

# Creating your Positive Health Statement

Whether you are applying for a job, writing a CV or preparing for an interview, it can be helpful to take some time to consider how you can present yourself positively as someone living with a health condition.

To create a positive health statement, start by making notes on the following subjects using the boxes provided:

- Describing your disability or health condition
- Explaining gaps in your employment history
- Disability in the workplace and the law

## Describing your disability or health condition:

It's important to think about how you will describe your disability or health condition. The table below is for guidance purposes only. You can use it to create a brief positive health statement for yourself, which may help you explain your situation more positively, both in writing and verbally.

<p>What words will you use to describe your condition?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Avoid words that sound worse than they are: eg chronic, degenerating</li><li>• You may find it helpful to use official diagnosis terms: eg Multiple Sclerosis, PTSD</li><li>• You may want to avoid terms such as: depression, ME or low back pain etc.</li></ul> <p>Use more general terms: low mood or mental health condition, a fatigue related condition or ongoing pain condition, etc.</p> <p>Try to use language that most people would understand or relate to.</p> <p>How will you describe what you have learnt to help you manage and improve your symptoms?</p> <p>Remember a potential employer needs to have confidence in you as an employee – you are the expert in your condition, not them.</p>	
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**Explaining gaps in your employment history:**

**Experience gained whilst you have been off work.**

Gaps in employment history leave potential employers wondering why they are there. Instead, it is better to show what you have achieved or positive experiences during your time off work.

Complete the table with any activities or experiences, however difficult at the time, that have had positive or useful outcomes for you, and that may be of interest to potential employers.

You can refer to the table for examples.

Experience or Activity	What you gained – skills, qualities, qualifications, etc.
Living with a health condition	Patience, empathy towards others, ability to work with and relate to different sorts of people, determination, resilience, diplomacy.
Health related courses or therapy	Self management techniques, eg: pacing, stress management, open communication, regular exercise, eg: swimming, walking.
Work Experience or Voluntary Work	Confidence in the ability to manage my health condition in the workplace.
College or Adult Education courses	Experience in ..... Training in ..... Qualifications gained.

**Disability in the Workplace and The Law – Reasonable Adjustments**

Write below some initial thoughts and ideas about any reasonable adjustments you may need for both the job selection process and the workplace.

Job Selection Process	Workplace





This is in relation to a part-time receptionist post in a hospital outpatients department.

Positive Health Statement	Relevant section of this form
<p>While being off work, I have attended an NHS Pain Management course. It has helped me to manage my back pain and find alternative way of being active. I have also attended an NHS Work Assessment Unit, which has helped me explore and build confidence in how I manage my pain whilst fulfilling aspects of a working role. With a supportive chair, careful organisation and using some equipment such as trolleys I am now able to work effectively. I have learnt how to manage my health and live a much fuller life. Although I am not able to do any heavy lifting I keep fit by swimming twice a week and this has also reduced the pain I used to have.</p> <p>Whilst I was off work, I did an online computer course and gained the European Computer Driving Licence. I also learnt how to better organise my time and pace myself in order to achieve my goals. I learnt how to be patient and empathise with others with health conditions.</p> <p>I have previously worked as a taxi driver gaining customer service and time management skills, which I will be able to transfer to this job. I will be able to empathise with the people I see due to my personal experience with a health condition.</p> <p>With my previous skills and experience as well as my new Pain Management techniques I know that with regular breaks, changes in tasks and a work station assessment, I will be able to manage my back condition within this job.</p>	<p>Brief positive health statement – describing your disability or health condition</p> <p>Experience gained whilst off work</p> <p>Experience gained whilst off work</p> <p>Reasonable adjustments</p>