Carleton College

Striving for an Inclusive Workplace & Campus

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AGENDA

✓ Introductions & What do you want to know?
✓ Overview of ADA law
✓ Stereotypes, terminology & etiquette
✓ Self-disclosure: Pros & cons
✓ Essential functions & Reasonable accommodations
✓ Resources
DISABILITY ETIQUETTE

✓ ASSUME NOTHING. If you aren’t sure about offering assistance, always ask the individual with the disability first.

✓ Keep focused on the overall goal of the interaction, not the person’s disability.

✓ Be patient - both with yourself and the individual with the disability.
Never assume the person needs help.
Always talk to the individual, not others accompanying her/him.
Do not shout.
Feel free to use words like “see” and “look”.
When directing, never push the person in front of you.

Do not make a guide dog the focus of conversation.
When a person enters a room, give some clues to open chairs and who is present.
Allow the person to negotiate their surroundings, e.g., finding the door, locating a chair.
**DEAF/HARD OF HEARING**

- Do not exaggerate enunciation.
- Do not shout.
- Keep hands away from your mouth.
- Talk and look directly at the individual, not the sign language interpreter or third person.
- Do not assume they can lip read or read ASL.

- Take turns talking if in a group setting, it’s very difficult to follow more than one conversation.
- Do not pretend to understand if you do not.
- Use facial expressions and gestures to help clarify your message.
- Hearing aids may provide only partial assistance.
MOBILITY ISSUES

✔ Don’t assume a person in a wheelchair needs assistance with opening doors or negotiating ramps.

✔ Do not lean on someone’s wheelchair, it’s part of their personal space.

✔ If traveling with someone with a mobility impairment, go at their pace/speed.

✔ Do not be patronizing by becoming overly familiar.

✔ If talking for any length of time, try to place yourself at their eye level, sitting down or stepping back.

✔ Don’t assume everyone who uses a wheelchair is paralyzed; they may have issues with pain, stamina and/or balance.
LEARNING DISABILITIES

- Be literal in what you communicate. Relying on tonal subtleties can be missed or misinterpreted.

- If the person has reading issues, use a tape recorder or Dictaphone.

- Encourage creativity, provide options and different ways to do things; his/her way may be to your advantage.

- If the person has difficulty with directional information, provide a map or visual clues to assist.

- Try to find out what is the best way the person learns and communicates. Then Follow their lead.

- If the person has writing issues, you may want to use a voice activated computer.
EMOTIONAL/MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

- There are many different types of emotional/mental illnesses with different causes.
- Respect the individual’s privacy about their disability.
- Be empathetic; they may not be comfortable talking about their disability.
- Do not try to provide counseling or therapy.

- With treatment, most mental health issues are manageable.
- When testing, make sure the person understands the questions being asked.
- Because a disability is invisible, often others cannot see the pain, but emotional pain is real.
- There are varying degrees of severity.
ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

✓ Job Tasks that are Fundamental (i.e. basic, necessary, integral) and Not Marginal (i.e. peripheral, incidental, minimal)

✓ Assess:
  – Whether the reason the position exists is to perform the function
  – The consequences of not performing the task
  – Whether a limited number of employees are available among whom performance of job can be distributed
  – If the function is highly specialized
REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

- Provision of auxiliary aids & services
- Part-time or modified work schedule
- Modifications to job site or work site
- Job restructuring
- Job Reassignment
UNDUE HARDSHIP

✓ The size of the business operation
✓ The financial resources of the employer
  – The cost of the accommodation,
  – The cost of the accommodation in relation to the size of the business and its resources,
  – The alteration to the employer’s business or the changes in the delivery of services, and
  – The disruption to other workers
REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS: 7 STEP PROCESS

1. Determine if the employee has a disability that is covered under the ADA.
2. Determine if the employee is a “qualified” individual under the ADA.
3. Determine the disability’s impact or functional limitations as they pertain to the job.
4. Determine (with the employee) what accommodation(s) are needed.
5. Determine if the accommodation creates an undue hardship.
6. Implement the accommodation.
7. Determine if it is effective - Follow Up.