



Personal assistant in disability support

Description

Personal assistants provide support to persons with disability (PWD), helping them to carry out their daily activities, overcome the obstacles and live more independently. They support and encourage PWDs in accordance with their specific needs and abilities. Depending on the type of disability, personal needs and living conditions, the level of support provided by personal assistants and the scope of the activities they carry out are defined. The activities carried out by personal assistants include the provision of support in the maintenance of personal hygiene, feeding, dressing, doing errands, attending the university, staying at the place of work, in shopping, public transportation, in their free time, in the organisation of their daily activities, etc. They mostly do their job indoors, but also outdoors, depending on the activity in which they are providing support to their charge.

To do the job of a personal assistant you do not need any specific qualifications but it is important that personal assistants are focused on the needs of persons with disability and that they respond to those needs in the best way possible. As a personal assistant, you need to be communicative, emphatic, and patient. You also need organisational skills to be able to implement all activities within the deadline that was set.

- | Desirable traits/requirements |
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| • Empathy and focus on the user's needs |
| • Patience and perseverance |
| • Responsibility and reliability |
| • Being organised |
| • Good communication skills and willingness to help |
| • Creativity and openness |
| • Emotional and psychological stability |
| • Flexibility and ability to respond promptly |

- | Positive aspects: |
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| • Personal assistants provide daily support to PWDs; they help them carry out their daily activities, in their development and maintenance of independence – which is the source of satisfaction and fulfilment. The job of a personal assistant is interesting, compassionate, and diverse. |
| Negative aspects: |
| • The job of a personal assistant often requires that you work irregular working hours and during holidays. Working hours can be prolonged and exhausting. The job requires devotion and energy. Working with some charges can be extremely demanding. |

Career path/field of work

To be able to do the job of the personal assistant, you cannot acquire formal education or formal qualifications, but you need to undergo suitable training.

Personal assistants work in direct contact with persons with disability. They are mostly hired by associations or organisation which provide this type of social welfare services.