



Self-Advocacy Toolkit

CAREER RESOURCES
FOR LEARNERS WITH
DISABILITIES
Humber Advising &
Career Services

HOW TO WRITE A DISABILITY POSITIVE STATEMENT

Creating disability-positive statements is an important part of self-advocacy. These statements help you affirm your identity, challenge stereotypes, and express the **value** your lived experience brings to academic, workplace, and community settings. Having a disability shapes your perspective, your strengths, and the way you contribute—and reflecting on this openly can build confidence and empowerment.

Use the formula, examples, and template below to organize your ideas and communicate the powerful ways your disability has influenced your growth.

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Step 1. Follow this FORMULA.

Each part helps you reflect on how your lived experience contributes to your strengths and identity:

- **Living with a disability has taught me** [Personal Insight]
What life lessons, values, or worldview has your disability given you?
- **Through this experience, I've developed** [Strengths Developed]
What personal strengths, skills, or qualities grew from that experience?
- **This has shaped the way I** [Impact on Collaboration/Leadership]
How do these strengths influence the way you work with others, learn, create, or lead?
- **As a result, I'm able to** [Positive Impact / Tangible Result]
What meaningful outcomes or contributions do you make because of this?

Tip: To anchor the structure, highlight the four repeated stems:

Living with a disability has taught me / Through this experience, I've developed / This has shaped the way I / As a result, I'm able to

Step 2. Review this EXAMPLE of the FORMULA.

- **Living with a disability has taught me** to navigate life with creativity, resilience, and adaptability.
- **Through this experience, I've developed** strong problem-solving skills and a deep sense of empathy.
- **This has shaped the way I** lead and collaborate—by centering intention, flexibility, and inclusion.
- **As a result, I'm able to** strengthen teams, design accessible solutions, and support inclusive project spaces.

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Step 3.

Use this **TEMPLATE** to create your disability-positive statement.

1. Living with a disability has taught me _____.
2. Through this experience, I've developed _____.
3. This has shaped the way I _____.
4. As a result, I'm able to _____.

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Step 4. Review the examples provided for ideas.

Four examples have been provided for:

- **Current Students**
- **Summer Jobs**
- **WIL Placements**
- **First Jobs**

These examples include a **wide variety of occupations and skills**, so you can explore and use the phrases that best reflect your experience.

Step 5.

Write a disability-positive statement based on your lived experience and future goals.

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EXAMPLES

Each example follows the same pattern:

Living with a disability has taught me → Through this experience, I've developed → This has shaped the way I → As a result, I'm able to

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CURRENT STUDENTS

Engineering

Living with a disability has taught me to value creative problem-solving and persistence.

Through this experience, I've developed strong analytical thinking and adaptability.

This has shaped the way I collaborate by promoting inclusive design and diverse perspectives.

As a result, I'm able to contribute innovative solutions and support accessibility in team projects.

Health Sciences

Living with a disability has taught me deep empathy and the importance of patient-centered care.

Through this experience, I've developed strong communication skills and emotional intelligence.

This has shaped the way I lead by fostering compassionate teamwork and advocacy.

As a result, I'm able to support inclusive health practices and empower diverse patients.

Business

Living with a disability has taught me resilience and strategic thinking.

Through this experience, I've developed leadership skills and strong resourcefulness.

This has shaped the way I collaborate by promoting equitable and inclusive decision-making.

As a result, I'm able to strengthen team performance and support accessible business planning.

Arts & Humanities

Living with a disability has taught me to see the world through nuance and depth.

Through this experience, I've developed strong storytelling abilities and cultural awareness.

This has shaped the way I engage with others by encouraging empathy and critical dialogue.

As a result, I'm able to create meaningful work and amplify underrepresented voices.

SUMMER JOBS

Retail Associate

Living with a disability has taught me to stay calm and focused in fast-paced environments.

Through this experience, I've developed strong customer service skills and patience.

This has shaped the way I communicate with empathy and clarity.

As a result, I'm able to support positive customer experiences and build an inclusive retail environment.

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Camp Counselor

Living with a disability has taught me the importance of inclusion and adaptability.

Through this experience, I've developed creative problem-solving and leadership skills.

This has shaped the way I support youth by modeling patience and understanding.

As a result, I'm able to create welcoming spaces and lead inclusive activities.

Office Assistant

Living with a disability has taught me how to advocate for accessible workflows.

Through this experience, I've developed strong organization and time-management skills.

This has shaped the way I improve communication and streamline processes.

As a result, I'm able to strengthen team productivity and support smooth operations.

Food Service Worker

Living with a disability has taught me to stay resilient under pressure.

Through this experience, I've developed multi-tasking and collaboration skills.

This has shaped the way I support teammates during busy periods.

As a result, I'm able to maintain high service standards and contribute to a positive kitchen environment.

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WIL PLACEMENTS

Human Resources Placement

Living with a disability has taught me how to advocate for fairness and inclusion.

Through this experience, I've developed strong interpersonal and conflict-resolution skills.

This has shaped the way I support teams through equitable communication.

As a result, I'm able to foster inclusive work cultures and strengthen onboarding processes.

Early Childhood Education Placement

Living with a disability has taught me patience and adaptability in learning spaces.

Through this experience, I've developed strong observation and communication skills.

This has shaped the way I build relationships with children through empathy.

As a result, I'm able to create inclusive activities and support welcoming classroom environments.

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Accounting Placement

Living with a disability has taught me precision and perseverance.

Through this experience, I've developed strong analytical and organizational skills.

This has shaped the way I promote accuracy and accountability in group work.

As a result, I'm able to support reliable financial processes and improve data accuracy.

Hospitality Placement

Living with a disability has taught me to stay calm and professional under pressure.

Through this experience, I've developed strong customer service and multi-tasking skills.

This has shaped the way I engage with guests through thoughtful and inclusive service.

As a result, I'm able to contribute to positive guest experiences and smooth operations.

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FIRST JOB

Administrative Assistant

Living with a disability has taught me adaptability in fast-paced environments.

Through this experience, I've developed strong time-management and organizational skills.

This has shaped the way I support teams by anticipating needs.

As a result, I'm able to maintain efficient workflows and contribute to a responsive workplace.

Junior Software Developer

Living with a disability has taught me creativity and patience when solving technical challenges.

Through this experience, I've developed strong coding and troubleshooting skills.

This has shaped the way I collaborate by prioritizing inclusive and accessible design.

As a result, I'm able to build features that improve usability for diverse users.

Marketing Coordinator

Living with a disability has taught me the importance of inclusive storytelling.

Through this experience, I've developed strong communication and campaign-planning skills.

This has shaped the way I center diverse voices in my work.

As a result, I'm able to create meaningful content that resonates widely.

Customer Service Representative

Living with a disability has taught me how to listen with empathy and respond with care.

Through this experience, I've developed strong communication and conflict-resolution skills.

This has shaped the way I support customers by remaining calm and solution-focused.

As a result, I'm able to turn challenging interactions into positive experiences.

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