued this conversation for another hour or two, or if it's just me. There’s not much to say left other than a huge, massive thank you to Joshua for moderating and to our three panelists: Michael, Darrin, Diane. I kid you not, I could listen to you for hours. We're really grateful for your time, your expertise, your knowledge, your advice. And there was a lot covered today. I know that we packed it all in and I'm hoping our participants were able to get many of their questions answered and to learn a lot. I know I definitely did. So, like Darrin said, we can continue the conversation; you can come through our team, or you can go directly to our mentors online as well to ask questions, but we are available to continue answering these questions and providing you with the opportunities to learn so don't hesitate to reach out to our team. And as said, reach out directly to our mentors to ask more. We will be putting together a transcript after the event to try to provide these answers in written form in both languages, and, as well, we'll be addressing any of the unanswered questions in SLIDO so stay tuned for that.  
That might take a couple weeks to come out, but we will make sure that gets into your hands at some point.

We're looking forward to seeing everyone at the next event as well on July 25th. That's the speed mentoring event. Please remember you do need to register for this in advance to make sure you go through our team to register for this event. We do have a couple of spots left.

Before I pass it over to Sylvie to say thank you and close its own in French, I just wanted to again express my sincere gratitude. Michael, Darrin, Diane, you've got so much to offer. A lot of amazing points and we're so grateful to have you today, and to Josh as well for moderating that discussion. Just a massive thank you to our guest speakers. So over to Sylvie to close us out. Not sure she's there. So we might have to skip the French closing, but I guess I'll just finish this off. Thank you everyone again for joining us.  
Lots of content was covered and we're really grateful for your participation. We will be following up with everyone on the event today to make sure we can provide some written responses going forward. So thanks again to our moderator or panelist and everyone on the call today. Really grateful for your time and I hope you have a great rest of your day.

**Eduard Sauer**  
Thank you so much.

**Michael Mohammed**  
Thank you.

**Diane Belanger-Vena**  
And thank you for doing this, Camila.