

do you disclose your mensa membership on your cv?

Recently, Noks Nauta (right) and Caro van Eck (below) sent a questionnaire to members of Mensa The Netherlands to determine whether members included their Mensa membership on their CVs and what advantages and disadvantages they saw in doing (or not doing) so.

There were thirty-nine respondents, 22 men and 17 women, and their ages ranged from 24 to 64 years old.

A total of 16 (41%), nine men and seven women stated that they



always included mention of their membership in CVs; 12 (31% - eight men and four women) stated that sometimes

or conditionally they included it; six (15% - two men and four women) stated that they didn't include their membership; three (8% - two men and one woman) wrote that they had included their membership in the past but wouldn't now, and two respondents had no opinion. Four of the respondents (10%) added that they indirectly included mention of Mensa by using a Mensa e-address or including their LinkedIn profile.

Advantages

The advantages mentioned by seventeen respondents could be summarised as follows:

- it shows you have something to offer when your qualifications are

not sufficient

- being active in a society (especially on the Board) is seen as a positive
- it shows that you like challenges rather than routine work
- it could be the start of an interesting discussion, especially about the different ways gifted people communicate
- it could be advantageous if the reader knows what Mensa is
- it is perceived to be a positive factor when applying for a job in the UK
- giftedness is nothing to be ashamed of
- being open about Mensa adds to increasing awareness of the organisation in the wider community

Disadvantages

The disadvantages mentioned by fifteen respondents could be summarised as follows:

- mentioning membership should only be used if it's directly applied to the job being applied for
- it may intimidate people as Mensans are often thought of as being negative or arrogant
- it may lead to unrealistic expectations
- the reader may not understand what Mensa is
- it is a disadvantage if you cannot explain the benefits of being a member

of Mensa

-once they know, you can never deny it

- it's not helpful if you have no active role in Mensa

Conclusions

Looking at the report, even though 77% thought that mentioning Mensa in CVs



was advantageous, the authors agree that the number of responses is too small for statistical analysis. They found it interesting, however, that within the sample, women more often choose not to include their membership on their CVs (70%) while 81% of the men do. Perhaps women have had more negative experiences, or perhaps women are more self-conscious in this area. They are also not sure if cultural differences have an impact on this issue and would like to garner more information from members worldwide. If this is of interest to you, please contact Noks.Nauta@ihbv.nl

Authors

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