

## People who stutter make good employees.



People who stutter are eager to excel at their work and to develop their skills and potential. They appreciate employers who give them opportunities to do so, rather than judging them on the basis of fluency. Some of the benefits brought to the workplace by people who stutter may include:

- Patience and perseverance, gained from dealing with their stuttering.
- Greater sensitivity to the needs of other people.
- Good listening skills.
- Appreciation of the value of preparation for presentations and meetings.
- Better understanding of communication issues in the workplace.
- Enhancement of your organization's image as one that accepts people on merit without regard to their disabilities.

## What is stammering?

Stammering is a speech disorder characterized by involuntary repetitions, blocks and hesitations. Stuttering generally involves forceful closures of the mouth or larynx (voice box), repetitions or prolongations of sounds and syllables, or hesitations or delays in making voiced sounds.

Though the exact cause of stammering is not known till now, recent research is pointing to genetic factors. Stammering is basically neurological and physiological – not psychological - in nature. In all other respects, persons who stutter are perfectly normal.

## What is TISA ?

TISA is a **self help association** of Indian people who stammer (IPWS).

Our purpose is to collect and disseminate relevant, correct and unbiased information for people who stammer and their families, friends and society in general. It is promoting a self help group movement, where PWS learn to help each other and themselves in the ancient Indian spirit:

**“This Self is to be achieved through self effort!”**

## For Employers

*If you stammer, you are not alone!*



# THE INDIAN STAMMERING ASSOCIATION

Better attitudes through knowledge !

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Stuttering affects the speech of one out of every 100 adults. Therefore, employers are likely to encounter people who stutter within their workforce or among job applicants. These individuals can make extremely valuable contributions to an employer's business. Unfortunately, their skills and talents are sometimes overlooked or under-utilized because of misconceptions and negative stereotyping about stuttering. For an individual to be judged solely on the basis of fluency is not only unfair to the person who stutters - it can be a real loss to the employer.

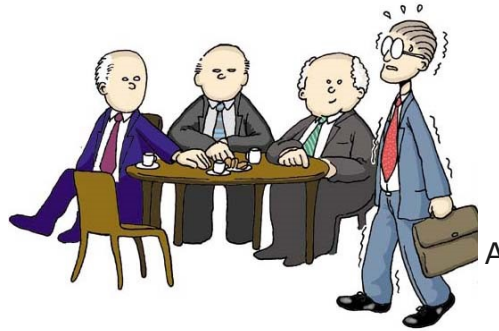
We are trying to promote...  
STUTTERING NEEDN'T HOLD A  
PERSON BACK!

### Common misconceptions.

- **Stuttering is not caused by nervousness or emotional disturbance.** Research shows people who stutter to be as emotionally stable as the general population.
- **Stuttering does not indicate any lack of intelligence or competence.** People who stutter are just as intelligent and competent as non-stutterers.

### Stuttering is variable.

The severity of stuttering varies widely among individuals. It may also vary in the same individual from day to day and depending on the speaking situation. Patterns of stuttering behavior also vary. Some individuals try to avoid stuttering by pausing before words, substituting words, and interjecting phrases such as "you know," "well actually," "um," etc., whenever they anticipate a block. As a result, the person may create the false impression of being hesitant, uncertain, or confused.



**job interview** may be the single most difficult speaking situation a stutterer will ever encounter. Stuttering is likely to be at its worst. Therefore, **the degree of stuttering at the interview should not be used to predict how the person will actually speak on the job.**

### Listening to a person who stutters.

- Listen attentively and wait for the person to finish. Don't try to fill in words or complete the person's sentences.
- Focus on what the person is saying about his or her experience, abilities, and skills.
- Speak normally in a relaxed manner.
- Maintain natural eye contact, even when the person is stuttering.
- Don't equate hesitant speech with uncertainty.

### Reasonable accommodations.

In those cases in which stuttering will actually prevent an employee from performing some speaking tasks, there are ways in which the employer can make a "reasonable accommodation" that would allow the employee to perform the essential functions of the job in question.

For example, a clerk or typist may be expected to take turns answering the phone when the receptionist is at lunch. A reasonable accommodation may be to relieve the person who stutters of this non-essential task, and instead have the person help with another task that doesn't require speaking.