Don’t Ask, I’ll Tell:

Investigating Strategy Use During Disability Disclosure at Work

by

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A thesis

presented to the University of Waterloo

in fulfillment of the

thesis requirement for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Psychology

Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, 2022

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

The nature and effects of workplace disability disclosure—sharing disability-relevant information with others at work—is of great interest to researchers and human resources professionals. In this dissertation, I investigate the various strategies individuals with disabilities use while disclosing their disabilities in work-related contexts, and the effects of employing these strategies. In Study 1, I qualitatively gathered strategies used by individuals with disabilities and coded them using thematic analysis—towards developing a scale that measures the extent to which these behaviours are used. In Studies 2 and 3, I refine the items generated in Study 1 and confirm the factor structure of the resultant scale for assessing individuals' use of strategies. In Study 4, I provide convergent, discriminant, and criterion-related validity for my scale. Finally, in Study 5, I experimentally demonstrate the effects of using disclosure strategies in a job search context. It is my hope that this work stimulates further research on this important topic. As such, I discuss multiple future directions and implications for my findings in this dissertation.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Jay Michela, for his support and guidance as I built this program of research. The innumerable effects of finding a thoughtful advisor who balanced my academic curiosity with structured thinking cannot be fully articulated. Jay, I will carry your reminders to "stay in the saddle" with me throughout my career and beyond.

I want to thank my committee (Dr. Bobocel, Dr. Drysdale, Dr. Beck, and Dr. Boekhorst) for their thoughtful feedback about this work. You have pushed me to think about my research in new ways and draw additional insights from my work. Thank you to my examiner, Dr. Bonaccio, for your willingness to review my dissertation, I appreciate the time and effort you put into thoughtfully discussing this work with me.

Thank you to my friends and family who celebrated every win and talked me through every challenge of graduate school and navigating the world of work. Your support has helped me achieve things I never thought possible. A big, big, thank you to Frankie (my pup) for being my emotional support animal, understanding the unsaid, and reminding me to connect with nature every day, regardless of the length of my current "to-do" list.

Finally, thank you to everyone who disclosed a disability to me as I worked through this program of research and shared my findings with others. Some graduate students truly cringe when someone asks, "what is your research topic?" but for me, this question cultivated some of the most meaningful conversations and honest moments of connection with new people. For that, I am grateful.

Dedication

For all individuals with disabilities, whether self-diagnosed or assessed, clinical or subclinical, medicated or unmedicated. In the times when it feels like our current work system was not built for you, I hope you trust your intuition about the way you were meant to function in this world. Systems built to propagate oppression are resistant to change, but that does not mean your pushes for justice are futile. Keep working, keep pushing, and keep educating others about the flaws of our work system. Above all else, no one knows you better than yourself, so trust your expert position on what work looks like for you.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

As the number of individuals with concealable disabilities in the workforce continues to increase at an alarming rate (World Health Organization, 2021) there is an emerging need to investigate how employees disclose disabilities at work, and how these disclosures may affect their workplace experiences—to inform practical guidance on the topic of disclosure. In response to this need, researchers have extensively studied the effects of either disclosing or concealing a disability in workplace settings. This growing body of research builds a case for the beneficial outcomes of disclosing an invisible identity at work (e.g., Follmer, Sabat, & Siuta, 2020; Wax, Coletti, & Ogaz, 2018; Jones & King, 2014)—including increased job performance and job satisfaction (Sabat, et al., 2017; DeJordy, 2008; Hewlin, 2009), a heightened sense of belonging, greater organizational commitment, and higher self-esteem (Newheiser & Tiemersma, 2017). Although the effects of disclosing compared to concealing are well understood, comparatively less research has outlined either the range of behaviours that a discloser may use to convey information during an instance of disability disclosure or the effects of using these strategies on workplace and individual outcomes. Given the negative consequences associated with ongoing concealment of a disability at work, there is a definite need to study strategies that workers can use during disability disclosures and to provide information about the beneficial and detrimental effects related to strategy use to organizational leaders. This information may benefit job seekers and job holders directly, to the extent that they have autonomy over their disclosure decisions. Additionally, organizational leaders may leverage an increased understanding of disclosures towards re-designing workplaces where disclosures and accommodations are possible.

When an individual contemplates disclosure, they may consider a range of factors in their decision. Workers with disabilities often engage in a risk-benefit analysis during this time,

paying particular attention to how others may perceive and subsequently treat them if they disclose their disability. One considerable risk involves the negative attributions assigned to disabled workers after disclosure which may result in undesirable social interactions and detrimental effects on well-being (Le Forestier, Page-Gould, & Chasteen, 2022). However, benefits may stem from a sense of fluency individuals with disabilities experience as they share disability-relevant information across life domains (i.e., in the workplace and in their non-work relationships; Tardy & Smithson, 2019; Ragins, 2008). These benefits are especially likely if a worker experiences a central disability identity—a formed identity about their membership as a person with a disability. Additional benefits a worker with a disability may weigh against potential risks is their likelihood of receiving increased social support and accommodations after disclosure (Vornholt, et al., 2018). The process of making a disclosure decision and the factors which influence this decision are jointly considered at multiple points throughout this dissertation.

In the present work, I sought to address three questions within the disability disclosure and identity management literatures. Firstly, how do existing identity management strategies compare to disability disclosure strategies? Researchers have outlined various identity management strategies that individuals may use to manage how others see their concealable identity in the workplace. However, there are multiple concerns that arise when applying these strategies within a disability disclosure context. Measures of identity management assess the use of a subset of strategies common *across* concealable identities, not strategies unique to disclosing a disability—even though researchers have highlighted the unique characteristics of managing a disability identity at work, as disability stereotypes are so saliently tied to one's performance and abilities (Roberts, 2005; Ragins, 2008). Further, measures of identity management implicitly

assume disclosure strategies are used across disclosures—often asking raters to consider how often a strategy is used across various targets at work (Lynch & Rodell, 2018). A growing body of research has outlined substantial intraindividual variations in disability disclosure strategy use based on contextual factors such as disability target, motive for disclosure, and current organizational diversity climate (Lindsay, Osten, Rezai, & Bui, 2021; Dewa, Van Weeghel, Joosen, & Brouwers, 2020; Clair, Beatty, & Maclean, 2005). Given the concerns with measuring identity management strategies as-is when studying disability disclosures, the current work aims to contribute to this body of research by broadening the current understanding of disclosure strategies used by individuals with disabilities. A nuanced understanding of the strategies used during disability disclosure compared to disclosures of other stigmatized identities can be applied to inform guidance specifically on disability disclosure. As such, in Study 1, my goal was to qualitatively gather and code strategies individuals with disabilities use to disclose in the workplace. This first study guided item generation and subsequent scale validation.

The second question this work aimed to address was: how are communication messages altered during disclosures? To address this question, the second contribution of this work involves application of Communication Accommodation Theory to the communication that occurs during a disability disclosure, a context which scholars have suggested as a promising avenue for research and extension of the theory (Lindsay, Cagliostro, Albarico, Mortaji, & Karon, 2018; Lindsay, Cagliostro, Leck, Shen, & Stinson, 2019). As detailed in Chapter 2, Communication Accommodation Theory describes how individuals alter their communication with others based on their current salient identity and motives. However, the literature applying Communication Accommodation Theory largely employs observational and qualitative approaches or uses non-validated measures to signal communication behaviours (Soliz & Giles,

2014). This has impeded researchers from empirically applying the theory in new contexts, such as the disclosure of disability-relevant information in the workplace. Further, the current work on identity management strategies focuses on how those with concealable identities may alter the *content* of their disclosure messages, although previous qualitative research has found people with disabilities additionally alter the *delivery* of their disclosure messages based on their audience and other salient contextual factors (Tomas, Ahmed, & Lindsay, 2022). The application of Communication Accommodation Theory in this context allows for a deeper understanding of the additional ways in which messages during a disability disclosure may be altered by the discloser. This information can further inform guidance on approaches and behaviours used during disability disclosure. Because Communication Accommodation Theory describes behaviour shifts that occur when an identity is salient, and disability disclosure involves a salient disability identity, application of this theory in this new context allows for a broadened understanding of disclosure behaviours and subsequently allows for investigation of their effectiveness. As such, in my scale development in Study 2, I combine items drawn from studies using Communication Accommodation Theory with items generated in Study 1 and refine the measure based on scale dimensionality. In Study 3, I confirmed the factor structure of my scale across several samples.

The third question this work sought to address was: what are the individual and workplace effects of using particular disclosure strategies? To address this question, the third contribution of this work builds on previous research findings that outline the benefits and consequences of disclosing or concealing at work. Many strategies have been tested within a hiring context, where disclosure strategy use is likely to be highly proximal to decisions made about hiring (Gewurtz, Langan, & Shand, 2016). The goal of this type of research has often been

to provide guidance to those with disabilities on which disclosure strategies may lead to beneficial outcomes while simultaneously limiting the use of strategies that may have harmful implications during hiring or at work. Towards this same goal, the current work extends this research agenda by distinguishing newly found disclosure strategies from identity management strategies and describing the effects of these strategies within a hiring context. In Study 4, I began to build a nomological network between the strategies found and several other theoretically correlated constructs—to demonstrate convergent, discriminant, and criterion-related validity for my scale. In Study 5, I experimentally manipulated the use of these strategies to explore outcomes of using these tactics during an instance of disability disclosure in a hiring context. The overarching goal of the current work is to build a broader picture of the spectrum of disability disclosure strategies used in a workplace context and to investigate the outcomes associated with using these strategies compared to other documented strategies in the literature. It is my hope that this work will stimulate additional research on this important topic and inform future guidance not only for those with disabilities, but policymakers and human resource professional alike, towards building a better workplace for those with disabilities.

CHAPTER 2: CREATING A MEASURE OF DISABILITY DISCLOSURE STRATEGIES AT WORK

Identity Management at Work

At work, those who hold concealable identities frequently encounter situations where they must publicly manage information about that identity—a process known as identity management (Lynch & Rodell, 2018). Individuals may engage in several behaviours to manage this identity-specific public knowledge at work including sharing selective aspects of their concealable identity with co-workers, using signalling techniques as an indication to co-workers they hold a stigmatized identity (Hastuti & Timming, 2021; Clair, Beatty, & Maclean, 2005), or engaging in actions that highlight or downplay an identity to others (Lyons, Volpone, Wessel, & Alonso, 2017; Jans, Kaye, & Jones, 2012). As such, identity management strategies can be conceptualized as behaviours used *across* contexts to craft social *knowledge* about whether an identity is held or what it means to hold that identity.

In line with theories of impression management (Roberts, 2005), researchers have highlighted and developed scales to measure the use of four prominent identity management strategies at work—assimilating, decategorizing, integrating, and confirming (Lynch & Rodell, 2018). Two of these strategies (assimilating and decategorizing) are identity management strategies used to "blend in" at work, and the other two strategies (integrating and confirming) are used to "stand out" at work. A worker using the assimilating strategy will highlight characteristics of a socially valued identity instead of their stigma-inducing identity. For example, a worker employing this strategy may coordinate a set of behaviours that highlights their positive identity of "athlete" to co-workers and limits cues about their stigmatized identity. An employee using a decategorizing strategy will greatly limit the scope of their self-

presentation to professional assets, removing references to any social identities beyond "worker." As an example, a worker may steer conversations with co-workers back to their work role to divert attention away from their stigmatized identity. A worker employing an integrating strategy will focus on positive aspects of their stigmatized identity at work. For example, a worker using this strategy may engage in behaviours that highlight their stigmatized identity, ensuring they share positive qualities they have gained from being a member of a stigmatized group. Finally, an employee using a confirming strategy will engage in behaviours that reveal their stigmatized identity in hopes the behaviours will generate desired responses in others at work. As an example, an employee using this strategy may coordinate their behaviours to act in line with a stereotype of a stigmatized identity, towards generating pity or helping responses in their co-workers (Roberts, 2005; Lynch & Rodell, 2018).

The use of the identity management strategies described above has been conceptually discussed or empirically tested in those with different concealable identities including LGBTQ+ workers (Lyons & Lynch, 2020), individuals who hold strong religious beliefs (Barnes, Maas, Roberts, & Brownwell, 2021), and workers with disabilities (Follmer & Jones, 2021). This work has even been extended to workers who hold less concealable identities such as racial/ethnic group membership (Ruggs, Singletary Walker, Corrington, & Nittrouer, 2019).

Stereotypes Associated with Concealable Identities

The identity management strategies identified above can be used by individuals who belong to any stigmatized group. However, there are considerable differences in the types of stereotypes evoked by different concealable identities in reference to the Stereotype Content Model (SCM; Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002). When rating individuals on the dimensions of warmth—an individual's friendliness or positive intentions—or competence—an individual's

intelligence or ability to achieve—various clusters of stereotypes are found based on the strength of stereotypes associated with each group. For example, gay men, Muslims, and Christians are, on average, rated similarly on the dimensions of warmth and competence—with ratings for both dimensions falling slightly above the midpoint of a 5-point scale. Rich people and educated people are rated as significantly more competent than warm, and on average, individuals with disabilities are rated as less competent than warm, although they are rated relatively low on both dimensions. It is important to note that although stereotypes exist for all the groups discussed above, the strongest stereotypes of incompetence out of all the groups listed exist for individuals with disabilities—and these stereotypes of incompetence are even stronger for those with psychological disabilities compared to physical disabilities (Follmer & Jones, 2017; Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002).

The stereotypes a concealable identity may invoke have broad implications for how a discloser may manage their identity in the workplace—especially if an employee's goal is to limit negative responses to disclosure from co-workers. The stereotype of low competence and moderate warmth noted for individuals with disabilities invokes emotions of pity and contempt in others—resulting in passively harmful discrimination behaviours such as neglect and ignoring, and active facilitation behaviours such as helping. The combination of these behaviours means those with disabilities are, at times, patronized and over-helped, and at other times, ignored or neglected by others (Cuddy, Glick, & Beninger, 2011). In the workplace, perceptions of warmth and competence contribute to personnel selection, role/task assignments, evaluation, assessment, and promotion—those perceived as incompetent consistently experience disadvantages at work as others view them as individuals who "stereotypically lack the trait most salient in these settings—competence" (Cuddy, Glick, & Beninger, 2011, p. 84). However, stereotypes about

competence and warmth are malleable, and can both be updated upon receiving counter-stereotypical information (Cuddy, Glick, & Beninger, 2011; Brambilla, Sacchi, Castellini, & Riva, 2010; Cuddy, Norton, & Fiske, 2005). Together, these findings highlight differences in the stereotypes activated and subsequent behaviours of co-workers when certain concealable identities are salient compared to others. These stereotypes and behaviours have a number of implications for the relevance and scope of identity management strategies that workers with disabilities may employ in an attempt to limit negative reactions to their disclosures—as discussed in further detail below.

Disclosure of Invisible Disabilities

At work, individuals with invisible disabilities make decisions about how and when to disclose their disability to others. Invisible disabilities include conditions that have no visible manifestation or have visible features not clearly connected to a disability (Santuzzi, Waltz, Finkelstein, & Rupp, 2014). At work, disability disclosure is the "communication of information about a disability to an employer" (Stanley, Ridley, Harris, & Manthorpe, 2011, p. 24). This definition has been used broadly by researchers investigating disability disclosure, referencing research that indicates disclosure to a supervisor is more common than disclosure to other types of coworkers (Ellison, Russinova, MacDonald-Wilson, & Lyass, 2003). However, more recent work on disclosure has illuminated the increasing rate of disclosure with others at work including peers and co-workers (Hyseni, Myderrizi, & Blanck, 2022; Blockmans, 2015; Follmer, Sabat, & Siuta, 2020). Therefore, in the current work I define disability disclosure as the behaviours one engages in when sharing disability-relevant information with individuals at work, including but not limited to employers and co-workers. Conceptually, disability disclosure is related to identity

management because individuals use disclosures as one route towards managing the public perception of their concealable identity.

Much of the early work on disability disclosure investigated opposite ends of the disclosure continuum, treating disclosures as homogenous and focusing on whether an individual concealed or revealed their identity (Clair, Beatty, & Maclean, 2005). This research helped to build knowledge of antecedents of disclosure such as one's disability identity, along with the understanding of how identities may be concealed or revealed across different life domains (Ragins, 2008). Further, this work has broadened understanding of the contextual factors that contribute to masking or revealing behaviours related to a concealable identity at work (Flett, 2012). A growing body of work has shifted away from studying full disclosures in comparison to full concealment, and instead highlights within and between-person factors that make disclosures heterogenous such as the amount of information shared (Lyubykh, Turner, Barling, Reich, & Batten, 2020), approach/avoidance motives for disclosing (Follmer & Jones, 2021), self vs. other focus during the disclosure (Tomas, Ahmed, & Lindsay, 2022), organizational culture, and immediate need for accommodations (Jans, Kaye, & Jones, 2012).

Because of these substantial differences between disclosures, researchers have investigated some strategies used during instances of disability disclosure. These strategies generally fall into two broad categories—either downplaying or claiming—and are used to manage target evaluations of what a disability means (Lyons et al., 2018). Downplaying a disability during disclosure involves attempts to shift focus away from the disability in order to soften the negative stereotypes related to the disability identity. For example, an individual using this strategy at work may minimize how their disability interacts with their work performance. Claiming, or highlighting the disability during disclosure, involves a focus on the positive

aspects of the disability in order to reshape negative stereotypes about their disability. As an example, a worker using this strategy may emphasize how their disability is associated with specific positive traits (Lyons, et al., 2018; Roberts, 2005; Shih, Young, & Bucher, 2013; Taub, McLorg, & Fanflik, 2004). Conceptually, downplaying is similar to the identity management strategy of decategorizing or "blending in" at work, and claiming is similar to the identity management strategy of integrating or "standing out" at work (Roberts, 2005; Lynch & Rodell, 2018). Downplaying and claiming strategies are presented and used in the current work because they are disability-specific measures that have been created for two of the identity-management strategies discussed earlier. As such, in the current research, findings related to previously identified identity management and disclosure strategies are presented together.

The use of downplaying strategies has been found to not be strongly associated with perceptions of warmth of the discloser, and marginally associated with lower perceptions of competence of the discloser. The use of claiming strategies is not strongly associated with perceptions of warmth but is significantly associated with higher perceptions of competence of the discloser. Further, evaluations of competence have been found to mediate the relationship between strategy use and positive employee evaluations (Lyons, et al., 2018).

Measuring Disclosure Behaviours

To measure disability disclosure behaviours in the current work, I first explored whether I could adapt identity management strategies for measurement within a single disability disclosure context. However, there were several concerns with the application of these strategies to disability disclosures. I will highlight these concerns below and discuss how the creation of a new scale addresses these limitations in the current work.

Firstly, previous identity management strategy measures were developed and validated in samples composed of individuals with various concealable identities—with most of the sample reporting their identity management behaviours related to identities outside of a disability identity such as sexual orientation or religious/political beliefs (Lynch & Rodell, 2018). The nature of disability status, as discussed earlier, uniquely evokes stereotypes of low competence (Cuddy, Glick, & Beninger, 2011). Because evaluations of expected outcomes play a large role in the disclosure process (Tomas, Ahmed, & Lindsay, 2022; Clair, Beatty, & Maclean, 2005; Follmer & Jones, 2021), I anticipated there would be additional strategies used by individuals with disabilities that are unique to this group managing an identity so closely tied to competence perceptions in the workplace.

Secondly, measures of identity management strategies ask raters to indicate whether these strategies are used across contexts and targets, making the implicit assumption that these strategies can be utilized in all disclosure scenarios, regardless of the target (Lynch & Rodell, 2018). However, there is empirical support for the substantial intraindividual variation in disability disclosure strategy use, considering a host of contextual factors such as motives for disclosure and characteristics of the target themselves. For example, disclosers are likely to share more intimate disability-relevant information with a target they trust and perceive to be knowledgeable about the disability (Clair, Beatty, & Maclean, 2005). The deeply contextual nature of disability disclosure requires a further examination of the various strategies used by disclosers. As such, in the current work, I sought to gain a more nuanced landscape of disability disclosure strategies and asked participants to focus on *individual* instances of disclosure—towards developing a list of strategies and subsequent scale for assessing the extent to which these strategies are used.

Communication Accommodation Theory

The current measures of identity management focus heavily on the content of messages sent during disclosures. However, researchers have highlighted how both content *and* delivery of disclosure messages are known to vary as a function of the disclosure context (Tomas, Ahmed, & Lindsay, 2022). Because the primary goal of this work was to expand knowledge of the types of strategies used by individuals with disabilities and to understand how effective these strategies may be, I applied Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT; Giles, 2016) in the current work to the context of disability disclosure. As CAT outlines various delivery strategies that could be used during communications, application of CAT in the current work allows me to investigate a broader range of strategies in the context of disability disclosures—towards the development of a measure of disclosure behaviours that includes both content and delivery strategies.

According to Communication Accommodation Theory, individuals adapt their verbal and nonverbal communications to their conversation partner to emphasize their social identities or increase clarity of their messages to their partner. CAT describes several routes someone may take to adapt the delivery of these messages during a conversation with others including approximation, interpretability, discourse management, interpersonal control, and emotional expressions (Giles, 2016). The majority of CAT research has focused on approximation, where one alters their communication style to match their conversation partner (convergence) or to distinguish themselves from their conversation partner (divergence; Zhang & Giles, 2018). Another route is a focus on interpretability, one's perception of their clarity and whether their conversation partner comprehends their communications. A third route focuses on discourse management, or a partner's goals and needs during the conversation. Interpersonal control

focuses on the role each conversation partner brings to the discussion. Emotional expressions focus on the feelings and emotions of one's conversation partner (Giles, 2016). Although these various strategies have been described separately above, there is currently no validated measure for each, and many scales span multiple methods of accommodation under the broader construct of "communication accommodation" (Soliz & Giles, 2014).

CAT suggests individuals adapt their communication behaviours both consciously and unconsciously. There are two broad categories for motives of adjustment: affective motives and cognitive motives (Giles, 2016). Affective motives involve an individual's need to establish their social identities in conversations with others and can drive convergence and divergence effects. Convergence (matching a partner's behaviours) may be motivated by a desire for social approval from others. Divergence (intentionally not matching a partner's behaviours) may be motivated by a desire to differentiate oneself from others and reinforce one's own social identity. Cognitive motives involve a desire to be better understood by one's conversation partner and to increase efficiency of one's communications, also contributing to convergence and divergence effects. Convergence may be motivated by an assessment of a conversation partner's needs, adjusting verbal and nonverbal behaviours in line with their style of communication in order to increase comprehension and predictability within the conversation. Divergence may be motivated by a need to emphasize group membership as different from a conversation partner to allow misunderstandings to be attributed to this different group membership or, in rare cases, to intentionally make communication more difficult (Giles, 2016).

Applying CAT to disability disclosure and inter-ability communications (communications between an individual with a salient disability identity and an individual who has no disability identity, or their disability status is unknown), those with disabilities may

engage in various communication strategies when they disclose their disabilities to others in the workplace, and use of these strategies is likely to shift as the context of each disclosure changes. Although CAT explicitly discusses inter-ability communications and disability disclosure conceptually, CAT has not been applied to study disability disclosures—despite researchers noting it as a promising theoretical approach for investigating disability disclosure among those with disabilities (Lindsay, Cagliostro, Albarico, Mortaji, & Karon, 2018; Lindsay, Cagliostro, Leck, Shen, & Stinson, 2019). Although much of the research using CAT is qualitative (Ayoko, Härtel, & Callan, 2002; Chevalier, Watson, Barras, & Cottrell, 2018), a meta-analytic review of CAT provides a summary of the studies in which a CAT scale has been developed and used (Soliz & Giles, 2014). To date, these scales have not been validated and each scale focuses on a different combination of accommodative behaviours.

In the current work, I apply CAT and quantitatively measure communication behaviours in a new context—towards understanding what types of message-delivery behaviours individuals with disabilities employ when disclosing their disabilities. This extends previous work by exploring how the content *and* delivery of disclosure messages may be altered by individuals with disabilities. Further, previous researchers have found both verbal and nonverbal behaviours convey messages about warmth and competence, which researchers have found to drive affective responses and subsequent behaviours following a disclosure (Cuddy, Glick, & Beninger, 2011). Because no current validated measures of CAT exist, I followed Hinkin's (1998) guidelines to develop and collect initial validation information on my scale, which measures the extent to which various strategies are used during a disability disclosure.

Overview of Studies

To address the research questions described above, I conducted five studies. In Study 1, I qualitatively gathered disclosure strategies from individuals with disabilities and developed items for scale generation. In Study 2 and 3, I refine and validate the resultant scale. In Study 4, I began to build a nomological network for the disability disclosure strategies found in the current work. In Study 5, I experimentally examine the outcomes of using each disclosure strategy found in my research.

STUDY 1: QUALITATIVE INVESTIGATION OF DISABILITY DISCLOSURE STRATEGIES

The goal of Study 1 was to capture a broad range of disclosure strategies individuals with disabilities use when disclosing in the workplace or during job search.

Methods

Participants and Procedure

One hundred fifty-four undergraduate students from a Canadian University were recruited for an online survey through a Psychology research pool. Participants completed a short pre-screen questionnaire administered at the start of the academic term to confirm survey eligibility. To participate in the survey, participants a) self-identified as having a diagnosed invisible disability and b) stated they have disclosed their disability during job search or in the workplace.

One thousand four hundred students completed the prescreen questionnaire, of which 255 (18.2%) reported having an invisible disability. Of the individuals with disabilities, 45 students (17.6%) reported an invisible disability but no work-related disclosure experiences and were therefore ineligible to participate in this survey. Two hundred ten students had an invisible disability and disclosure experience and were invited to participate in this study. Of the 210 potential participants, 154 participated in my survey, a participation rate of 73.3%.

After removing careless responders (n = 8), a final sample size of 146 participants was obtained. Participants were compensated with credit towards their applicable psychology course for completing my online survey. Based on pre-screen responses, participants were invited to participate in either a survey about their disability disclosure during job search or their disability

disclosure in the workplace. Data was collected from two samples to allow for comparisons between job search and workplace disclosures.

Sample A. Forty-four students who completed questionnaires about their disability disclosure during job search are included in Sample A. Participants were an average age of 21.79 years (*SD* = 3.26), 84.09% of them were female. Participants reported an average of 1.84 (*SD* = 2.03) full-time work experiences and an average of 2.98 (*SD* = 1.98) part-time work experiences. Participants had disclosed their disability during job search an average of 3.18 (*SD* = 5.26) times and had disclosed their disability in the workplace an average of 4.52 (*SD* = 3.27) times. In this sample, 27.3% of students were currently enrolled in a co-operative education program, where they alternate academic and work terms.

Sample B. One hundred and two students who completed questionnaires about their disability disclosure in the workplace are included in Sample B. Participants were an average age of 21. 99 years (*SD* = 4.41), 82.35% of them were female. Participants reported an average of 1.91 (*SD* = 2.02) full-time work experiences and an average of 3.21 (*SD* = 2.35) part-time work experiences. Participants had disclosed their disability during job search an average of 1.53 (*SD* = 3.86) times and had disclosed their disability in the workplace an average of 3.94 (*SD* = 3.51) times. In this sample, 29.4% of students were currently enrolled in a co-operative education program.

Survey Questions

Participants confirmed their disability status and disclosure history before they began the survey. Participants were asked to reflect on one disability disclosure experience for the entirety of the survey. If participants had disclosed several times in the past, they were asked to think about their most recent disclosure. Participants answered questions regarding the target of their

disability disclosure and were asked to describe one strategy they used during their disclosure. Participants were asked additional demographic questions about disability type, age, sex, number of full-time and part time jobs, number of previous job search disclosures, and number of previous workplace disclosures.

Results

The results below include a summary of the types of disabilities participants had, disclosure targets, and disclosure strategies. As strategy responses from this sample were used for the primary purpose of item generation, disability type and disclosure target characteristics are presented to illustrate the representativeness of the sample. A summary of the findings for disability type and disclosure target are shown in Tables 1 and 2 respectively. Table 3 includes definitions for each strategy type and Table 4 includes a summary of the findings for strategy types.

Disability Type

Participants were asked to list any invisible or partially concealable disabilities they have been diagnosed with in an open text box. These disabilities were then coded using categories of disabilities that were determined a priori. Categories were created by reviewing the Canadian Survey on Disability as it was used in the largest survey on disability in Canada (Cloutier, Grondin, & Lévesque, 2018).

Table 1 includes a summary of disability types across the samples. The first category of disabilities is individuals with *Physical Disabilities*, which includes persons whose daily activities are limited because of physical disorders. In line with previous researchers (Moisey, 2004; Werner & Shulman, 2015), I chose to combine all physical disabilities into one category—

which included hearing, mobility, flexibility, dexterity, and pain-related disabilities. Examples of these disabilities include hearing loss, diabetes, and partial vision.

The second category of disabilities is individuals with *Developmental Disabilities,* which includes persons who are diagnosed with a condition that affects development. Examples of these disabilities include down syndrome, autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

The third category of disabilities is individuals with *Mental-Health Related Disabilities*, which includes persons whose daily activities are affected because of difficulties with an emotional, psychological, or mental-health condition. Examples of these disabilities include generalized anxiety disorder (GAD), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, bipolar disorder, substance abuse, and anorexia.

The fourth category of disabilities is individuals with *Learning and Memory Disabilities*, which includes persons whose daily activities are affected because of difficulties with ongoing memory problems or periods of confusion, and persons who are diagnosed with a learning disability. Examples of these disabilities include dyslexia (language processing challenges) and dyscalculia (numerical processing challenges). The fifth category of disabilities is individuals with *Multiple Categories of Disabilities,* which includes persons who have several disabilities that span the at least two of the categories listed above.

Sample A. Participants who disclosed during job search reported the following disabilities, listed in order from most reported to least reported: mental-health related disability (31.82%), physical disability (27.27%), multiple categories of disabilities (22.73%), learning and memory disabilities (13.64%), and developmental disabilities (2.27%).

Sample B. Participants who disclosed in the workplace reported the following disabilities, listed in order from most reported to least reported: mental-health related disability (43.14%), multiple categories of disabilities (22.55%), physical disability (16.67%), learning and memory disabilities (13.73%), and developmental disabilities (1.96%).

Disclosure Target

Disclosure target refers to the person the participant disclosed their disability to in the job search or workplace context. During job search, disclosers often have few individuals to whom they can disclose, based on who they interact with during the recruitment process. However, in the workplace, a discloser may disclose to anyone they interact with in the organization. Table 2 includes a summary of disclosure targets across the samples.

Sample A. Participants who disclosed during job search reported the following disclosure targets, listed in order from most reported to least reported: supervisor/manager (84.09%), and human resources professional (13.64%).

Sample B. Participants who disclosed in the workplace reported the following disclosure targets, listed in order from most reported to least reported: supervisor/manager (55.88%), peer/colleague (34.31%), and human resources professional (3.92%).

Disclosure Strategies

Participants were asked to describe a strategy they used during their disclosure in an open text box. These responses were reviewed and coded by the primary author using thematic analysis—a inductive qualitative coding approach that emphasizes ongoing reflection during analysis to determine emerging patterns in the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The 6 steps of thematic analysis were followed: 1) familiarizing myself with the data, 2) generating initial codes, 3) searching for themes, 4) reviewing themes, 5) defining and naming themes, and 6)

producing a report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This analysis resulted in 6 themes of disclosure strategies.

After initial coding by the primary author, definitions for each theme and the original responses were coded by a second graduate student with experience applying thematic analysis. This allowed me to establish inter-rater reliability for coding this qualitative data. Upon initial coding, Cohen's Kappa between these two raters was .84 and any disagreements were discussed until agreement was reached.

The six strategies found were coded into two overarching categories: content strategies – used to shape the content of messages sent to the disclosure target—and delivery strategies—used to shape the delivery of disclosure messages. Content strategies include sharing knowledge/advice, solving disagreements, and controlling discussion topics. Delivery strategies include focusing on interpersonal politeness, considering power dynamics, and managing silence.

Because Communication Accommodation Theory highlights the ability for individuals to engage in multimodal communication shifts (i.e., individuals alter not only what they say, but how they say it), CAT was used as an organizing framework for the content/delivery dichotomy in the current work—describing two routes in which communication messages are altered during disclosure. As highlighted earlier, identity management strategies focus primarily on how the content of messages may be altered. As such, CAT was incorporated into the current work to broaden this previously limited scope as to how communication messages during disclosure may be altered. When coding the qualitative data gathered in this study, particular attention was given to coding participant data according to this distinction. For example, many participants stated they focused on and rehearsed the content of the messages to be sent to the disclosure target, and

others focused on the way in which they delivered this information. Some participants were focused on being viewed as warm and pleasant by the disclosure target, and others wanted to be viewed as competent and capable, especially in relation to job requirements.

Each strategy type is discussed below in further detail, and a definition and sample response for each strategy is available in Table 3. Table 3 also includes the initial coded categories for participant responses and demonstrates how my initial codes were consolidated into the 6 strategy types discussed below. Table 4 includes a summary of the strategies used in the samples in Study 1.

Sharing knowledge/advice strategies are behaviours used during disclosure to share new information or insights with a disclosure target. Behaviours include giving useful advice and being helpful. Multiple participants described how they shared information about their disability framed as a personal strength or how they overcame limitations caused by their disability status. Framing their disability as a strength, one participant stated they approach disclosure by "talking about how [my disability] can make me a better worker." This response was initially coded under the category of Strengths of disability. Another participant shared information about overcoming limitations of their disability by stating they approach disclosure by "explaining how [my disability] limits my functioning and how I overcome those limitations." This response was initially coded under the category of Overcoming limitations. The two categories described above were combined to create the sharing knowledge/advice strategies. An individual using sharing knowledge/advice strategies may share additional information about their disability, how it affects them, or what supports may be useful for them. In a job search context, this could involve answering interview questions in order to share these insights with the interviewer. In a

workplace context, this could involve sharing new disability-relevant information and insights with managers or other co-workers.

Solving disagreements strategies are behaviours used during disclosure to resolve disagreements with the disclosure target. Behaviours include remaining silent if there are conflicting opinions and using restraint to prevent arguments from escalating. Several participants described how they used disclosure to solve disagreements with the disclosure target. One participant stated how they discussed job requirements during disclosure, "using [my diagnosis] to explain the points in which I was failing to meet the job requirements." This response was initially coded as Not meeting job requirements. Another participant used their disclosure to discuss barriers they were facing at work, "I've brought up [my disability] in response to barriers to my work." This response was initially coded as Barriers to work. The two categories described above were combined to create the solving disagreements strategies. An individual using solving disagreements strategies may be using their disclosure as a means of solving a disagreement with the disclosure target or using strategies to solve disagreements that arise in real time as they are disclosing their disability. In a job search context, this could involve behaviours used when discussing one's disability in relation to meeting certain job requirements. In a workplace context, this could involve behaviours used when discussing barriers to the discloser's work performance.

Controlling discussion topic strategies are behaviours used during disclosure to guide a conversation with the disclosure target towards/away from certain topics. Behaviours include avoiding certain topics and not always stating the topics one is thinking about. Participants described how they prepared for a disclosure and kept the discussion on topics they wanted to talk about. One participant discussed their preparation for disclosure, stating they "go into the

discussion with a plan for what I want to say…prepare a list of talking points and rehearse." This was initially coded as Scripting topics for the disclosure. Another participant discussed the level of detail they go into about their diagnosis, stating they are "only sharing things about my diagnosis that I am comfortable with." This was initially coded as Limiting diagnosis information. These two categories were combined into the category of controlling discussion topic strategies. An individual using controlling discussion topic strategies may go into a disclosure with a plan about which topics they would like to discuss, and which topics are off limits for discussion. In a job search context, use of this strategy may involve efforts to guide interview discussions or follow-up questions away from or towards certain topics. In a workplace context this could involve shutting down discussions of certain topics or beginning a discussion on a new topic of interest when disclosing to a co-worker or manager.

Focusing on interpersonal politeness strategies are behaviours used during disclosure to ensure effective communication and maintain the relationship with the disclosure target. Behaviours include ensuring one does not say anything to offend the other person and listening to what the disclosure target has to say. Many participants described a focus on the disclosure target during their disclosure, ensuring they meet the needs of their conversation partner. One participant stated they "talk about it very openly, allow [the disclosure target] to ask any questions they may have." This was initially coded as Focusing on target questions. Another participant highlighted the relationship with the disclosure target, stating they approach disclosure by "focusing on building trust with [the disclosure target] by being honest." This was initially coded as Focusing on relationship with target. These two categories were consolidated into the category of Focusing on interpersonal politeness. In a job search context, use of this strategy may involve discussing one's disability in an interview while focusing on demonstrating

politeness behaviours towards the disclosure target. In a workplace context, use of this strategy may involve discussing one's disability with a co-worker with a focus on maintaining the relationship with that co-worker.

Considering power dynamics strategies are behaviours used during disclosure to address power dynamics with the disclosure target. Behaviours include not acting superior and not prying for privileged information. As they disclose, an individual using considering power dynamics strategies may focus on the hierarchy within an organization and the power certain social groups hold. One participant focused on legal information that was pertinent to them as a person with a disability, stating they "made sure I knew my legal rights." This was initially coded as Knowing legal rights. Another participant considered the power and role of the individual they disclosed to by "finding an opportunity to talk to someone less superior who could not affect my job at all." This was initially coded as Considering job role of target. These two categories were consolidated into considering power dynamics strategies. In a job search context, use of this strategy may involve efforts to not act conceited when sharing disability-relevant information during an interview. In a workplace context, use of this strategy may involve sharing certain details about one's disability and asking questions to a manager while considering the power and superiority that manager has.

Managing silence strategies are behaviours used during disclosure to initiate conversation or end silences with the disclosure target. Behaviours include initiating conversation and finding common topics of conversation. An individual using managing silence strategies may have a focus on managing and reducing silences during their disclosure conversation. One participant stated they "ask questions in certain ways to get my answers." This was initially coded as Probing questions. Another participant emphasized the casualness and

humour they infused into disclosure, as they wanted to "be light and make jokes to make [the disclosure] less awkward." This was initially coded as Using humour during disclosure. These two categories were combined into the managing silence strategies. In a job search context, use of this strategy may involve asking questions after disclosing in an interview to ensure silences are filled. In a workplace context, use of this strategy may involve multiple attempts to continue the disclosure conversation through questions and discussion until common topics of interest are found with the disclosure target.

Sample A. Students who disclosed during job search reported the following disclosure strategies, listed in order from most reported to least reported: sharing knowledge/advice strategies (61.36%), focusing on interpersonal politeness strategies (18.18%), controlling discussion topic strategies (6.82%), considering power dynamics strategies (2.27%), and solving disagreements strategies (2.27%).

Sample B. Students who disclosed in the workplace reported the following disclosure strategies, listed in order from most reported to least reported: focusing on interpersonal politeness strategies (39.22%), sharing knowledge/advice strategies (29.41%), controlling discussion topic strategies (10.78%), solving disagreements strategies (6.86%), considering power dynamics strategies (3.92%), and managing silence strategies (0.98%).

Study 1 Discussion

In Study 1, the presence of disability types reveals a similar pattern among participants who disclose during job search and in the workplace—with the largest proportion of participants in each sample reporting only mental-health related disabilities. The target of disclosure also showed a similar pattern between those who disclosed during job search and in the workplace—with supervisor/managers being the primary disclosure target, regardless of disclosure setting.

However, approximately one-third of participants disclosing in a workplace setting disclosed to peers/colleagues at work, which is often not possible when disclosing in a job search context. Finally, disclosure strategies differed between those disclosing during job search and in the workplace—with sharing knowledge/advice strategies being used most frequently during job search disclosure and focusing on interpersonal politeness strategies being used most frequently during workplace disclosure. Managing silence strategies were employed least often in both samples.

To develop a scale to measure the extent to which each disclosure strategy was used during actual disclosures, I created items for each of the six strategy types found above, based on the qualitative responses. Further, items in studies from Soliz and Giles' (2014) meta-analysis on Communication Accommodation Theory were compiled and a literature review was conducted to find any additional quantitative studies that included a measure of Communication Accommodation Theory. Together, this resulted in 189 potential scale items. After deleting duplicate items (112), 77 items remained and were used in the exploratory factor analysis in Study 2. The number of items associated a priori with each strategy type were as follows: sharing knowledge/advice (9 items), solving disagreements (4 items), controlling discussion topic (13 items), focusing on interpersonal politeness (25 items), considering power dynamics (13 items), and managing silence (13 items).

One limitation of Study 1 involves the distinction made between content and delivery strategies. Although there are theoretical reasons drawn from Communication Accommodation Theory to draw this distinction that were supported by the qualitative responses of participants, further empirical evidence could be provided to strengthen the distinction. In Study 3, I test the empirical distinction between content and delivery strategies by testing them as latent constructs

in a hierarchical confirmatory factor analysis. Additionally, in Study 4, I begin to provide correlational evidence for the distinction between content and delivery strategies through their differential relationships with identity management strategies. I will return to and discuss the distinction between content and delivery strategies considering this empirical evidence.

STUDY 2: ITEM REDUCTION

The purpose of Study 2 was to refine a measure that assesses the extent to which each of the strategies found in Study 1 are used during a disclosure. This was accomplished through an exploratory factor analysis (EFA).

Methods

Participants and Procedures

Four hundred twenty-six undergraduate participants with an invisible or partially concealable disability from a Canadian University were recruited for an online survey through a Psychology research pool. Participants completed a short pre-screen questionnaire administered at the start of the academic term to confirm survey eligibility. Participants were recruited over two academic terms between September 2019 and April 2020.

Two thousand nine hundred eighteen students completed the prescreen questionnaire, of which 615 (21.1%) reported having an invisible disability. Of the individuals with disabilities, 102 students (16.6%) reported an invisible disability but no work-related disclosure experiences and were therefore ineligible to participate in this survey. Five hundred thirteen students had an invisible disability and disclosure experience and were invited to participate in this study. Of the 513 potential participants, 426 participated in my survey, a participation rate of 83.0%.

Participants were compensated with credit towards their applicable psychology course for completing my online survey. I screened out individuals who failed an attention check (n=33), resulting in a final sample of 393 participants (M_{age} = 20.08 years, SD = 2.67, 66.4 % female). In this sample, 46.4% of participants were currently enrolled in a co-operative education program.

Survey Questions

In the pre-screen questionnaire, participants were asked to indicate if they had ever disclosed a disability during job search and/or in the workplace. Those who had experience disclosing a disability in either setting were eligible to participate in the survey. Participants confirmed their disability status and disclosure history before they began the survey. Participants were asked to reflect on one instance of disability disclosure for this survey. If they had disclosed several times in the past, they were asked to think about their most recent disclosure.

Participants were presented with 77 items related to potential behaviours they could have engaged in during this disclosure and asked to rate the extent to which they performed each behaviour during this disclosure (1 = not at all, 5 = a great deal).

Results

I conducted an EFA (maximum likelihood estimation, with oblimin rotation) to examine the underlying factor structure of the items and for initial item reduction. To this end, I chose to use parallel analysis (Horn, 1965) to determine the number of factors to retain—because this method has been widely cited as more accurate than the Kaiser criterion (retaining factors with Eigenvalues greater than 1; Kaiser, 1960) and Cattell's (1966) test of retaining factors above the "drop" in a scree plot. Through parallel analysis, I compared my obtained Eigenvalues for each factor to random column permutations of the data matrix and retained factors for which the obtained Eigenvalues were greater than the randomly generated data (Garrido, Abad, & Ponsoda, 2013). Table 5 outlines the first 10 Eigenvalues obtained from the EFA compared to the 95th percentile Eigenvalues obtained from factor analysis of 100 random column permutations of the data. Comparison of these two columns of Eigenvalues suggested the retention of the first 6 factors.

After conducting an initial EFA with 77 items, I removed items that did not load onto the first six factors (44 items), items with cross-loading differences less than .20 (3 items) and items that had maximum factor loading less than .30 (3 items), resulting in a final scale of 27 items (Gorsuch, 1988). I factor analyzed the remaining 27 items and found all items loaded onto the appropriate factors—as seen in Table 6—and accounted for 68.2% of the variance. As shown in Table 7, the factors showed a general pattern of low to moderate positive intercorrelations and the alphas of the subscales were high. The highest inter-factor correlations appear between the following sets of strategies: focusing on interpersonal politeness-controlling discussion topic strategies (r = -.43), focusing on interpersonal politeness-solving disagreements strategies (r = -.42), sharing knowledge/advice-managing silence strategies (r = .47), and controlling discussion topic-solving disagreements strategies (r = .55).

STUDY 3: CONFIRMATION OF FACTOR STRUCTURE

The purpose of Study 3 was to confirm the factor structure of the scale refined in Study 2. This was accomplished using confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) in three independent samples.

Method

Participants and Procedures

Four hundred thirty-one undergraduate participants with an invisible or partially concealable disability from a Canadian University were recruited for an online survey through a Psychology Research Pool. Participants completed a short pre-screen questionnaire administered at the start of the academic term to confirm survey eligibility.

Three thousand one hundred two students completed the prescreen questionnaire, of which 636 (20.5%) reported having an invisible disability. Of the individuals with disabilities, 77 students (12.1%) reported an invisible disability but no work-related disclosure experiences and were therefore ineligible to participate in this survey. Five hundred fifty-nine students had an invisible disability and disclosure experience and were invited to participate in this study. Of the 559 potential participants, 431 participated in my survey, a participation rate of 77.1%.

Participants were compensated with credit towards their applicable psychology course for completing my online survey. I screened out individuals who failed an attention check (n=23), resulting in a final sample of 408 participants (M_{age} = 20.02 years, SD = 2.48, 71.70% female). In this sample, 41.3% of participants were currently enrolled in a co-operative education program.

Survey Questions

Similar to the procedure followed in Study 2, participants were asked to indicate if they had ever disclosed a disability during job search and/or in the workplace in a pre-screen questionnaire. Those who had experience disclosing in either setting were eligible to participate

in this survey. Participants confirmed their disability status at the beginning of the survey and reflected on one instance of disability disclosure when completing this survey. I administered the same instructions as in Study 2, except that the scale only consisted of the reduced list of 27 items in Table 6. See Appendix A for full scale instructions and a list of these 27 items, each marked as newly developed or repurposed from previous work on Communication Accommodation Theory.

Results

I conducted a CFA to determine model fit, examining the fit of the model using the root mean square error of approximate (RMSEA) and the comparative fit index (CFI). The six-factor model provided excellent fit for the data, $X^2(309) = 790.71$, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .06, CFI =.92. As further outlined in Table 8, a chi-square difference test revealed that a six-factor solution fit the data significantly better than a one-factor solution ($X^2_{diff}(10) = 2628.68$, $p < .001$) and several plausible alternatives models. Further, when I tested a hierarchical model with content and delivery strategies as latent variables, this model provided moderate fit to the data, ($X^2(307) = 782.72$, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .07, CFI =.91), but fit indices did indeed worsen compared to the six-factor solution discussed above. Although model fit does not worsen past thresholds where it is considered poor, the comparative fit to a non-hierarchical model indicates the addition of content and delivery as latent constructs decreases model fit and fails to provide clear empirical proof of the distinction between content and delivery strategies. Because the current research builds on and draws from strong theoretical distinctions made between content and delivery strategies within Communication Accommodation Theory, the distinction between content and delivery strategies can still be useful, especially in practical settings. For example, individuals with disabilities who are contemplating disclosure may benefit from the added reflection of

considering how *what* they will say and *how* they will say it may change from disclosure to disclosure. Given my hierarchical confirmatory factor analysis findings, future work on this topic may again consider and test whether the content/delivery distinction has an empirical basis.

Table 9 shows the inter-factor correlation matrix for Study 3. Each item loaded onto its hypothesized factor and the factors showed modest intercorrelations, confirming that the scale assesses six factors that are distinct yet related to one another. Consistent with Study 2, the highest correlations appear between the following sets of strategies: focusing on interpersonal politeness-controlling discussion topic strategies (r = -.52), focusing on interpersonal politeness-solving disagreements strategies (r = -.42), sharing knowledge/advice-managing silence strategies (r = .73), and controlling discussion topic-solving disagreements strategies (r = .67).

Additional Worker Samples

Confirmatory factor analyses were run in two additional worker samples, to confirm the factor structure would replicate in another population. I recruited participants with an invisible or partially concealable disability through Amazon's Mechanical Turk using CloudResearch, a crowdsourcing platform commonly used to recruit employee samples (Litman, Robinson, & Abberbock, 2017). To limit data quality issues, only workers who passed CloudResearch's internal data quality checks were permitted to participate in my studies. These data quality checks include only allowing participants who passed CloudResearch's attention and engagement measures to participate, blocking duplicate IP submissions, and verifying worker country location via IP address. Participants completed a short pre-screen questionnaire before beginning the survey to confirm survey eligibility. The two additional CFAs demonstrated excellent fit and provide additional evidence for the 6-factor solution, described in further detail below.

The first additional sample was 359 full-time North American workers with disabilities, with an average age of 23.4 years (*SD* = 1.64) and 42.1% of them were female. In this sample, the 6-factor solution showed excellent fit to the data ($X^2(309) = 612.50$, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .06, CFI = .93). Participants had disclosed their disability during job search or in the workplace an average of 7.89 (*SD* = 8.52) times. Six thousand and two workers completed the prescreen questionnaire, of which 1792 (29.9%) reported having an invisible disability. Of the individuals with disabilities, 398 workers (22.2%) reported an invisible disability but no work-related disclosure experiences and were therefore ineligible to participate in this survey. One thousand three hundred ninety-four workers had an invisible disability and disclosure experience and were invited to participate in this study. Of the 1394 potential participants, 371 participated in my survey, a participation rate of 26.6%. Careless responders who failed the attention check (*n*=12) were removed from the data analyses, resulting in a final sample size of 359. Workers were compensated $1.09 USD for completing this study.

The second additional sample was 383 full-time North American workers with disabilities, with an average age of 37.6 years (*SD* = 9.37) and 44.1% of them were female. In this sample, the 6-factor solution showed excellent fit to the data ($X^2(309) = 608.92$, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .06, CFI = .94). Participants had disclosed their disability during job search or in the workplace an average of 5.55 (*SD* = 7.10) times. Three thousand three hundred forty-one workers completed the prescreen questionnaire, of which 559 (16.7%) reported having an invisible disability. Of the individuals with disabilities, 122 workers (21.8%) reported an invisible disability but no work-related disclosure experiences and were therefore ineligible to participate in this survey. Four hundred thirty-seven had an invisible disability and disclosure experience and were invited to participate in this study. Of the 437 potential participants, 400

participated in the survey, a participation rate of 91.5%. Careless responders who failed the attention check (*n*=17) were removed from my data analyses, resulting in a final sample size of 383. Workers were compensated $1.09 USD for completing this study.

STUDY 4: DEVELOPING A NOMOLOGICAL NETWORK FOR DISCLOSURE STRATEGIES

The purpose of Study 4 was to create the initial nomological network for the measure of disability disclosure strategies by demonstrating convergent, discriminant, and criterion-related validity. This was accomplished through obtaining correlations between use of disclosure strategies and various antecedents, identity management strategies, and theoretically related outcomes. Additionally, for each outcome, I examined the incremental predictive validity of my developed scale and tested whether the hypothesized effects I found remained significant after controlling for identity management strategies.

Hypotheses

Antecedents to disclosure strategy are addressed in Hypotheses 1 through 3. The remaining hypotheses involve concomitants or outcomes of choice of disclosure strategy. Some of these hypotheses require assumptions or conjectures that lack a strong empirical basis. Unlike hypotheses that test a particular theory, these hypotheses are included primarily to *stimulate* theorizing about why key antecedents, concomitants, and outcomes might have particular associations with disclosure strategies.

Self-esteem

An individual's global self-esteem is defined as their perception of their inherent value (Leary & Baumeister, 2000). Individuals with high self-esteem are more likely to disclose personal information in their social relationships compared to those with low self-esteem. However, when individuals with low self-esteem *do* disclose information to others, they are likely to hyper-focus on negative emotions and experiences (Wood & Forest, 2016). Further, employees with lower self-esteem have been shown to demonstrate lower rates of self-

regulation, resulting in negative and deviant behaviours at work, especially when their self-esteem is threatened (Heimpel, Elliot, & Wood, 2006; Ferris, Spence, Brown, & Heller, 2012).

Because disclosure at work can be considered an experience that is threatening to one's self-esteem, I expect those with low self-esteem to focus on negative emotions and behaviours in the face of this threat. Accordingly, I expect people with lower self-esteem to make more use of disclosure strategies that entail negative emotions and behaviours (solving disagreements, controlling discussion topic, considering power dynamics); those higher in self-esteem will use disclosure strategies with a more positive or neutral valence (sharing knowledge/advice, focusing on interpersonal politeness, managing silence). Therefore, I hypothesize:

> *Hypothesis 1:* Self-esteem will be negatively related to negatively-valanced disclosure strategies (solving disagreements, controlling discussion topic, considering power dynamics) and positively related to positively-valanced disclosure strategies (sharing knowledge/advice, focusing on interpersonal politeness, managing silence).

Concealability

Concealability of a disability refers to the extent to which the disorder can be hidden or masked from others. Those who interact with individuals with more concealable disabilities may not readily know they have a disability or may not readily connect the individual's symptoms to a disability (Santuzzi, Waltz, Finkelstein, & Rupp, 2014). Individuals who have concealable disabilities often mask and conceal their disabilities over longer periods of time at work in an effort to limit stigmatization from their disability status—which results in negative outcomes due to the cumulative strain of impression management (Pachankis, 2007).

Those who hold more concealable identities have likely had more experience masking their disabilities and greater autonomy in managing their disclosures as an employee, where they

can make case-by-case disclosure decisions to limit stigmatization from co-workers. Therefore, when disclosing, I expect those with more concealable disabilities to engage in continued masking of some disability-relevant information, with a focus on managing the delivery of their messages—which can be done through focusing on interpersonal politeness behaviours, addressing considering power dynamics dynamics, and ending managing silences during the conversation. As such, I expect concealability to be positively related to the use of delivery strategies (focusing on interpersonal politeness, considering power dynamics, managing silence).

Hypothesis 2: Concealability will be positively related to the use of delivery strategies (focusing on interpersonal politeness, considering power dynamics, managing silence).

Age

Previous researchers have found a negative association between age and disability identity—a formed identity about one's membership as a person with a disability. Disability identity is associated with higher rates of disclosures, motivated by sharing information about your identity (Santuzzi, Waltz, Finkelstein, & Rupp, 2014; Von Schrader, Malzer, & Bruyère, 2014).

Based on these relationships, I expect age to be negatively related to the use of content strategies (sharing knowledge/advice, solving disagreements, controlling discussion topic). Older individuals are less likely to have a well-developed disability identity or less likely to be motivated to assert disability identity to others through choice of disclosure strategy. These individuals therefore may be less motivated to share disability-relevant content with the disclosure target. I hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 3: Age will be negatively related to the use of content strategies (sharing knowledge/advice, solving disagreements, controlling discussion topic).

Identity Management and Disclosure Strategies

As discussed earlier, previous researchers have identified blending in strategies—downplaying, assimilating, decategorizing—and standing out strategies—claiming, confirming, integrating. I predicted delivery strategies (focusing on interpersonal politeness, considering power dynamics, managing silence) would show null or weak relationships with existing strategies and content strategies (sharing knowledge/advice, solving disagreements, controlling discussion topic) would show moderate relationships with existing strategies—as previous strategies found in the literature focus on what information is shared during a disclosure, not how disclosure messages are delivered. I hypothesize that:

> *Hypothesis 4:* Identity management and disclosure strategies will have null or weak relationships with delivery strategies (focusing on interpersonal politeness, considering power dynamics, managing silence) and moderate relationships with content strategies (sharing knowledge/advice, solving disagreements, controlling discussion topic).

Receiving Accommodations

Those who alter the delivery or content of their disclosure messages are likely doing so towards managing the target's reaction and subsequent outcomes of their disclosure. Because requests for workplace accommodations are one of the primary motivating factors for workplace disclosure (Corbière, Villotti, Toth, & Waghorn, 2014), I expect that individuals using any disclosure strategies would be more likely to receive accommodations in their place of work. Therefore, I predict both content and delivery strategies will be positively associated with receiving accommodations. I hypothesize that:

> *Hypothesis 5:* Content disclosure strategies (sharing knowledge/advice, solving disagreements, controlling discussion topic) and delivery strategies (focusing on

interpersonal politeness, considering power dynamics, managing silence) will be positively associated with receiving workplace accommodations.

Emotional Exhaustion

Emotional exhaustion is an individual's state of depleted personal resources and high perceived stress (Tepper, 2000). Previous researchers have linked knowledge sharing with higher rates of emotional exhaustion, explained by Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Kim, Lee, & Yun, 2016). According to COR, knowledge sharing is a resource-intensive process for employees which, over time, leads to perceptions of reduced or dwindling individual resources and greater stress. COR also suggests that employees who experience chronic stress may eventually reduce knowledge sharing behaviours to conserve their resources (Tepper, 2000). As such, I expect use of sharing knowledge/advice strategies will be positively related to emotional exhaustion. I had no a priori hypotheses about the correlations between all other strategies and emotional exhaustion. Therefore, I hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 6: Use of the sharing knowledge/advice disclosure strategy will be positively associated with emotional exhaustion.

Organizational Citizenship Behaviours

Organizational citizenship behaviours (OCB) are voluntary, extra-role behaviours that contribute towards an organization's functioning. OCB includes helping behaviours directed towards the organization (OCB-O) and helping behaviours directed towards other individuals at work (OCB-I; Williams & Anderson, 1991). When individuals strategically alter the content of their disclosure messages based on their target, they likely invoke feelings of pity in the target, resulting in helping responses toward the discloser (Cuddy, Glick, & Beninger, 2011). According to Social Exchange Theory, those who experience more helping behaviours are more likely to

engage in helping behaviours towards others due to the norm of reciprocity (Blau, 1968). As such, I expect content disclosure strategies will be positively related to performing OCB-I and OCB-O and both types of OCB will be positively related to receiving accommodations. Combining these two predictions, I expect that the effect of content strategies on OCBs will be mediated by receiving accommodations.[1] I hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 7a: Use of content disclosure strategies (sharing knowledge/advice, solving disagreements, controlling discussion topic) will be positively associated with OCB-I and OCB-O.

Hypothesis 7b: OCB-I and OCB-O will be positively associated with receiving accommodations.

Hypothesis 7c: The effect of content disclosure strategies (sharing knowledge/advice, solving disagreements, controlling discussion topic) on OCB-I and OCB-O will be mediated by receiving accommodations.

Task Performance

Previous work on disclosure has demonstrated a positive relationship between disclosure and task performance (Santuzzi & Keating, 2020). There are three primary reasons for this observed relationship. Firstly, an individual who discloses can now put less effort, energy, and resources towards concealment efforts, which can now be directly applied to job-related tasks. Secondly, disclosure implies trust of the discloser towards the disclosure target, enhancing social connectedness and helping behaviours from co-workers, providing more resources for the discloser to focus on job-related duties. Finally, disclosures are often motivated by requests for accommodations and when these accommodations are provided, they eliminate or reduce barriers

[1] Although it is not typical to test mediation hypotheses in a nomological network study, I had a theoretical basis for predicting these relationships. Thus, these mediation hypotheses are tested within Study 4.

to completing assigned job duties efficiently or at all (Santuzzi & Keating, 2020). As this previous research has focused on content strategies, I expected to replicate this result and extend to delivery strategies—such that use of both types of strategies is associated with increased task performance. I hypothesize that:

> *Hypothesis 8:* Use of content disclosure strategies (sharing knowledge/advice, solving disagreements, controlling discussion topic) and delivery strategies (focusing on interpersonal politeness, considering power dynamics, managing silence) will be positively associated with task performance.

Method

Participants and Procedures

To test these hypotheses, 217 full-time North American workers (M_{age} = 28.95 years, *SD* = 9.74, 39.30% female) with an invisible or partially concealable disability were recruited from Amazon Mechanical Turk for participation in two surveys. Similar to my previous studies, participants completed a short pre-screen questionnaire before beginning the survey to confirm survey eligibility. Participants were asked to indicate if they had an invisible disability and had ever disclosed a disability during job search and/or in the workplace.

Four thousand eight hundred ninety-three workers completed the prescreen questionnaire, of which 856 (17.5%) reported having an invisible disability. Of the individuals with disabilities, 283 workers (33.1%) reported an invisible disability but no work-related disclosure experiences and were therefore ineligible to participate in this survey. Five hundred seventy-three workers had an invisible disability and disclosure experience and were invited to participate in this study. Of the 573 potential participants, 245 participated in my study, a participation rate of 42.8%. Careless responders who failed the attention check question (n=11) and participants who

completed survey 1 but not survey 2 (n=17) were removed from further analyses, resulting in a final sample size of 217. Participants were paid $1.80 USD for completing survey 1 and $2.70 USD for completing survey 2.

Eligible participants who chose to complete my surveys completed two surveys with a minimum of 10 days between survey one and survey two. The focal measure (disclosure strategies) and workplace outcomes were measured at two different time points to reduce common method variance (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). To ensure that participants were reflecting on the same instance of disability disclosure in both surveys, participants were provided a text box in which to describe their disability disclosure in the first survey. The text they entered in the first survey about their disability disclosure experience was shown to them at the beginning of survey 2.

At Time 1 (T1), participants completed measures of self-esteem, concealability, my developed measure of disability disclosure behaviours, and demographic variables. At Time 2 (T2), participants completed several workplace outcome measures and rated their use of various identity management strategies at work. Participants had previously worked an average of 2.41 (SD = 2.20) part-time positions and 2.93 (SD = 2.52) full time positions. Participants had disclosed during job search an average of 2.84 (SD = 2.62) times and had disclosed in the workplace an average of 3.05 (SD = 2.68) times.

Measures

Self Esteem. Global self-esteem (α = .83) was measured using Rosenberg's 10-item self-esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965). I used the original instructions created for the scale, which asks participants to review a list of statements about themselves and indicate how strongly they agree or disagree with each statement (1 = strongly agree, 2 =somewhat disagree, 3 = neither agree nor

disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5= strongly agree). A sample item includes “On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.”

Concealability. Concealability (α = .74) was measured using a 4-item scale developed for this study to measure how concealable an individual believes their disability is. This scale asked participants to rate their agreement with statements about their disability (1 = completely agree, 2 = agree, 3, = somewhat agree, 4 = neither agree nor disagree, 5 = somewhat disagree, 6 = disagree, 7 = completely disagree). Items include “It is easy for others to recognize the symptoms of my disability”, “Others probably wouldn’t know I have a disability unless they were told” (reversed), “Others can tell that I have a disability by the way I act”, and “Others can tell that I have a disability from the way I talk”. Higher scores represent more concealable disabilities.

Identity Management and Disclosure Strategies. Assimilating, decategorizing, confirming, and integrating were measured using scales developed by Lynch and Rodell (2018) and downplaying and claiming were measured using scales developed by Lyons et al. (2018). Participants were presented with various behaviours associated with each strategy and asked to rate how frequently they engaged in each behaviour (1 = never, 2 = sometimes, 3 = about half the time, 4 = most of the time, 5 = always). Assimilating (α = .89) was measured with four items including “I display strengths consistent with more positively regarded group identities over my disability identity.” Decategorizing (α = .92) was measured with four items including “I highlight my distinctive strengths instead of any group identity.” Confirming (α = .90) was measured with four items including “I express the positive aspects of my disability identity.” Integrating (α = .92) was measured with four items including “I take advantage of attributes affiliated with my disability identity.” Downplaying (α = .85) was measured with five items including “I try to

minimize how my disability affects my work." Claiming (α = .93) was measured using three items including "I tell others at work about certain positive aspects of having my disability."

Receiving Accommodations. Receiving accommodations was measured with a single-item measure developed for this study. Participants rated the extent to which they agreed with the item "I received the accommodations I needed to be successful in my job" (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree).

Emotional Exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion (α = .95) was measured using the 8-item emotional exhaustion subscale of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach, Jackson, Leiter, Schaufeli, & Schwab, 1986). Participants were asked to review items and rate the frequency with which they felt each item in their job (1 = never, 2 = a few times a year, 3 = once a month, 4 = a few times per month, 5 = once a week, 6 = a few times per week, 7 = every day). A sample item includes "I feel emotionally drained from work."

Organizational Citizenship Behaviours. Organizational Citizenship Behaviours (OCB) were measured using Lee and Allen's (2002) 16-item measure. Eight items measure OCB-I (citizenship behaviours towards individuals, α = .92) and eight items measure OCB-O (citizenship behaviours towards the organization, α = .93). Participants were asked to rate how often they performed each behaviour (1 = never, 2 = seldom, 3 = rarely, 4 = sometimes, 5 = often, 6 = very often, 7 = always). A sample item for OCB-I is "help others who have been absent" and a sample item for OCB-O is "express loyalty toward the organization."

Task Performance. Self-rated task performance (α = .76) was measured with Williams and Anderson's (1991) 7-item measure. Participants were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed with each statement (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree). A sample item is "I perform tasks that are expected."

Results

Table 10 includes the means, standard deviations, correlations, and reliabilities for all variables. Tables 11, 12, and 13 include a summary of findings for antecedents, identity management/disclosure strategies, and outcomes respectively.

Self Esteem

In Hypothesis 1, I predicted self-esteem would be positively related to use of sharing knowledge/advice, focusing on interpersonal politeness, and managing silence strategies and negatively associated with use of solving disagreements, controlling discussion topic, and considering power dynamics strategies. As expected, self-esteem was positively related to use of sharing knowledge/advice (r = .16, p = .02), and focusing on interpersonal politeness strategies (r = .40, p < .001), and negatively associated with solving disagreements (r = -.30, p < .001) and controlling discussion topic strategies (r = -.36, p <.001). There was a null relationship between self-esteem and use of managing silence (r = .10, p = .14) and considering power dynamics strategies (r = -.06, p = .41). Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was partially supported.

Concealability

In Hypothesis 2, I predicted concealability would be positively related to the use of delivery strategies (focusing on interpersonal politeness, considering power dynamics, managing silence). As expected, concealability was positively associated with use of focusing on interpersonal politeness strategies (r = .64, p < .001). Concealability showed a null relationship with considering power dynamics (r = -.12, p = .08) and managing silence strategies (r = -.04, p = .56). Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was partially supported.

Age

In Hypothesis 3, I predicted age would be negatively related to the use of content strategies (sharing knowledge/advice, solving disagreements, controlling discussion topic). As expected, age was negatively correlated with use of solving disagreements (r = -.15, p = .03) and controlling discussion topic strategies (r = -.27, p < .001). Age showed a null relationship with use of sharing knowledge/advice strategies (r = -.12, p = .07). Therefore, Hypothesis 3 was partially supported.

Identity Management and Disclosure Strategies

In Hypothesis 4, I predicted that all identity management and disclosure strategies would show null or weak relationships with delivery strategies (focusing on interpersonal politeness, considering power dynamics, managing silence) and moderate relationships with content strategies (sharing knowledge/advice, solving disagreements, controlling discussion topic). Because I am hypothesizing a true null hypothesis for delivery strategies, Cortina and Folger (1998) recommend only interpreting these null effects if significant effects are found for other disability disclosure strategies. As described above, I hypothesized content strategies would be moderately related to identity management and disclosure strategies found in the literature. These effects were found for multiple content strategies, allowing me to interpret the null effects described below.

As expected, the use of focusing on interpersonal politeness strategies demonstrated a null relationship with downplaying (r = -.11, p = .12), and decategorization (r = -.11, p = .10), and weak relationships with assimilation (r = -.15, p = .03) and confirming (r = -.19, p = .005). Contrary to my hypotheses, use of focusing on interpersonal politeness strategies showed moderate negative relationships with claiming (r = -.54, p < .001), and integration (r = -.41, p <

.001). Use of considering power dynamics strategies showed null relationships with downplaying (r = -.12, p = .09), assimilating (r = .07, p = .30), confirming (r = .01, p = .83), and integrating (r = .09, p = .18), weak negative relationship with decategorization (r = -.16, p = .02), and a weak positive relationship with claiming (r = .22, p = .001). Use of managing silence strategies showed null relationships with assimilating (r = .05, p = .50), claiming (r = .06, p = .38), and integrating (r = .12, p = .08), and a weak positive relationship with downplaying (r = .20, p = .004), decategorization (r = .20, p = .003), and confirming (r = .17, p = .012). Therefore, Hypothesis 4 was partially supported with respect to delivery strategies.

For content strategies, as predicted, use of sharing knowledge/advice strategies showed moderate relationships with decategorization (r = .25, p < .001) and confirming (r = .24, p < .001) but contrary to my prediction, a weak relationship with assimilation (r = .15, p = .024). Use of solving disagreements strategies showed moderate relationships with claiming (r = .21, p = .002), and integrating (r = .28, p < .001), but contrary to Hypothesis 4, a weak relationship with decategorization (r = .15, p = .032). Use of controlling discussion topic strategies showed moderate relationships with downplaying (r = .25, p < .001), claiming (r = .21, p = .002), integrating (r = .20, p = .003) but contrary to my prediction, a weak relationship with decategorization (r = .18, p = .008). Therefore, Hypothesis 4 was partially supported with respect to content strategies.

Receiving Accommodations

In Hypothesis 5, I predicted the use of content disclosure strategies (sharing knowledge/advice, solving disagreements, controlling discussion topic) and delivery strategies (focusing on interpersonal politeness, considering power dynamics, managing silence) would be positively associated with receiving workplace accommodations. As expected, use of solving

disagreements (r = .18, p = .007), controlling discussion topic (r = .17, p = .012), and managing silence (r = .17, p = .01) strategies were positively associated with receiving accommodations. Unexpectedly, use of focusing on interpersonal politeness strategies (r = -.24, p < .001) was negatively associated with receiving accommodations. I found a null relationship between sharing knowledge/advice strategies (r = .12, p = .09) and considering power dynamics strategies (r = -.08, p = .27) and receiving accommodations. Therefore, Hypothesis 5 was partially supported.

Next, I examine the predictive validity of my scale when predicting receiving accommodations. See Table 14 for all regression coefficients for predicting receiving accommodations from my measure of disclosure strategies.

Predicting Receiving Accommodations from Disclosure Strategies. My developed measure of disclosure strategies predicted significant variance in receiving accommodations (R^2 = .07, F(6, 211) = 2.53, p = .02). Focusing on interpersonal politeness strategies was significantly negatively related to receiving accommodations (b = -.14, p = .03).

Predicting Receiving Accommodations from Disclosure Strategies When Controlling for Identity Management Strategies. When controlling for previous measures of identity management, my developed measure of disclosure strategies did not explain a significant amount of additional variance in receiving accommodations (R^2_{change} = .03, F(6, 204) = 1.31, p = .25), and no strategies were significantly related to receiving accommodations.

Emotional Exhaustion

In Hypothesis 6, I predicted that the use of the sharing knowledge/advice disclosure strategies would be positively associated with emotional exhaustion. Contrary to what was

predicted in Hypothesis 6, I found a null relationship between the use of sharing knowledge/advice strategies and emotional exhaustion (r = -.02, p = .80). Therefore, Hypothesis 6 was not supported.

Next, I examine the predictive validity of my scale when predicting emotional exhaustion. See Table 14 for all regression coefficients for predicting emotional exhaustion from my measure of disclosure strategies.

Predicting Emotional Exhaustion from Disclosure Strategies. My developed measure of disclosure strategies predicted significant variance in emotional exhaustion (R^2 = .14, F(6, 211) = 5.66, p < .001). Sharing knowledge/advice (b = -.33, p = .02) and controlling discussion topic (b = .38, p = .01) strategies were significantly associated with emotional exhaustion.

Predicting Emotional Exhaustion from Disclosure Strategies When Controlling for Identity Management Strategies. When controlling for previous measures of identity management, my developed measure of disclosure strategies explained a significant amount of additional variance in emotional exhaustion (R^2_{change} = .10, F(6, 204) = 3.94, p < .001). Use of controlling discussion topic strategies was significantly positively associated with emotional exhaustion (b = .29, p = .04).

Organizational Citizenship Behaviours

In Hypothesis 7a, I predicted that use of content disclosure strategies (sharing knowledge/advice, solving disagreements, controlling discussion topic) would be positively related to OCB-I and OCB-O. In line with Hypothesis 7a, I found a positive association between sharing knowledge/advice strategies with OCBI (r = .32, p < .001) and OCBO (r = .28, p < .001), solving disagreements with OCBI (r = .16, p = .019) and OCBO (r = .17, p = .014), and

controlling discussion topic with OCBI (r = .19, p = .004) and OCBO (r = .21, p = .002). Therefore, Hypothesis 7a was supported. Secondly, in Hypothesis 7b, I predicted that OCB-I and OCB-O would be positively associated with receiving accommodations due to the norm of reciprocity. As expected, OCB-I (r = .39, p < .001) and OCB-O (r = .44, p < .001) were both positively associated with receiving accommodations. Therefore, Hypothesis 7b was supported.

Thirdly, in Hypothesis 7c, I predicted the effect of content disclosure strategies (sharing knowledge/advice, solving disagreements, controlling discussion topic) on OCB-I and OCB-O will be mediated by receiving accommodations. To test this hypothesis, I used a PROCESS macro (model 4, mediation) in SPSS with 5000 bootstrap samples (Hayes, 2017). As predicted, use of solving disagreements strategies significantly predicted accommodations (b = .13, p = .006), and accommodations significantly predicted OCB-I (b = .58, p < .001) and OCB-O (b = .72, p < .001). I found a significant indirect effect of using solving disagreements strategies on OCB-I (indirect effect = .07, 95% CI [.02, .13]) and OCB-O (indirect effect = .10, 95% CI [.02, .17]), mediated by receiving accommodations.

As predicted, use of controlling discussion topic strategies significantly predicted accommodations (b = .13, p = .006), and accommodations significantly predicted OCB-I (b = .55, p < .001) and OCB-O (b = .69, p < .001). There was a significant indirect effect of using controlling discussion topic strategies on both OCB-I (indirect effect = .07, 95% CI [.02, .13]) and OCB-O (indirect effect = .09, 95% CI [.02, .17]), mediated by receiving accommodations. Contrary to my predictions, use of sharing knowledge/advice strategies did not predict receiving accommodations (b = .09, p = .105), and the indirect effect of using sharing knowledge/advice strategies on OCB-I (indirect effect = .05, 95% CI [-.02, .12]), and OCB-O (indirect effect = .06,

95% CI [-.02, .15]), was not mediated by receiving accommodations. Therefore, Hypothesis 7c was partially supported.

Next, I examine the predictive validity of my scale when predicting OCBI and OCBO. See Table 14 for all regression coefficients for predicting OCBI and OCBO from my measure of disclosure strategies.

Predicting OCBI and OCBO from Disclosure Strategies. My developed measure of disclosure strategies predicted significant variance in OCBI (R^2 = .15, F(6, 211) = 5.96, p < .001) and OCBO (R^2 = .15, F(6, 211) = 6.08, p < .001). Sharing knowledge/advice (b = .29, p = .01) and managing silence (b = .25, p = .02) strategies were positively associated with OCBI. Sharing knowledge/advice (b = .36, p < .001) and focusing on interpersonal politeness (b = -.33,p < .001) strategies were significantly associated with OCBO.

Predicting OCBI and OCBO from Disclosure Strategies When Controlling for Identity Management Strategies. When controlling for previous measures of identity management, my developed measure of disclosure strategies explained a significant amount of additional variance in OCBI (R^2_{change} = .10, F(6, 204) = 5.15, p < .001) and OCBO (R^2_{change} = .07, F(6, 204) = 3.53, p = .002). Sharing knowledge/advice (b = .25, p = .01) and managing silence (b = .21, p = .24) were positively associated with OCBI. Sharing knowledge/advice (b = .31, p = .01) was positively associated with OCBO.

Task Performance

In Hypothesis 8, I predicted use of content (sharing knowledge/advice, solving disagreements, controlling discussion topic) and delivery strategies (focusing on interpersonal politeness, considering power dynamics, managing silence) would be positively associated with task performance. As predicted, use of sharing knowledge/advice (r = .26, p < .001) and focusing

on interpersonal politeness strategies (r = .40, p < .001) were positively associated with task performance. Contrary to my hypotheses, there was a negative relationship found between use of considering power dynamics strategies and task performance (r = -.27, p < .001) and there was a null relationship found between solving disagreements (r = -.09, p = .18), controlling discussion topic (r = -.08, p = .22), managing silence (r = .13, p = .06) and task performance. Therefore, Hypothesis 8 was partially supported.

Next, I examine the predictive validity of my scale when predicting task performance. See Table 14 for all regression coefficients for predicting task performance from my measure of disclosure strategies.

Predicting Task Performance from Disclosure Strategies. My developed measure of disclosure strategies predicted significant variance in task performance (R^2 = .30, F(6, 211) = 15.21, p < .001). Sharing knowledge/advice (b = .16, p < .001), and focusing on interpersonal politeness behaviours (b = .28, p < .001) were positively associated with task performance.

Predicting Task Performance from Disclosure Strategies When Controlling for Identity Management Strategies. When controlling for previous measures of identity management, my developed measure of disclosure strategies explained a significant amount of additional variance in task performance (R^2_{change} = .17, F(6, 204) = 9.64, p < .001).

When controlling for previous measures of identity management, my developed measure of disclosure strategies explained a significant amount of additional variance in task performance (R^2_{change} = .10, F(6, 204) = 3.94, p < .001). Sharing knowledge/advice (b = .12, p = .02) and

focusing on interpersonal politeness behaviours (b = .28, p < .001) were positively associated with task performance.

Study 4 Discussion

In Study 4, I aimed to build an initial nomological network for my measure of disability disclosure strategies by demonstrating convergent, discriminant, and criterion-related validity of the scale. Moderate correlations between use of content strategies and identity management/disclosure strategies found in the literature provide support for the convergent validity of my scale. Weak or null relationships between use of delivery strategies and identity management/disclosure strategies from the literature provide support for the discriminant validity of my scale and the unique contribution of delivery strategies in the current work. Predicted associations between the disclosure strategies and outcomes provide support for the criterion-related validity of my scale. Further, I demonstrated incremental predictive validity of my scale, as it explained additional variance in the outcomes of emotional exhaustion, OCBI, OCBO, and task performance beyond what was explained by existing measures of identity management. However, no additional variance in receiving accommodations was explained by my disclosure measure when controlling for identity management strategies. Finally, many relationships found between my disclosure strategies and outcomes remained significant when controlling for identity management strategies, strengthening the partial support found for my hypotheses related to emotional exhaustion, OCBI, OCBO, and task performance. However, when controlling for identity management strategies, there was no longer a significant association between any disclosure strategies and receiving accommodations.

One outcome-related finding that may be of particular interest to employers is the positive association found between receiving accommodations and OCB-I and OCB-O, along

with the positive effects of using solving disagreements and controlling discussion topic strategies on OCB, mediated by receiving accommodations. As employers consider providing accommodations to their employees with disabilities, this finding highlights the potential impact of the norm of reciprocity related to providing disability-relevant accommodations to a worker. Although causal order cannot be inferred from this data, if employees who receive accommodations are more likely to engage in organizational citizenship behaviours, managers may view this outcome as one incentive for offering accommodations to their employees.

Although this study provided insight into the relationship between disclosure strategies and workplace/individual outcomes, one major limitation of this work was my ability to make causal conclusions about the use of each strategy. It is possible that strategy use is correlated with third variables that influence workplace and individual outcomes. To address this limitation, in Study 5, I used an experimental approach to examine the effects of using particular disclosure strategies.

CHAPTER 3: EVALUATING THE EFFECTS OF USING DISABILITY DISCLOSURE STRATEGIES

Much of the work on the psychological effects of disclosure vs. non-disclosure tell a compelling narrative about the benefits of revealing one's disability status and the negative outcomes associated with concealment once an individual with a disability has joined a workplace. Concealment over a long period of time results in negative effects due to the cumulative strain of ongoing impression management (Pachankis, 2007). Further, delayed disclosure is likely to result in negative effects, as it increases the probability a disclosure will occur in response to negative performance (Newheiser & Barreto, 2014).

The effects of using identity management and disclosure strategies have also been studied—both in the workplace and in a job search setting. The identity management strategies described earlier (assimilating, decategorizing, integrating, and confirming) have been linked to outcomes of boosterism (promoting the employee to others) and ostracism (socially excluding the employee). Strategies used to blend in at work (assimilating and decategorizing) lead to higher levels of boosterism towards that employee. In contrast, standing out strategies (integrating and confirming) result in higher levels of ostracism towards the target employee (Lynch & Rodell, 2018). The disability disclosure strategy of downplaying (conceptually similar to decategorizing) is associated with lower hiring intentions. Further, the disability disclosure strategy of claiming (conceptually similar to integrating) is associated with feelings of admiration for the discloser, a greater intention to hire that job candidate, and higher perceived levels of competence in the discloser (Lyons, Volpone, Wessel, & Alonso, 2017; Lyons, et al., 2018).

Although workers with disabilities may disclose after they join a workplace, job seekers with disabilities may also disclose within a job search context. In fact, many individuals with disabilities view stages within the job search process such as recruitment efforts, screening calls, or interviews as opportunities for an organization to signal their goals, commitments to providing disability-related supports, and diversity climate (Bangerter, Roulin, & König, 2012; Bonaccio, Connelly, Gellatly, Jetha, & Martin Ginis, 2020; Avery, et al., 2013).

Further, individuals with disabilities are more likely to disclose in a job search context if they have a more salient and central disability identity, a strong desire for openness and transparency with their employer, and if they anticipate they will have a need for accommodations (Von Schrader, Malzer, & Bruyère, 2014). Disclosures during the job search process can result in stronger negative evaluations compared to the workplace context—as less counter-stereotypical information is known about the applicant and the decision to hire a candidate is quite proximal to their disclosure. These negative evaluations such as lower perceptions of competence result in a lower intention to hire and lower ratings of candidate employability (Cuddy, Glick, & Beninger, 2011; Dalgin & Bellini, 2008). The strong negative evaluations and consequences that result from disclosure within a job search context indicate disclosure strategies may be particularly useful during job search to limit the effects of negative stereotypes while allowing the applicant to simultaneously gain information about how they may be supported in a new workplace. As such, effects of the strategies found in the current work were explored in an experimental job search context to build an understanding of how effective these strategies could be at attenuating negative evaluations of the discloser.

The contributions of this study are twofold. Firstly, this study seeks to complement Studies 1-4 by investigating the effects of disability disclosure from the perspective of the

disclosure target instead of the discloser. Gathering evaluations of disclosure strategies from an employer perspective provides stronger evidence on the links between disclosure strategies and workplace outcomes. Secondly, this study explicitly investigates the "effectiveness" of using both content and delivery disclosure strategies when a discloser has a psychological vs. physical disability. In this way, my work contributes to the field's understanding on the malleability of the underlying stereotypes related to different disability types, based on the disclosure strategies used by the discloser.

STUDY 5: EXPERIMENTAL OUTCOMES OF STRATEGY USE

The purpose of Study 5 was to provide evidence of the effects of using the disability disclosure strategies found in Study 1 on relevant job search outcomes. To accomplish this, I conducted an experimental study with hiring managers.

Hypotheses

When studying the effects of disclosures or other events during an interview, previous researchers have commonly explored two variables as outcomes: willingness to hire the candidate and ratings of the candidate's potential (Lyons, Volpone, Wessel, & Alonso, 2017; Flower, Dickens, & Hedley, 2021; Dalgin & Bellini, 2008). As such, in the current research, I explored both hiring intentions and ratings of candidate employability.

As discussed earlier, there are different stereotypes for individuals with physical compared to psychological disabilities. Although both groups are seen as relatively low on competence and warmth, those with psychological disabilities are stereotyped as even more incompetent than those with physical disabilities (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002). In a job search context where competence is central to the assessment of the candidate, I expected simple disclosure (disclosure without use of strategies) to result in both lower intention to hire and candidates would be rated as less employable if they had a psychological disability compared to a physical disability.

Further, I expect use of disclosure strategies to be differentially effective at increasing hiring intentions and ratings of employability for those with psychological compared to physical disabilities. These effects are expected because use of disclosure strategies (i.e., the presentation of counter-stereotypical information) will likely have stronger or weaker effects on perceived competence depending on the invoked stereotype related to the disability of the candidate. When

rating psychological disabilities, where the invoked stereotype is of very low competence and moderate warmth, raters tend to use a non-neutral baseline when making evaluations (i.e., make comparisons with individuals with less severe psychological disabilities). However, for physical disabilities, where the invoked stereotype is similarly low between competence and warmth, raters tend to use a neutral baseline such as comparisons with all other employees. When using a non-neutral baseline to rate individuals with psychological disabilities, ratings tend to be more extreme, and new information is weighed more heavily (Kervyn, Bergsieker, Grignard, & Yzerbyt, 2016).

In the current work I expect content strategies (sharing knowledge/advice, solving disagreements, controlling discussion topic) to be linked to positive hiring perceptions of candidates, as the strategic use of tactics aimed to shape the content of messages sent to a disclosure target are direct demonstrations of their competence. However, I expect the use of content strategies will be more effective at increasing hiring and employability ratings for those with psychological disabilities, where there is a stronger stereotype of incompetence and therefore more divergent ratings of warmth and competence that can be influenced by receiving counter-stereotypical information (Fisher & Purcal, 2017). For those with psychological disabilities compared to physical disabilities, I expect the use of content strategies will result in more extreme and positive ratings, as raters are more likely to use a non-neutral baseline in this condition. Therefore, I hypothesize:

> *Hypothesis 9*: The relationship between strategy type and hiring intention will be moderated by disability type such that use of content strategies (sharing knowledge/advice, solving disagreements, controlling discussion topic) will increase

hiring intention relative to simple disclosure for those with psychological but not physical disabilities.

Hypothesis 10: The relationship between strategy type and hiring intention will be moderated by disability type such that use of content strategies (sharing knowledge/advice, solving disagreements, controlling discussion topic) will increase ratings of candidate employability relative to simple disclosure for those with psychological but not physical disabilities.

In the current study, I do not make explicit hypotheses about the effectiveness of delivery strategies because use of content strategies directly addresses the most relevant workplace stereotype of individuals with disabilities as having low competence—by illustrating competence. Conversely, delivery strategies are more likely to influence perceptions of warmth, which are not as central to the assessment of a job candidate. However, the effects of using delivery strategies are examined in an exploratory way in my results below

Methods

Participants and Procedures

To test these hypotheses, I recruited 630 full-time North American hiring managers through Amazon's Mechanical Turk for an online experiment (M_{age} = 35.71 years, *SD* = 8.87, 31.3 % female). Participants indicated they had experienced an average of 19.39 (*SD* = 15.68) disclosures from their employees while they were in management positions. Thirty-seven percent of hiring managers—comparatively higher than the base rate for disability in the population—indicated they have, at some point, been diagnosed with a disability—whether it was an episodic or a permanent condition. Participants completed a short pre-screen questionnaire before beginning the survey to confirm survey eligibility.

In the pre-screen questionnaire, participants were asked to indicate whether they were currently employed in a management position and whether they had experience making hiring decisions. Those who had experience making hiring decisions and were currently employed in a management position were eligible to participate in the experiment. One thousand nine-hundred seventy workers completed the pre-screen questionnaire, and 654 were eligible for the survey. After removing careless responders who failed an attention check (n=24), the final sample size was 630. Workers were paid $1.21 USD for participating in this experiment.

Participants were told they would be reviewing a candidate's anonymized application for a data scientist position. They were asked to review the job description (Appendix B) and résumé (Appendix C) towards making a hiring decision for the candidate, just as they would when hiring at their place of work. Participants were also told I had information about this candidate's performance in their previous jobs, and I was interested in how accurately they could predict how the candidate performed. Further, I told them I was offering a bonus if they were accurate in rating the candidate's performance. This was done to incentivize participants and to reduce the influence of social desirability when hiring managers were making ratings on individuals with disabilities. All participants, regardless of their rating "accuracy," were provided with a bonus of $0.40 USD.

After participants reviewed the job description and résumé, the experimental manipulation was presented by sharing information about the candidate's disability status through an excerpt from their interview (Appendix D). After this, hiring managers made several ratings about the applicant and themselves, as described below. At the end of the study, participants were informed about the use of deception, debriefed on the purpose of the study, and had the opportunity to withdraw their data from the study. No participants chose to withdraw

their data. The experiment's design was a 7 (strategy type) x 2 (disability type) between-subjects design. Strategy types included: simple disclosure and the 6 strategies found in Study 1. Disability types included: physical disability (leg injury) and psychological disability (depression). I measured two outcomes: hiring intentions and ratings of candidate employability, along with the Stereotype Content Model variables of warmth and competence, and several control variables known to influence competence/warmth stereotypes.

Measures

Hiring Intention. Hiring intention was measured with a single-item measure developed for use in this study, asking participants to rate the extent to which they agree with the statement "I would recommend this person to be hired (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither disagree or agree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree).

Candidate Employability. Candidate employability (α = .72) was measured with Krefting and Brief's (1976) 10-item measure. Participants were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed with statements made about the candidate's employability (1 = completely disagree, 2 = strongly disagree, 3 = disagree, 4 = neither disagree or agree, 5 = agree, 6 = strongly agree, 7 = completely agree). A sample item is "the candidate has the abilities to do the job."

Warmth and Competence Measures. Perceptions of warmth (α = .64) and competence (α = .62) were measured with 2 items for each construct. Participants were asked to review items and rate the extent to which they feel each word describes the job candidate (1 = not at all, 2 = a little, 3 = a moderate amount, 4 = a lot, 5 = extremely). The two descriptors for warmth were

"warm" and "friendly" and the two descriptors for competence were "competent" and "capable" (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002).

Covariate Measures. In addition to my proposed mediators, I measured four control variables to include in the analyses that have previously been linked to perceptions and behaviours towards individuals with disabilities (Dalgin & Bellini, 2008; Tomas, Ahmed, & Lindsay, 2022). These variables include concealability, exposure to people with disabilities, previous disclosures from employees, and disability status. Concealability (α = .28) was measured using the same measure from Study 4. Because of the extremely low reliability of concealability in this measure, I did not include this measure as a covariate in the moderated mediation analyses, but included it in the correlation matrix, Table 15.

The second covariate was exposure to people with disabilities (α = .85), which was measured with 10 items from the Contact with Disabled Persons Scale (Yuker & Hurley, 1987). Participants were asked to review statements about their contact with people with disabilities and rate how often they have engaged in each behaviour (1 = never, 2 = once or twice, 3 = a few times, 4 = often, 5 = very often). A sample item includes "worked with a disabled client, student, patient, or co-worker." The third covariate was previous disclosures from employees, a self-developed single-item measure where participants were asked "approximately how many times has a job candidate or employee disclosed a disability to you?" and they responded with a number. The final covariate was disability status, where participants answered the single item "have you ever been diagnosed with a disability? (e.g., a physical, psychological, psychiatric, developmental, learning, or any other type of disorder)?" by clicking a radio button for yes or no.

Results

The means, standard deviations, correlations, and reliabilities for all variables are presented in Table 15. The strategy type variable was dummy coded with simple disclosure as the reference group and the disability type variable was dummy coded with physical disabilities as the reference group. Given my hypothesized relationships were focused on content strategies, a 4 (simple and content strategy types) x 2 (disability type) ANOVA was run as the focal analysis below.

Hiring Intention

In Hypothesis 9, I predicted the relationship between strategy type and hiring intention would be moderated by disability type such that use of content strategies (sharing knowledge/advice, solving disagreements, controlling discussion topic) would increase hiring intention relative to simple disclosure for those with psychological but not physical disabilities. To investigate the effects of disability type and strategy use on hiring recommendations, I conducted a univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA). I found no significant main effect of disability type ($F(1, 352) = 2.51$, $p = .11$) or strategy type ($F(3, 352) = 2.60$, $p = .05$), and no significant interaction between disability type and strategy type ($F(3, 352) = 0.38$, $p = .77$). Therefore, Hypothesis 9 was not supported.

Candidate Employability

In Hypothesis 10, I predicted the relationship between strategy type and ratings of candidate employability would be moderated by disability type such that use of content strategies (sharing knowledge/advice, solving disagreements, controlling discussion topic) would increase ratings of candidate employability relative to simple disclosure for those with psychological but not physical disabilities. To investigate the effects of disability type and strategy use on ratings

of the candidate's employability, I conducted a univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA). As expected, I found a significant main effect of disability type ($F(1, 352) = 15.00$, $p < .001$), with those with physical disabilities ($M = 4.98$) being rated as more employable than candidates with psychological disabilities ($M = 4.69$). I found no significant main effect of strategy type ($F(3, 352) = 0.35$, $p = .79$), and no significant interaction between disability type and strategy type ($F(3, 352) = 0.74$, $p = .53$). Therefore, Hypothesis 10 was not supported.

Exploratory ANOVA Including All Disclosure Strategies

In addition to the focal analysis above, I conducted a secondary, exploratory analysis including all disclosure strategies, as a 7 (simple, content, and delivery strategy types) x 2 (disability type) univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA).

Hiring Intention

The results of the ANOVA demonstrated a significant main effect of disability type ($F(1, 620) = 4.43$, $p = .04$), with those with physical disabilities ($M = 3.96$) being rated as more hirable than candidates with psychological disabilities ($M = 3.82$). I found no significant main effect of strategy type ($F(6, 620) = 1.09$, $p = .15$) and no significant interaction between disability type and strategy type ($F(6, 620) = .59$, $p = .74$).

Candidate Employability

The results of the ANOVA demonstrated a significant main effect of disability type ($F(1, 620) = 11.59$, $p = .001$), with those with physical disabilities ($M = 4.96$) being rated as more employable than candidates with psychological disabilities ($M = 4.77$). I found no significant main effect of strategy type ($F(6, 620) = .43$, $p = .86$). However, there was a significant interaction between disability type and strategy type ($F(6, 620) = 2.61$, $p = .02$). To probe this interaction further, I investigated the simple effect of disability type for each strategy

type. Further, I conducted independent sample t-tests of employability ratings when using simple disclosure compared to each of the 6 disclosure strategies for both physical and psychological disabilities. Figure 1 shows a visual summary of the disability type effects at each level of strategy type.

When using simple disclosure strategies, candidates were rated as having a higher level of employability when disclosing physical disabilities (M = 4.98) compared to psychological disabilities (M = 4.61, $F(1, 90) = 5.71$, p = .02).

For the content strategies of solving disagreements and controlling discussion topic, simple effect tests revealed no significant differences on ratings of a candidate's employability between disability types when using solving disagreements ($F(1, 88) = 2.95$, p = .09 or controlling discussion topic ($F(1, 88) = .78$, p = .38) disclosure strategies. Ratings for candidates with physical disabilities using solving disagreements strategies (M = 5.01) and controlling discussion topic (M = 4.92) strategies were not significantly different than candidates with physical disabilities who were using simple disclosures (M = 4.98, $t_{\text{solving disagreements-simple}}(89) = -.28$, p = .78, $t_{\text{controlling discussion topic-simple}}(89) = .49$, p =.62). Ratings for candidates with psychological disabilities using solving disagreements strategies (M = 4.76) and controlling discussion topic (M = 4.80) strategies were significantly higher than candidates with psychological disabilities who were using simple disclosures (M = 4.61, $t_{\text{solving disagreements-simple}}(89) = -1.2$, p =.04, $t_{\text{controlling discussion topic-simple}}(89) = -1.6$, p = .03). This finding suggests use of solving disagreements and controlling discussion topic strategies increased ratings of employability for those with a psychological disability, but not those with a physical disability.

However, when using sharing knowledge/advice strategies, candidates were rated as having a higher level of employability when disclosing physical disabilities compared to

psychological disabilities ($F(1, 86) = 7.07$, $p = .009$). Ratings for candidates with physical disabilities using sharing knowledge/advice ($M = 5.01$) strategies was not significantly different than candidates with physical disabilities using simple disclosures ($M = 4.98$, $t_{\text{sharing knowledge/advice-simple}}(89) = -.24$, $p = .81$). Ratings for candidates with psychological disabilities using sharing knowledge/advice ($M = 4.61$) strategies was not significantly different than candidates with psychological disabilities using simple disclosures ($M = 4.61$, $t_{\text{sharing knowledge/advice-simple}}(87) = .02$, $p = .98$). This result demonstrates use of sharing knowledge/advice strategies did not increase ratings of employability for those with a psychological or physical disability.

For delivery strategies, simple effect tests revealed candidates using managing silence strategies were rated as having a higher level of employability when disclosing physical disabilities compared to psychological ($F(1, 90) = 3.78$, $p = .04$). Ratings for candidates with physical disabilities using managing silence ($M = 5.07$) strategies was not significantly different than candidates with physical disabilities using simple disclosures ($M = 4.98$, $t_{\text{managing silence-simple}}(90) = -.69$, $p = .49$). Ratings for candidates with psychological disabilities using managing silence ($M = 4.76$) strategies was not significantly different than candidates with psychological disabilities using simple disclosures ($M = 4.61$, $t_{\text{managing silence-simple}}(90) = -.87$, $p = .39$). These findings demonstrate that use of managing silence strategies did not increase ratings of employability for those with a psychological or physical disability.

However, when using considering power dynamics strategies, simple effect tests revealed no significant differences on ratings of a candidate's employability between disability types ($F(1, 90) = 1.22$, $p = .27$). Ratings for candidates with physical disabilities using considering power dynamics ($M = 4.98$) strategies was not significantly different than candidates with physical disabilities using simple disclosures ($M = 4.98$, $t_{\text{considering power dynamics-simple}}(90) = .02$, $p =$

.99). Ratings for candidates with psychological disabilities using considering power dynamics (M = 4.82) strategies was significantly higher than candidates with psychological disabilities who were using only simple disclosures (M = 4.61, $t_{\text{considering power dynamics-simple}}(90) = -2.64$, p = .03). These findings demonstrate the use of the considering power dynamics strategies increased ratings of employability for those with a psychological disability, but not those with a physical disability.

When candidates used focusing on interpersonal politeness strategies, they were rated as having a higher level of employability when disclosing psychological disabilities compared to physical ($F(1, 88) = 5.27$, p = .024). Ratings for candidates with physical disabilities using focusing on interpersonal politeness (M = 4.75) strategies was significantly lower than candidates with physical disabilities using simple disclosures (M = 4.98, $t_{\text{focusing on interpersonal politeness-simple}}(89) = 1.96$, p = .04). Ratings for candidates with psychological disabilities using focusing on interpersonal politeness (M = 5.04) strategies was significantly greater than candidates with psychological disabilities who were using simple disclosures (M = 4.61, $t_{\text{focusing on interpersonal politeness-simple}}(89) = -2.66$, p = .009). Overall, these findings demonstrate the use of focusing on interpersonal politeness strategies increased ratings of employability for those with a psychological disability and decreased ratings of employability for those with a physical disability.

Study 5 Discussion

The goal of Study 5 was to provide experimental evidence for the effects of using particular disability disclosure strategies in a hiring context. In my focal analyses, I did not find support for my prediction that the relationship between strategy type and hiring outcomes would be moderated by disability type. However, in my exploratory analyses, I did find support that

the content strategies of solving disagreements and controlling discussion topic increased ratings of employability for those with psychological disabilities, but not with physical disabilities. Furthermore, sharing knowledge/advice strategies did not increase ratings of employability for those with physical or psychological disabilities. For delivery strategies, considering power dynamics strategies increased ratings of employability for those with psychological disabilities not physical disabilities, managing silence strategies did not increase ratings of employability for those with psychological or physical disabilities. Finally, focusing on interpersonal politeness strategies increased ratings of employability for those with psychological disabilities while reducing ratings of employability for those with physical disabilities.

It is important to explicitly note that the significant interaction found between disability type and strategy type was only found in my exploratory analyses when including both content and delivery strategies and was likely fueled by the unpredicted effect of focusing on interpersonal politeness strategies. Therefore, although it was interesting to examine the simple effect of disability type at each level of strategy type in an exploratory way, these findings should be interpreted with caution as this interaction was not found when only considering the effects of content strategies alone. Further attempts to replicate these findings should be made before they are used to guide individuals with disabilities on which strategy to employ based on their disability type. However, my exploratory analyses begin to provide researchers with experimental evidence for the effects of choice of disability disclosure strategy and builds on the limitations of Study 4. The primary limitations of Study 5 involve the experimental manipulation, as discussed next.

All hiring managers reviewed descriptions of the participants' behaviours, instead of directly viewing the participants behaviours through a video or simulated interaction. This

lowers the ecological validity of the manipulation, as hiring managers would likely interact with individuals who disclose within a job search context and could have a discussion with the job candidate. This may have also contributed to the limited relationships found between strategy use and competence perceptions, seen in the Study 5 correlation matrix, Table 15. Future work could explore alternative experimental manipulations such as video observations or mock interviews to determine if this is the case.

Any single study of this kind entails many other limitations at both the conceptual and operational levels. Conceptually, for example, is the physical-psychological variation a key distinction when selection and impacts of disclosure strategies are of concern? Operationally, one question is whether the physical variant would yield different findings for a job in which a physical disability would require an accommodation. Further, disability type and concealability were confounded in the current study, as a worker with a leg injury would likely show more noticeable manifestations of their disability in the workplace compared to depression. Future work could investigate various levels of concealability for both physical and psychological disabilities to begin to decouple the effects of visibility and disability type on hiring outcomes. Finally, this study did not include a manipulation check to confirm the effectiveness of the focal manipulation of strategy type. As such, I cannot comment on the effectiveness of the manipulation used and cannot rule out other confounding variables that may be driving the effects of strategy type on ratings of candidate employability. Future research should employ a manipulation check to confirm participants perceive the focal independent variable differently between experimental conditions, as intended by the experimental manipulation.

Thus, the main contribution of this particular study within the program of research for this dissertation is to illustrate how future researchers can build on the rest of the program's

findings to undertake experimental examination of effects of particular disclosure strategies. Experimental studies of this kind commonly examine several independent variables or operationalizations around a single theme, such as this study's theme of determinants of outcomes from choice of disability disclosure strategy.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The goals of the current work were threefold: 1) describe the strategies used by individuals with disabilities to disclose at work, 2) apply Communication Accommodation Theory in developing and validating a new, extended scale for measuring a wider range of disclosure behaviours at work, and 3) experimentally demonstrate the effectiveness of using the strategies I found.

Towards the first goal, Study 1 qualitatively explored strategies workers with disabilities used in job search or workplace settings. These findings demonstrated that supervisors/managers were the most common disclosure target in both workplaces and job search contexts, and one-third of disclosures in the workplace sample were towards peers/colleagues. Further, workplace disclosure was more common than job search disclosure and six strategies individuals use to disclose their disabilities were identified. These strategies fit broadly under two categories: strategies used to shape the *content* of the messages sent during a disclosure and strategies used to shape the *delivery* of disclosure messages. Content strategies include sharing knowledge/advice (sharing disability-relevant advice and insights with a disclosee), solving disagreements (shutting down disagreements with the disclosure target), and controlling discussion topic (guiding the conversation away from or towards certain controlling discussion topics during a disclosure). Delivery strategies include focusing on interpersonal politeness (behaviours used to maintain the relationship with the disclosee), considering power dynamics (behaviours used to address power dynamics), and managing silence (attempts to initiate conversation or end silences).

Towards my second goal, qualitative strategies found in Study 1 were used for item generation, and items from empirical studies employing Communication Accommodation

Theory were added to each of these six categories on an *a priori* basis. This allowed me to apply Communication Accommodation Theory in a new context, towards understanding how various communication behaviours may be used during a disclosure. In Studies 2 and 3, the initial set of items were reduced, and I demonstrated evidence for my scale's factor structure across multiple samples. Study 4 provided evidence of discriminant, convergent, criterion-related, and incremental predictive validity for my scale

Towards the third goal, in Study 5, I experimentally manipulated strategy type and disability type in a hiring experiment. Hiring managers rated their willingness to hire and their perceptions of employability for individuals with disabilities who disclosed using one strategy. findings demonstrated that, as compared with hiring managers' responses to job candidates with psychological disabilities, responses to candidates with physical disabilities were more favourable when rating candidate employability. While my focal analyses in Study 5 did not support the predicted interaction between disability type and strategy type for either hiring outcome, in my exploratory analyses, I found an interaction between strategy type and disability type on ratings of candidate employability—such that use of solving disagreements, controlling discussion topic, and considering power dynamics strategies were particularly effective for those with psychological disabilities, but not physical disabilities. Interestingly, use of focusing on interpersonal politeness strategies were extremely effective for those with psychological disabilities and showed a detrimental effect on ratings of employability for those with physical disabilities. These findings have broad implications for researchers and practitioners alike, as discussed in further detail below.

How are disclosure strategies combined and used?

The qualitative study that began this program of research asked participants to describe a single strategy they have used during an instance of disability disclosure. Further, in the experimental study, I investigated the effects of using each strategy independently. Although the strength of these methods allowed me to catalog and interpret effects of each strategy independently—it is realistic to assume individuals with disabilities may use multiple strategies within a single disclosure. This raises the question: how would combinations of strategies impact the effectiveness of strategy use? Previous researchers have demonstrated disclosure behaviours are likely to co-occur based on the reason for disclosure. In other words, factors related to making a disclosure decision affect a *host* of behaviours demonstrated during the disclosure. As an example, an individual who holds primarily approach-focused goals during their disclosure (i.e., disclosing towards the pursuit of positive outcomes) may be more sensitive to a range of positive cues from the disclosure target, experience positive feelings of hopefulness and intimacy during a disclosure, and thus engage in a wide range of positive focusing on interpersonal politeness behaviours as they disclose (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010). Given the range of low to moderate intercorrelations between strategy types found in the current work, it is likely that strategies, while conceptually distinct, tend to be used in tandem during a disclosure. Future research should explore how these strategies are combined by individuals with disabilities and how these combinations may affect evaluations from the disclosure target.

In addition, the use of disclosure strategies is likely to vary both inter- and intra-individually over time—and the current work focuses primarily on between-person differences in strategy use. My findings indicate age and global self-esteem are associated with strategy use, and conceptual models of disability disclosure highlight many additional individual difference

factors that could be explored in future work on strategy use (such as risk-taking propensity, self-monitoring skills, developmental stage; Clair J. A, Beatty J. E, & Maclean T. L, 2005). Beyond this, my work could further be extended by investigating within-person factors that affect disclosure behaviours and change within-person over time and contexts (i.e., strength of disability identity in a given context, self-identification of impairment, anticipated stigma that others may or may not apply to the discloser; Santuzzi & Waltz, 2016). Disability identity could be a particularly interesting future avenue of research—as previous work on this controlling discussion topic has explored how discrimination from others at work may cause an individual to engage in identity-switching (de-emphasizing the disability identity over time) or identity redefinition (re-shaping stereotypical information about the disability over time; Shih, Young, & Bucher, 2013). Longitudinal work on this topic could provide a developmental perspective on the fluctuations in disability identity and may be particularly useful as a guide for individuals with disabilities as they reflect on disclosure and strategy use throughout their work experiences.

What is the relationship between Disability Disclosure and Identity Management Strategies?

One of the primary motivations for beginning this program of research was to build on and distinguish disability disclosure strategies from established identity management strategies. Identity management strategies focused on behaviours used across instances of disclosure and were originally developed to understand behaviours common across the management of various stigmatized identities. These strategies focused on altering the content of one's disclosure messages to shape stereotypes invoked and responses to disclosures (Lynch & Rodell, 2018). The current work extends these findings to study both content *and* delivery strategies used during

disability disclosures. To do this, I applied Giles' (2016) Communication Accommodation Theory in this new context to further understand inter-ability communication behaviours.

In Study 4, I examined correlations between use of disclosure strategies and identity management strategies. In this study, I found the general pattern of delivery strategies showing weak or null relationships with identity management strategies, and content strategies demonstrating moderate relationships with identity management strategies. The unique exception to this pattern was use of focusing on interpersonal politeness strategies, which was expected to show weak relationships with identity management strategies but demonstrated moderate negative relationships with claiming and integration identity management strategies. These findings demonstrate that content strategies found in the current research relate to the use of identity management strategies, but the delivery strategies investigated are a unique contribution of this research.

Communication Accommodation Theory allows for a nuanced understanding of inter-ability communication—highlighting how the salience of an ability-related identity may influence communication behaviours when disclosing to a target (Giles, 2016). This is especially relevant in the current research because in Study 1, where I qualitatively gathered disclosure strategies, almost one-quarter of the sample had multiple disabilities—even if they were disclosing only one disability. This suggests that an individual with multiple disabilities may be making decisions about which disabilities to disclose, may be disclosing one disability and concealing others, or using different disclosure strategies based on the disability being disclosed with the target. Researchers have also shown individuals engage in identity-switching quite rapidly—which could have many interesting implications for those disclosing multiple identities (Zina, Lavric, Levine, & Koschate, 2022). Future research should investigate the process by

which these decisions are made, highlighting what factors an individual with multiple disabilities may consider when disclosing certain identities while simultaneously limiting the information they share about another stigmatized identity.

Covid-19 and Disability Disclosure

Worker data from Studies 3 and 4 were collected during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. Consequently, I suspected many employees recruited in this study may have disclosed in a virtual environment, making some of the disclosure behaviours in my measure more difficult to use—especially the delivery strategies. In Study 4, I included a measure asking participants to indicate whether they disclosed in-person or online, towards potentially examining the relationship between disclosure context (online vs. in-person) and use of content and delivery strategies. However, in Study 4, 96% of participants indicated they disclosed in-person, so I did not explore these relationships further due to the limited variance in disclosure context in the sample. Future work could explore the relationship between virtual and in-person disclosures and strategy use.

A second by-product of more employees working from home is reduced interactions with their co-workers and peers (Hamouche, 2021). As such, employees in the sample may have had less opportunities to build trust, intimacy, and feel safe enough to disclose their disabilities with their co-workers. The reduced number of interactions could have limited the number of disclosures that happened between co-workers "in-the-moment" and increased the number of pre-meditated disclosures in the Study 4 sample. Previous researchers have shown that most participants with disabilities plan and practice how they will disclose in advance, so I did not expect the lack of interaction with co-workers to greatly affect disclosure strategy use (Tomas, Ahmed, & Lindsay, 2022).

Thirdly, the focus of this research has been on concealable disabilities—disabilities that individuals have a *choice* to disclose in a workplace context. However, with a shift to a virtual environment due to the pandemic—previously non-concealable disabilities may now appear more concealable. This is especially concerning considering the pervasive negative effects associated with ongoing concealment of a disability with co-workers (Newheiser & Tiemersma, 2017). As such, future research should explore experiences of individuals with disabilities in online environments from the perspective of the discloser, to build a more nuanced view of how disclosure interacts with a virtual working environment.

Additional Limitations and Future Directions

There are many extensions possible for this work that build upon the strengths of the current studies while addressing their limitations. To begin, my initial qualitative study where I gathered disclosure strategies was conducted with an undergraduate sample that skewed heavily female. Given previous work has outlined communication differences between males and females (Joshi, Wakslak, Appel, & Huang, 2020) it is possible there are additional strategies used more commonly by males that were not found in this initial study. An additional limitation is the likely range restriction in this undergraduate sample in terms of disability type and severity. My sample only had three participants with developmental disabilities, and it is less likely those with severe or unmanaged disabilities would be part of an undergraduate sample. However, the exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analyses, and nomological network studies were conducted in less skewed samples. Future work could examine sex differences in communication strategies used during disability disclosure and additional strategies used by workers with other disability types and severities.

Secondly, Studies 1-4 asked participants to recall an instance of disability disclosure after it occurred. Depending on how long ago the disclosure occurred, some participants may have had trouble remembering the behaviours they engaged in during their disclosure, or it is possible they misremembered details about their behaviours based on what happened at that workplace (or with that disclosure target) after the disclosure. Future studies could explore additional methodological approaches to measure disclosure behaviours closer in time to the instance of disclosure. For example, diary studies may allow participants to record disclosure behaviours shortly after a disclosure (Ohly, Sonnentag, Niessen, & Zapf, 2010).

Thirdly, in Study 5, I measured both warmth and competence as covariates of strategy use. The relationships between strategy use and perceptions of competence and warmth were non-significant for most strategies, as a significant correlation was only found between the focusing on interpersonal politeness strategy and perceptions of warmth. Future research could explore additional affective responses as covariates to strategy use, such as the responses hypothesized in the Stereotype Content Model—pity and contempt (Cuddy, Glick, & Beninger, 2011). Considering the alarming rate at which mental health-related disabilities continue to rise among employees (Statistics Canada, 2022) and the salient stereotype of incompetence for those with psychological disabilities compared to physical disabilities, future work could meaningfully compare mechanisms across a range of psychological and physical disabilities.

Fourthly, throughout my studies, I reported participants' age and gender as my primary demographic variables of interest. Although these variables are important to consider, other demographic variables such as race and socioeconomic status may influence how an individual experiences disability and subsequently navigates disclosure. For example, research on intersectionality emphasizes how race and disability may interact within-person to create unique

identities, especially if individuals are oppressed and marginalized due to their multiple identities (Frederick & Shifrer, 2019). Further, individuals from lower socioeconomic backgrounds may have more difficulty accessing accommodations and navigating the disclosure process (Waterfield & Whelan, 2017). These unique identities could influence approaches to disability disclosure that were not considered in the current work. Future research should consider additional demographics and identities beyond age and gender to capture the influence of these complex and unique identities, or to confirm participant samples are diverse across multiple demographic variables.

Finally, at the outset of this work, one of my goals was to help inform strategy use among individuals with disabilities interested in disclosing in the workplace. An important future avenue of research is to examine how these strategies are learned by employees with disabilities. Some researchers suggest individuals learn disclosure strategies through trial and error, which shapes their expected outcomes of using strategies over time (Ragins, 2008). However, there may be additional social learning processes that could be important to learning disclosure strategies. Future work could explore how social networks, including workplace affinity groups, may play a role in how disclosure strategies are learned—to understand where and when questions about evidence-based disclosure strategies are raised by employees.

Practical Implications of the Current Work

There are several practical implications of my work for employees, workers who are joining a new organization, and given the undergraduate population in which data from Study 1, 2, and 3 was gathered—co-operative education students who alternate academic and work terms. To make explicit recommendations on which strategies should be used in specific contexts,

further experimental research will need to be conducted. However, the current work provides a basis for disclosure-related reflection that could be useful for several groups of employees.

For employees with disabilities, the research described in this dissertation offers a range of strategies they may use to disclose their disabilities. Reviewing these strategies may offer a useful point of reflection on how past disclosures have been managed and strategies that may be employed in the future. Further, when workers join a new organization, they may review strategies as they consider disclosures and requests for accommodations in a novel environment. Organizations may also benefit from providing information on disabilities, accommodations, and disclosures as a part of their onboarding programs—towards educating all employees on how they may request accommodations or disclose their disabilities and normalizing discussing disability in the workplace. Finally, students with disabilities involved in a co-operative education program may benefit from reviewing the range of strategies found in the current research as they navigate early-career disclosures. Employers who participate in these co-operative education programs could also benefit from reviewing types of disclosures and their effects, towards creating a workplace where disclosure and accommodations are possible.

CONCLUSION

The goal of the present work was to develop a deeper understanding of disability disclosure: behaviours associated with strategy use, links to various outcomes, and experimental evidence of target reactions to disclosures. This work drew on the literature on identity management along with Communication Accommodation Theory to build a story of how strategies are used and subsequently perceived. Through five studies, I developed a scale for assessing the extent to which six strategies were used within a single disclosure, validated the factor structure of the scale, and demonstrated the effects of using strategies on willingness to hire and ratings of employability. This work provides a unique perspective on disability disclosure, signalling the importance of both the message sent during disclosure, and the delivery of that message. It is my hope that this work will continue to spark interest, discussion, and research on the various intersections between disability and work—including but not limited to disclosure.

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Appendix

Table 1. *Disability Type Descriptive Statistics, Study 1*

Disability Type	Sample A		Sample B	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Physical	12	27.27	17	16.67
Mental-Health Related	14	31.82	44	43.14
Developmental	1	2.27	2	1.96
Learning & Memory	6	13.64	14	13.73
Multiple Categories of Disabilities	10	22.73	23	22.55
Did not disclose disability type	1	2.27	2	1.96

Note. Sample A, $N = 44$. Sample B, $N = 102$.

Table 2. *Disclosure Target Descriptive Statistics, Study 1*

Disclosure Target	Sample A (Job Search)		Sample B (Workplace)	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Human Resources Professional	6	13.64	4	3.92
Supervisor/manager	37	84.09	57	55.88
Peer/colleague	0	0.00	35	34.31
Did not specify target	1	2.27	6	5.88

Note. Sample A, $N = 44$. Sample B, $N = 102$.

Table 3. *Disclosure Strategies Definitions, Coding, and Examples, Study 1*

Category	Participant Example Response	Initial Coded Category	Consolidated Coded Category	Consolidated Category Definition
Content: strategies use to shape the content of messages sent to a disclosure target	"talking about how [my disability] can make me a better worker"	Strengths of disability	Sharing knowledge/advice	Behaviours used during disclosure to share new information or insights with disclosure target.
	"explaining how [my disability] limits my functioning and how I overcome those limitations"	Overcoming limitations		
	"using [my diagnosis] to explain the points in which I was failing to meet the job requirements"	Not meeting job requirements	Solving disagreements	Behaviours used during disclosure to solve disagreements with the disclosure target.
	"I've brought up [my disability] in response to barriers to my work"	Barriers to work		
	"go into the discussion with a plan for what I want to say…prepare a list of talking points and rehearse"	Scripting topics	Controlling discussion topic	Behaviours used during disclosure to guide a conversation with the disclosure target towards/away from certain topics.
	"only sharing things about my diagnosis that I am comfortable with"	Limiting diagnosis information		

Category	Participant Example Response	Initial Coded Category	Consolidated Coded Category	Consolidated Category Definition
Delivery: strategies used to shape the delivery of disclosure messages	"talk about it very openly, allow [the disclosure target] to ask any questions they may have"	Focusing on target questions	Focusing on interpersonal politeness	Behaviours used during disclosure to ensure effective communication and maintain the relationship with the disclosure target.
	"focusing on building trust with [the disclosure target] by being honest"	Focusing on relationship with target		
	"made sure I knew my legal rights"	Knowing legal rights	Considering power dynamics	Behaviours used during disclosure to address power dynamics with the disclosure target.
	"finding an opportunity to talk to someone less superior who could not affect my job at all"	Considering job role of target		
	"ask questions in certain ways to get my answers"	Probing questions	Managing silence	Behaviours used during disclosure to initiate conversation or end silences with the disclosure target.
	"be light and make jokes to make [the disclosure] less awkward"	Using humour during disclosure		

Table 4. *Disclosure Strategies Descriptive Statistics, Study 1*

Category	Disclosure Strategy	Sample A (Job Search)		Sample B (Workplace)	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Content	Sharing knowledge/advice	27	61.36	30	29.41
	Solving disagreements	1	2.27	7	6.86
	Controlling discussion topic	3	6.82	11	10.78
Delivery	Focusing on interpersonal politeness	8	18.18	40	39.22
	Considering power dynamics	1	2.27	4	3.92
	Managing silence	0	0.00	1	0.98
	No strategies mentioned	4	9.09	9	8.82

Note. Sample A, $N = 44$. Sample B, $N = 102$.

Table 5. *Eigenvalues of Actual and Random Data for Exploratory Factor Analysis, Study 2*

Factor Number	Eigenvalues for actual data	95th percentile Eigenvalues for 100 sets of random data
1	19.34	2.09
2	9.29	1.99
3	4.09	1.92
4	2.54	1.87
5	1.93	1.81
6	1.87	1.77
7	1.64	1.73
8	1.56	1.69
9	1.44	1.65
10	1.35	1.63

Table 6. *Loadings of Retained Items from Exploratory Factor Analysis, Study 2*

	Factor					
Item	P	I	KA	T	S	D
Did not act superior	**0.99**	0.15	0.22	-0.03	0.21	-0.05
Did not pry for privileged information	**0.79**	0.14	0.20	0.00	0.19	0.03
Did not treat them poorly	0.16	**0.89**	0.25	-0.36	0.20	-0.34
Did not try to boss them around	0.22	**0.86**	0.17	-0.30	0.19	-0.34
Did not speak as if I was better than them	0.16	**0.83**	0.20	-0.39	0.16	-0.43
Listened to what they had to say	0.15	**0.82**	0.25	-0.42	0.21	-0.42
Did not try to manipulate them	0.17	**0.82**	0.11	-0.35	0.10	-0.40
Did not say things that offended them	0.13	**0.77**	0.24	-0.36	0.08	-0.33
Did not act resentful towards them	0.12	**0.76**	0.21	-0.29	0.15	-0.26
Did not order them to do things	0.13	**0.64**	0.01	-0.39	0.03	-0.33
Had kind words for my conversation partner	0.25	0.26	**0.83**	-0.13	0.39	0.01
Was considerate	0.29	0.30	**0.81**	-0.12	0.40	-0.04
Was helpful	0.17	0.09	**0.70**	-0.02	0.36	0.10
Was supportive	0.18	0.21	**0.68**	-0.13	0.37	-0.03
Gave useful advice	0.04	0.01	**0.58**	0.00	0.28	0.20
Avoided certain ways of talking	-0.02	-0.33	-0.02	**0.84**	-0.09	0.45
Didn't always say what I thought	-0.03	-0.31	-0.07	**0.80**	-0.14	0.51
Had to bite my tongue	-0.09	-0.45	-0.20	**0.65**	-0.07	0.38
Avoided certain topics	-0.04	-0.35	-0.09	**0.63**	-0.11	0.48
Sought information	0.17	0.11	0.36	-0.02	**0.81**	0.00
Initiated conversation	0.20	0.17	0.32	-0.19	**0.76**	-0.09
Found common topics	0.19	0.30	0.56	-0.20	**0.69**	-0.14
Was humorous	0.20	0.16	0.50	-0.11	**0.59**	0.05

	Factor					
Item	P	I	KA	T	S	D
Held back my opinions	-0.03	-0.37	0.04	0.54	-0.04	**0.85**
Remained silent if my opinions conflicted with theirs	0.04	-0.29	0.11	0.40	-0.04	**0.80**
Restrained myself from arguing with them	-0.08	-0.38	0.04	0.48	-0.07	**0.74**
Made allowances for them	-0.05	-0.22	0.01	0.27	0.03	**0.40**

Note. N = 393. Boldface indicates the highest loading for each item. P = considering power dynamics, I = focusing on interpersonal politeness, KA = sharing knowledge/advice, T = controlling discussion topic, S = managing silence, D = solving disagreements.

Table 7. *Interfactor Correlations and Reliabilities from Exploratory Factor Analysis, Study 2*

Factor	P	I	KA	T	S	D
P	**.88**					
I	-0.19	**.93**				
KA	0.22	-0.22	**.84**			
T	-0.04	0.43	-0.10	**.82**		
S	0.21	-0.16	0.47	-0.11	**.81**	
D	-0.04	0.42	0.08	0.55	-0.03	**.79**

Note. N = 393. Alpha reliabilities are presented on the diagonal in boldface. P = considering power dynamics, I = focusing on interpersonal politeness, KA = sharing knowledge/advice, T = controlling discussion topic, S = managing silence, D = solving disagreements.

Table 8. *Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results, Hypothesized and Alternative Models, Study 2*

Model	Chi-square	*df*	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
A: A priori six-factor model	790.71**	309	.92	.91	.06	.06
B: One-factor model	3419.39**	299	.48	.43	.16	.16
C: Five-factor model (sharing knowledge/advice + managing silence)	937.63**	314	.90	.89	.07	.07
D: Five-factor model (controlling discussion topic + solving disagreements)	1058.32**	314	.88	.87	.08	.07
E: Five-factor model (focusing on interpersonal politeness + controlling discussion topic)	1382.95**	314	.83	.81	.09	.09
F: Five-factor model (solving disagreements + focusing on interpersonal politeness)	1369.59**	314	.83	.81	.09	.09

Note. $N = 408$. ** $p < .01$. CFI = comparative fit index, TLI = Tucker-Lewis index, RMSEA = root mean squared error of approximation, SRMR = standardized root mean residual.

Table 9. *Interfactor Correlations and Reliabilities from Confirmatory Factor Analysis, Study 3*

Factor	P	I	KA	T	S	D
P	**.73**					
I	-.09	**.93**				
KA	.17	-.17	**.87**			
T	-.02	.52	-.13	**.86**		
S	.20	-.25	.73	-.23	**.79**	
D	.01	.42	.02	.67	-.07	**.82**

Note. N = 408. Alpha reliabilities are presented on the diagonal in boldface. P = considering power dynamics, I = focusing on interpersonal politeness, KA = sharing knowledge/advice, T = controlling discussion topic, S = managing silence, D = solving disagreements.

Table 10. *Descriptive statistics, Correlations, and Reliabilities for all variables in Nomological Network, Study 4*

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. KnA	3.25	0.94	**.85**								
2. Disag	2.81	1.09	.42**	**.84**							
3. Topic	2.73	1.09	.33**	.68**	**.87**						
4. Inter	3.79	1.17	-.20**	-.62**	-.59**	**.95**					
5. Power	2.69	1.32	-.42**	-.27**	-.28**	-.01	**.87**				
6. Silence	3.14	0.95	.59**	.50**	.38**	-.33**	-.41**	**.80**			
7. SE	3.34	0.75	.16*	-.30**	-.36**	.40**	-.06	.10	**.83**		
8. Conc	4.22	1.33	.00	-.34**	-.37**	.64**	-.12	-.04	.38**	**.74**	
9. Age	28.95	9.74	-.12	-.15*	-.27**	.24**	.09	-.11	.22**	.06	--
10. Down	2.63	0.98	.11	.12	.25**	-.11	-.12	.20**	-.04	-.11	-.01
11. Assim	3.48	0.98	.15*	.07	.12	-.15*	.07	.05	.08	-.11	-.04
12. Decat	3.72	0.99	.25**	.15*	.18**	-.11	-.16*	.20**	.14*	-.07	-.03
13. Claim	1.85	1.32	.01	.21**	.21**	-.54**	.22**	.06	-.24**	-.46**	-.15*
14. Conf	3.68	0.93	.24**	.08	.07	-.19**	.01	.17*	.11	-.07	-.05
15. Integ	3.34	1.13	.13	.28**	.20**	-.41**	.09	.12	-.13	-.28**	-.13
16. Accom	4.03	0.82	.12	.18**	.17*	-.24**	-.08	.17*	.01	-.23**	-.13
17. EmEx	4.04	1.62	-.02	.24**	.33**	-.27**	-.08	.12	-.42**	-.21**	-.12
18. OCBI	4.94	1.24	.32**	.16*	.19**	-.17*	-.17*	.31**	.15*	-.03	-.09
19. OCBO	4.66	1.35	.28**	.17*	.21**	-.28**	-.07	.23**	.10	-.19**	-.13
20. TaskP	4.10	0.64	.26**	-.09	-.08	.40**	-.27**	.13	.37**	.40**	.08

Note. N = 217. Alpha reliabilities are presented on the diagonal in boldface.
*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
KnA = sharing knowledge/advice, disag = solving disagreements, Topic = controlling discussion topic, Inter = focusing on interpersonal politeness, Power = considering power dynamics, Silence = managing silence, SE = self-esteem, conc = concealability, down = downplaying, assim = assimilating, decat = decategorization, claim = claiming, conf = confirming, integ = integration, accom = receiving accommodations, EmEx = emotional exhaustion, TaskP = task performance.

Variable	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1. KnA											
2. Disag											
3. Topic											
4. Inter											
5. Power											
6. Silence											
7. SE											
8. Conc											
9. Age											
10. Down	**.85**										
11. Assim	-.04	**.92**									
12. Decat	.07	.38**	**.92**								
13. Claim	.26**	.02	.06	**.93**							
14. Conf	.04	.34**	.41**	.29**	**.90**						
15. Integ	.03	.26**	.14*	.38**	.59**	**.92**					
16. Accom	.19**	.08	.04	.31**	.10	.09	--				
17. EmEx	.26**	-.04	.01	.15*	-.10	-.01	-.13	**.95**			
18. OCBI	.37**	.08	.19**	.37**	.19**	.11	.39**	.06	**.92**		
19. OCBO	.26**	.16*	.11	.47**	.21**	.16*	.44**	-.02	.82**	**.93**	
20. TaskP	.24**	.08	.23**	-.24**	.13	-.09	.12	-.15*	.38**	.25**	**.76**

Note. N = 217. Alpha reliabilities are presented on the diagonal in boldface.
*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
KnA = sharing knowledge/advice, disag = solving disagreements, Topic = controlling discussion topic, Inter = focusing on interpersonal politeness, Power = considering power dynamics, Silence = managing silence, SE = self-esteem, conc = concealability, down = downplaying, assim = assimilating, decat = decategorization, claim = claiming, conf = confirming, integ = integration, accom = receiving accommodations, EmEx = emotional exhaustion, TaskP = task performance.

Table 11. *Summary of Findings, Study 4, Antecedents*

Antecedent	Predicted relationship with disclosure strategies	Correlations Found			Hypothesis Supported?
		Positive	**Negative**	**Null**	
Self-esteem	*Positive:* Sharing knowledge/advice Focusing on interpersonal politeness Managing silence *Negative:* Solving disagreements Controlling discussion topic Considering power dynamics	Sharing knowledge/advice Focusing on interpersonal politeness	Solving disagreements Controlling discussion topic	Managing silence Considering power dynamics	Partially supported
Concealability	*Positive:* Focusing on interpersonal politeness Considering power dynamics Managing silence	Focusing on interpersonal politeness		Considering power dynamics Managing silence	Partially supported
Age	*Negative:* Sharing knowledge/advice Solving disagreements Controlling discussion topic		Solving disagreements Controlling discussion topic	Sharing knowledge/advice	Partially supported

Table 12. *Summary of Findings, Study 4, Identity Management and Disclosure Strategies*

Identity Management and Disclosure Strategies	Predicted relationship with disclosure strategies	Moderate Correlations Found	Null/weak Correlations Found	Hypothesis Supported?
Downplaying Assimilating Confirming Integrating Decategorization Claiming	*Null/weak:* Focusing on interpersonal politeness Considering power dynamics Managing silence *Moderate:* Sharing knowledge/advice Solving disagreements Controlling discussion topic	*Focusing on interpersonal politeness:* Claiming Integration *Sharing knowledge/advice:* Decategorization Confirming *Solving disagreements:* Claiming Integrating *Controlling discussion topic:* Downplaying Claiming, Integrating	*Focusing on interpersonal politeness:* Downplaying Decategorization Assimilation Confirming *Considering power dynamics:* Downplaying Assimilating Confirming Integrating Decategorization Claiming *Managing silence:* Assimilating Claiming Integrating Downplaying, Decategorization Confirming *Sharing knowledge/advice:* Assimilation *Solving disagreements:* Decategorization *Controlling discussion topic:* Decategorization	Partially supported

Table 13. *Summary of Findings, Study 4, Outcomes*

		Correlations Found			
Outcome	**Predicted relationship with disclosure strategies**	**Positive**	**Negative**	**Null**	**Hypothesis Supported?**
Receiving accommodations	*Positive*: Knowledge advice Solving disagreements Controlling discussion topic Focusing on interpersonal politeness Considering power dynamics Managing silence	Solving disagreements Managing silence Focusing on interpersonal politeness		Sharing knowledge/advice Considering power dynamics	Partially supported
Emotional exhaustion	*Positive:* Sharing knowledge/advice			Sharing knowledge/advice	Not supported
OCBI/OCBO	*Positive:* Sharing knowledge/advice Solving disagreements Controlling discussion topic Receiving accommodations	Sharing knowledge/advice Solving disagreements Controlling discussion topic Receiving accommodations			Fully supported
	Positive Indirect effect through receiving accommodations: Sharing knowledge/advice Solving disagreements Controlling discussion topic	*Positive Indirect Effect:* Solving disagreements Controlling discussion topic			Partially supported

Task Performance	*Positive:* Knowledge advice Solving disagreements Controlling discussion topic Focusing on interpersonal politeness Considering power dynamics Managing silence	Sharing knowledge/advice Focusing on interpersonal politeness	Considering power dynamics	Solving disagreements Controlling discussion topic	Partially supported

Table 14. *Multiple Regression of Developed Measure on Outcomes When Controlling for Measures of Identity Management, Study 4*

Outcome variable	**Receiving Accommodations**		**Emotional Exhaustion**		**OCBI**		**OCBO**		**Task Performance**	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
Constant	4.38** (.53)	-3.56 (2.08)	4.56** (1.0)	-4.58 (4.05)	3.98** (.79)	-17.11** (2.83)	4.84** (.87)	-16.15** (3.12)	2.26** (.37)	-2.44 (1.39)
Knowledge/advice	.01 (.07)	-.01 (.07)	-.33* (.14)	-.27 (.14)	.29** (.11)	.25* (.10)	.36** (.12)	.31* (.11)	.16** (.05)	.12* (.05)
Disagreement	.00 (.08)	.05 (.08)	.03 (.14)	.06 (.15)	-.18 (.11)	-.09 (.10)	-.23 (.12)	-.12 (.11)	.01 (.05)	.04 (.05)
Topic	.00 (.07)	-.02 (.07)	.38** (.13)	.29* (.14)	.09 (.10)	.03 (.10)	.08 (.11)	.05 (.10)	.05 (.05)	-.01 (.05)
Interpersonal	-.14* (.06)	-.02 (.07)	-.16 (.11)	-.21 (.14)	-.12 (.09)	.14 (.10)	-.33** (.10)	.01 (.11)	.28** (.04)	.28** (.05)
Power	-.02 (.05)	-.06 (.05)	-.07 (.09)	-.05 (.09)	-.02 (.07)	-.09 (.07)	.02 (.08)	-.09 (.07)	-.05 (.03)	-.05 (.03)
Silence	.07 (.08)	.07 (.08)	.09 (.15)	.04 (.15)	.25* (.12)	.21* (10)	.09 (.13)	.09 (.12)	.05 (.05)	.02 (.05)
R^2 (Model 1)	.07		.14		.15		.15		.30	
R^2 (Model 2)		.15		.19		.35		.34		.40

Outcome variable	Receiving Accommodations		Emotional Exhaustion		OCBI		OCBO		Task Performance	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
Downplaying		.07 (.06)		.32** (.12)		.27** (.08)		.14 (.09)		.17** (.04)
Assimilating		.10 (.06)		-.03 (.12)		.08 (.08)		.23* (.09)		.04 (.04)
Decategorizing		-.06 (.07)		.01 (.13)		.09 (.09)		-.08 (.10)		.09* (.04)
Claiming		.19** (.06)		.03 (.11)		.41** (.07)		.53** (.08)		-.03 (.04)
Confirming		.04 (.08)		-.15 (.16)		-.02 (.12)		.04 (.13)		.07 (.06)
Integrating		-.07 (.07)		-.10 (.13)		-.04 (.09)		-.10 (.10)		.01 (.04)

Note: N = 217. *Coefficient is significant at the .05 level. ** Coefficient is significant at the .01 level. Model 1 = disclosure measure without identity management controls, Model 2 = disclosure measure with identity management controls. Values are unstandardized regression coefficients, standard error estimates in parentheses. Knowledge/advice = sharing knowledge/advice, Disagreement = solving disagreements, Topic = controlling discussion topic, Interpersonal = focusing on interpersonal politeness, Power = considering power dynamics, Silence = managing silence.

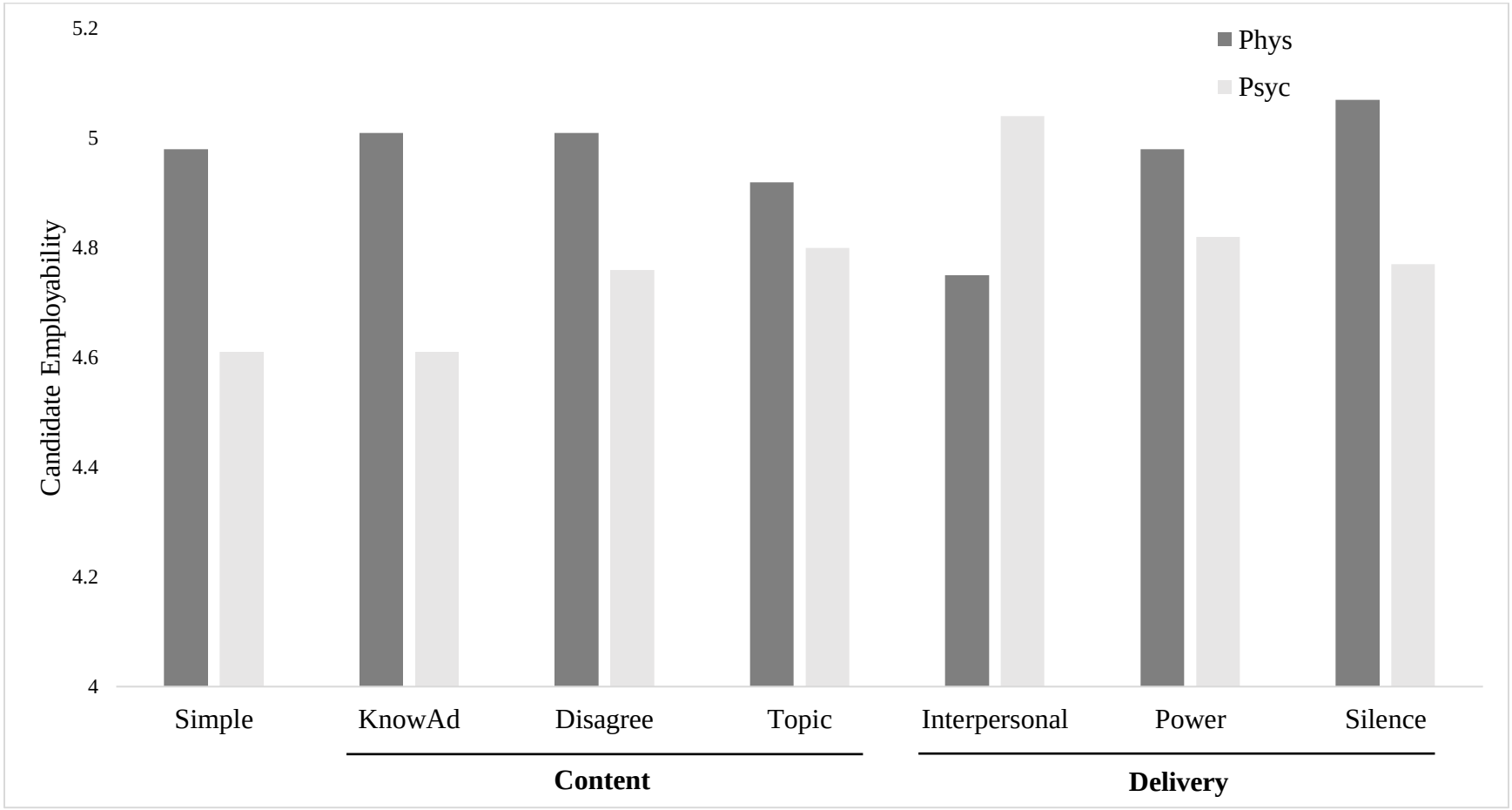
Table 15. *Descriptive statistics, Correlations, and Reliabilities for all Variables, Study 5*

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1. KnA	.14	.35	--														
2. Disag	.14	.35	-.16**	--													
3. Topic	.14	.35	-.16**	-.17**	--												
4. Inter	.14	.35	-.16**	-.17**	-.16**	--											
5. Power	.14	.35	-.17**	-.17**	-.17**	-.17**	--										
6. Silence	.14	.35	-.17**	-.17**	-.17**	-.17**	-.17**	--									
7. Psyc	.50	.50	-.01	.00	.00	.01	.00	.01	--								
8. Warmth	3.91	.79	-.03	-.03	-.04	.08*	-.01	.02	-.05	**.64**							
9. Compet	3.79	.81	-.01	-.02	.01	-.02	.01	.00	-.02	.48**	**.62**						
10. Conc	3.85	1.00	.05	-.03	-.01	-.03	.06	-.01	.08*	-.02	-.04	**.28**					
11. Expos	3.48	.79	-.02	.02	-.02	.00	.08*	-.04	-.09*	.36**	.32**	-.11**	**.85**				
12. Prev Dis	19.39	15.68	-.04	.02	-.04	.07	.00	-.04	-.04	.12**	.03	-.13**	.31**	--			
13. Dis Stat	0.37	.48	-.02	-.01	-.01	.07	.03	-.01	.00	.10*	-.02	-.03	.20**	.40**	--		

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
14. Hire	3.89	.83	.05	.03	-.11**	.04	.02	.01	-.09*	.48**	.50**	-.01	.37**	.24**	-.12**	--	
15. Employ	4.87	.70	-.03	.01	-.01	.02	.02	.03	-.14**	.52**	.55**	-.02	.31**	.09*	-.08	.62**	**.72**

Note. N = 630. Alpha reliabilities are presented on the diagonal in boldface.
*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Strategy type (variables 1-6) are dummy coded with simple disclosure as the reference group, disability type (variable 7) is dummy coded with physical disabilities as the reference group. KnA = sharing knowledge/advice, disag = solving disagreements, Topic = controlling discussion topic, Inter = focusing on interpersonal politeness, Power = considering power dynamics, Silence = managing silence, psyc = psychological disability, compet = comptence, conc = concealability, expos = exposure to people with disabilities, prev dis = previous managerial experiences with disclosure, dis stat = disability status where 0= no, 1 = yes, hire = intention to hire, employ = rating of candidate employability.

Figure 1. *Simple effect of disability type for each strategy type, Study 5 Exploratory Analysis*



Note. N = 630.
Phys = Physical Disability (leg injury). Psyc = Psychological disability (depression diagnosis). KnowAd = sharing knowledge/advice, Disagree = solving disagreements, Topic = controlling discussion topic, Interpersonal = focusing on interpersonal politeness, Power = considering power dynamics, Silence = managing silence.

Appendix A

Disability Disclosure Behaviours, Scale Instructions

Please take a moment to imagine a time when you **disclosed personal information about your disability during job search or in the workplace.** If you disclosed during job search, please think of an experience where you were successful in getting the job. If several experiences come to mind, choose the most recent one.

With this disability disclosure experience in mind, please rate the extent to which you engaged in the following behaviours during this conversation about your disability:

During this conversation, I...

Sharing knowledge/advice items

1. Had kind words for my conversation partner+
2. Was considerate+
3. Was helpful*
4. Was supportive*
5. Gave useful advice*

Solving disagreements items

1. Held back my opinions*
2. Remained silent if my opinions conflicted with theirs*
3. Restrained myself from arguing with them*
4. Made allowances for them+

Controlling discussion topic items

1. Avoided certain ways of talking*
2. Didn't always say what I thought*
3. Had to bite my tongue+
4. Avoided certain topics*

Focusing on interpersonal politeness items

1. Did not treat them poorly+
2. Did not try to boss them around+
3. Did not speak as if I was better than them+
4. Listened to what they had to say*
5. Did not try to manipulate them+
6. Did not say things that offended them*
7. Did not act resentful towards them*
8. Did not order them to do things+

Considering power dynamics items

1. Did not act superior+

2. Did not pry for privileged information*

Managing silence items

1. Sought information+
2. Initiated conversation*
3. Found common topics+
4. Was humorous*

Note: Items marked with an asterisk (*) were developed from Study 1.
Items marked with a plus sign (+) were taken as-is from existing studies on Communication Accommodation Theory, with instructions changed to reflect use of behaviours in a disability disclosure context.

Appendix B

Job Description, Study 5

Role: Data Scientist at GainX

About The Company: GainX is hiring! At GainX, the aim is to create a deep understanding of how large, complex, and dynamic organizations work. They bring Anthropology, Social Network Analysis (SNA), Natural Language Processing (NLP), unsupervised machine learning (ML) and supervised machine learning together to surface critical recommendations to senior business leaders. They are creating a new product market and have a vision to tackle the problems that have been historically too difficult or impossible. They are looking to add another data scientist to their team.

About the Role:

- Work closely with the Head of Research and Data to research solutions to business and customer problems
- Produce hypotheses, and create functional prototypes that will be used to validate them
- Work with data science team to bring cutting-edge research together from many disciplines
- Conduct research and provide advice to other informatics professionals regarding the selection application and implementation of database management tools
- Research and document data requirements, data collection and administration policy, and data access rules
- Conduct research and provide advice to other information systems professionals regarding the collection, availability, and suitability of data

Skills and Experience Required:

- Undergraduate or master's degree in a field that involves heavy use of data science
- Significant experience in unsupervised learning, particularly involving graph data
- Experience with SNA or Graph Theory metrics (e.g., centrality) and what insights they provide to networks of people
- Experience with interpretable/explainable supervised learning
- Proficiency with Python, SQL, R, and/or other programming/quantitative software
- Effective interpersonal skills and ability to be a strong member of a team
- Excellent oral and written communication with a strong client focus
- Attention to detail and ability to meet tight deadlines

Job Type: Full-time permanent; **Salary:** From $90k USD/year

Benefits:

- Remote work available with flexible schedule
- Casual dress
- Dental care benefits

- Disability insurance
- Extended health care benefits
- Vision care benefits
- Life insurance benefits
- Paid time off
- Retirement plan benefits
- Work from home

Appendix C

Anonymized Résumé, Study 5

First name, Last Name

Data Scientist
Waterloo, Ontario, Canada
firstname_lastname@gmail.com, 416-222-0000
LinkedIn Profile

Summary of Qualifications

- 4+ years of experience in the field of data science, through Data Science degree at the *University of Waterloo*
- Strong proficiency with programming languages including SQL, R, & Python gained through years of cleaning, analyzing, interpreting, and visualizing data
- Exceptional teamwork and interpersonal skills through data science projects
- Excellent oral and written communication skills with a strong client focus demonstrated through completing work for *Disability Services*

Relevant Experience

Data Scientist Sept. 2020 – Present
Fitness Switch, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada

- Uses modern approaches to data analysis to research solutions to business and customer problems related to the fitness industry
- Conducts analyses and provides advice to the data science team on the collection, availability, and suitability of customer data

Data Analyst, Student Services (Course Project) Sept. 2019 – 2020
University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada

- Employed data analysis techniques using R and Python to analyze, synthesize, and create visualizations from annual student engagement data
- Collaborated with a team of three data analysts to present recommendations to leadership team based on key findings from student engagement data

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Education

Bachelor of Mathematics in Data Science (GPA: 92%) Sept. 2016 - 2020
University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada

- **Relevant Courses:** Computational Statistics and Data Analysis, Statistical Learning (Classification), Data Visualization, Statistical Learning (Function Estimation)

Activities and Interests

- **Social Issues and Activism:** passionate about organizing, facilitating, and participating in events related to youth mental health and social equity initiatives
- **Fitness:** weightlifter and gym enthusiast, passion for healthy living in daily life
- **Sustainable Living:** buys local food, has maintained a vegan lifestyle for 12+ years

Appendix D

Experimental Manipulations, Study 5

Below is an excerpt from a discussion with the candidate during our interview with them.

Interviewer question: what other information would you like to share with us?

Candidate response: "I have a permanent [*depression diagnosis/leg injury]* so I [*access a therapist regularly to help me cope/use an assistive device to help me walk*]. No other information to add, I am excited to learn more about GainX and hear back from you."

[Experimental manipulations below, each participant shown 1 of these statements, simple disclosure group not shown any of these statements]:

Sharing knowledge/advice: As they shared this information, you noticed they had kind words for you and were considerate. They were helpful and supportive as they spoke to you.

Solving disagreements: As they shared this information, you noticed they held back their opinions and remained silent if their opinion conflicted with yours. They restrained themselves from arguing with you and made allowances for you.

Controlling discussion topic: As they shared this information, you noticed they avoided certain ways of talking and didn't always say what they thought. They had to bite their tongue and avoided certain topics.

Focusing on interpersonal politeness: As they shared this information, you noticed they were careful not to treat you poorly and tried not to boss you around. They didn't speak as if they were better than you and they listened to what you had to say.

Considering power dynamics: As they shared this information, you noticed they did not act superior and did not pry for privileged information from you.

Managing silence: As they shared this information, you noticed they sought information from you and initiated conversation between you two. They found common topics and were humorous.