**Transcript**

**Ben Pettingill**: Hey everybody, Ben Pettingill here, professional speaker with only 2% eyesight. Now you may have seen me in the video series about how to communicate your value with confidence. If you haven't already, I really encourage you to check that one out because you might find something valuable for you in that.

Today I'm here to share with you about disclosure and to begin with, let's just have a chat about what is disclosure. Now disclosure is telling and explaining to our potential employer our blindness, our low vision and our situation and how that could potentially impact our ability to do the role that we're applying for.

Now why is it so important? It's so important because it is normal. The fact that we live with blindness or low vision doesn't have to be this black mark, this cross next to our name that we get nervous about, that we get uptight about, that we don't want to share with people. It's literally like another part of us that I really encourage you to be proud of. I encourage you to wear it on your sleeve. It's literally like the fact that I have brown hair and green eyes. I've got low vision and it's the exact same thing. That's why it's so important. It's so important also to make yourself and your potential employer feel comfortable.

Now when are we going to disclose? You've got a few different options here. You can either do it on your cover letter or on your resume before you get to that job interview process. You can do it at the beginning of a job interview or during. You’ve got those three options, there's no right or wrong, it's whatever you feel most comfortable with. Some people prefer to do it beforehand on your cover letter, get it out in the open and therefore you know you're not going in nervous about how you are going to explain it.

If you potentially don't feel as confident speaking and sharing about how your blindness or low vision is going to impact your capability to do the role in person, maybe that’s a perfect spot to do it. But if you feel confident and comfortable talking about it to strangers and a potential employer, then I would highly encourage you to do it during the job interview so you can answer questions and it takes away the ability for people and potential employers to make assumptions about what you can and can't do.

It's really important also to know that you're not alone in this process. You've got plenty of support. I know that when I've been disclosing previously, Vision Australia and their employment consultants have been really, really helpful in providing support for me on how to do it when it comes to either on a cover letter or even during the job interview process but also providing support for the potential employer.

It's so important when we are disclosing that we realise that it's not just us that our blindness and low vision is affecting, it's also going to affect our potential employer and they are potentially unaware and feeling nervous just as we are. So providing the support for them and giving them the means to access what they can potentially use to support them through this process is really important.

Finally, I'd really encourage you, if you are going to disclose during the job interview, practise what you're going to say. Practice, practice, practice makes perfect. It's going to make you feel more comfortable, more confident. It’s simply just a conversation, a normal conversation, not a negative one, a normal conversation about your situation and how you're going to do the role differently, but not any worse.

Hopefully that helps you when you come to disclosing your blindness or low vision on your next search for employment. I'm Ben Pettingill, thanks very much.

**Vision Australia. Blindness. Low vision. Opportunity.**

**Vision Australia logo. Three navy blue ovals linked together diagonally within a bright yellow rectangle.**

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