

NATIONAL STUTTERING ASSOCIATION

IF YOU *stutter*, YOU ARE NOT *alone*.



**Tuesday, August 25, 2020**

## **Job Searching During COVID**

Searching for a job during the COVID pandemic affects all people in all industries. This webinar discussed a variety of topics ranging from ideas on updating your resume to using effectively using social media in the job search process to participating in free mock job interviews from the NSA to helpful advice on video job interviews.

**Facilitators: Pam Mertz and Carl Coffey  
(PWS / NSA Special Project Co-Chairs)**

### **Behind the Scenes - Chat Room Excerpt**

Andrea:	I am in the middle of job search now. I had a Zoom interview earlier and yesterday I had a phone interview.
Adam:	I'm on unemployment money!!! Applied for a job at Moe's...never got a phone call back for an interview. On the job application I advertised I stutter--did I get prejudiced...when I didn't get called back???

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Carlos:	I am actively job searching. Had an interview Friday August 4th and waiting on the result. Had another interview last week (Tuesday) and they want to have 2nd round with me tomorrow and next week. All were on Zoom and Microsoft teams.
Carl:	Some folks are experiencing being “Zoom’d out” from all of the online/virtual interaction... 😊
Tim:	I am job searching as well. I have done some Zoom interviews and several phone screenings.
Carlos:	I am having a lot of “virtual networking coffees” so Zoom for me works way better than phone.
Jake:	My company has mandated a Zoom-Free day after each quarter :) Great policy that I hope other businesses will adapt!
Jennifer:	I am in a job search as well. I'm having trouble getting past the phone interview stage because of my disfluency. I do offer video interviews instead but in my experience the employer wants do phone interviews 1st. I guess I haven't found the "right" company yet.
Adam:	Out of work since end of MARCH!!! I've been given the possibility to work from home!! But how can I FILE from home!!!
Carlos:	Jennifer, I feel you. I requested if we can do a Zoom interview instead of phone and they agreed. I was a bit surprised but it worked out for me :)
Jennifer:	Carlos - It never hurts to ask! I'm glad it has worked out!
Adam:	Employers are uninformed and uneducated about stuttering.
Carl:	Adam - very true. The more the public can see stuttering normalized, the more awareness we can bring
Carlos:	Adam – Ditto 100%
Adam:	It's rare for a job interviewer to encounter a stutterer...I disclosed I stutter on my job application to Moe's and I never got called back!!! Obvious discrimination!!!! I should never have applied but I took a shot anyway! Now I'm getting unemployment----anyone else getting unemployment money??
Andrew:	Could you give some examples of how to disclose a stutter? When in the interview should you disclose?
Carl:	Andrew - Great question. We can talk about that.
Iram:	Thanks Andrew for asking this question. I have the same question. Please someone address it.

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David:	When people disclose do they explain what stuttering is and how it might impact the interview experience? I would always try to disclose at the start of the interview if I am disclosing.
John:	This is a great resource for we who stutter ... it's job interview advice from an someone who works in HR and stutters ... included is advice on disclosure ... <a href="https://westutter.org/wp-content/uploads/ace_your_next_job_interview_july2019.pdf">https://westutter.org/wp-content/uploads/ace_your_next_job_interview_july2019.pdf</a>
Asia:	I wasn't able to disclose when I had a phone interview but during the Zoom interview I disclosed and it was much better for me.
Adam:	Maybe people should disclose...but the option to explain stuttering to the interviewer...would an interviewer really want to hear about your stuttering for the whole time??? They wanna know your qualifications!!
Carl:	For people who have disclosed... do you find that it makes you more at ease during the interview?
Adam:	Disclosing probably puts the cat out of the bag--
Carlos:	When I disclose I do it at the beginning. I know that eventually I will stutter during the conversation so better to have that out of my system and not think about it during the interview
Adam:	If 100 percent of world stuttered, we're in good company!
Jennifer:	I have another question about job postings. When the posting asks for "strong communication skills or excellent communication skills - I feel conflicted due to the disfluency because I know I have good communication skills but it's going to look like I don't to the interviewer. Hahah. Has anyone else experienced that?
Jake:	For me it was highly dependent on the interviewer's response to my statement (physically and vocally). Positive response reinforced a relaxing outlook moving forward, puzzled with a sense of pity made it much worse for me.
Carl:	John Moore's golden advice to me: companies don't like surprises. Changed the way I viewed the importance of disclosing!
John:	NSA Webinar "When You're the Interviewer"... <a href="https://youtu.be/Q7FeayK4RnU">https://youtu.be/Q7FeayK4RnU</a>

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Adam:	I was lucky when I was a teen. I applied for a dishwashing job....my father who knew the owner explained I stutter...without my presence there. I got the job without the interview...that was lucky!
Derek:	I've actually had experiences when disclosing has led to some interesting interview conversations that may have not happened otherwise.
Bimpe:	Thanks Iain, I have never viewed it that way before and it makes sense because I realize that once I start stuttering in-between the interview, the interviewer looks or sounds confused so it's a good advice to help the interviewer help the interviewee.
Carl:	To piggyback on what Iain said as well... it causes the person to focus on WHAT you're saying, but not HOW you're saying it.
Jennifer:	That's a good point.
Jonathan:	Fluent speech does not equate to good communication skills. Good communication skills means good listening skills, the ability to understand people and what they are communicating to you and the ability to respond appropriately. It also entails maturity in that the ability to respond after fully understanding the other person rather than reacting through emotion.
Carl:	Jonathan – 100%
Adam:	The interviewer will look past our stutterer maybe if we are confident with ourselves!
John:	Sorry to potentially embarrass you Jake ... but you can learn more of Jake's story from his PWS Career Success profile ... <a href="https://westutter.org/team/jake-kail/">https://westutter.org/team/jake-kail/</a>
Jennifer:	Jonathan - I really like how you worded that. I would hope the interviewer feels the same. I will keep this in mind. Thanks for your thoughts.
Jonathan:	Personal experience - I use my stuttering as a qualification tool rather than a weakness.
Adam:	Excellent communication skills...listening....Power Point...how can we compensate for stuttering on a job. An aura on confidence!
Jennifer:	Douglas – Good points!

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Jonathan:	Jennifer - A lot of interviews are ignorant toward the strengths of the person who stutters. I would introduce your stutter as a means of being a leader in the stuttering community, use it as a diversity leader tool.
Carl:	Great point, Doug — I've started smiling when I am getting through a block, and it takes the pressure off of me and lets the person know that I'm okay with it... so they can be too.
Adam:	A voice can bring many emotions!!!! "Good communication skills"--- I'd be hesitant!!!! I'd apply anyways!!
Asia:	I will still apply!
Iram:	I don't usually apply for such jobs.
Carl:	I always love to hear from People Who Stutter who manage teams of people... that's always been a fear of mine, to be a people manager, even though I love people!
Jonathan:	Don't be afraid to apply for jobs you are qualified for!!! Your stuttering does not disqualify you from ANY job!
Adam:	Applying for Moe's restaurant, I think I got disqualified because I stuttered - I never got called back....idiots! I even disclosed on my application!
Carl:	Adam - Chipotle and Qdoba are better anyway! 😊
Tim:	I found that is listed on every job I have been applying for. But it doesn't stop me. It may have a while back before the NSA but I would still apply for them.
Adam:	Great job JAKE!!!!
Carl:	Jake - thanks for joining!
Adam:	We are family!
Jonathan:	Adam – Don't give up!
Adam:	Quitters don't win gang!
David:	Practicing in advance of interviews is so important, whether you stutter or not. Practicing with other people is much better than practicing by yourself!
Carlos:	How fast is the turn around to schedule a mock interview? :)
Carl:	Carlos - We try to have a 2 day turnaround time to respond!

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All: Douglas; Andrea; Ian; Carlos; Jennifer:	Enjoyed the Webinar! It was great content; Thanks, everyone for a great session; Thank you for inviting us NSA! Gracias! Thank you for having this today!
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### Links:

[www.westutter.org/CareerSuccess](http://www.westutter.org/CareerSuccess)  
<https://westutter.org/careersuccess/mock-interviews/>  
<https://westutter.org/chapters/>  
*NSA Webinar on Disclosure ...* <https://youtu.be/nZ5KtPbptyI>  
*NSA Webinar on Job Interview Skills ...* <https://youtu.be/70xGrpf3zrw>  
[https://westutter.org/wp-content/uploads/ace\\_your\\_next\\_job\\_interview\\_july2019.pdf](https://westutter.org/wp-content/uploads/ace_your_next_job_interview_july2019.pdf)  
<https://westutter.org/careersuccess/mock-interviews/>  
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