

DISABILITY ETIQUETTE

DISABILITY ETIQUETTE: INTERACTING WITH PEOPLE LIVING WITH DISABILITIES:

It is important to keep in mind that, a person with a disability is still a person they are not their disability. People desire to be independent and treated with respect

Do not assume that when you come across an individual with a disability that they need your help. Invite the individual rather than involuntarily assisting the person.

These two important questions may help you establish if your assistance is needed: **May I help you?** OR **How can I help you?**

- Do not pretend to understand when you do not
- Be patient and listen.
- It is okay to use common expressions
- Do not pity the staff members or students
- Focus on the ability not the disability

The following are examples of the preferred terminology you can use:

YES	NO
People with disabilities, the disability community.	The disabled, the handicapped.
Has a disability, is a person with a disability.	Crippled, suffers from, afflicted with, stricken with, victim of, invalid.
People without disabilities, able-bodied, person who is able to walk, person who can see, etc.	Normal person, healthy, whole.
Person who is blind, person who is deaf or hard of hearing.	The blind, the deaf person.
Person who uses a wheelchair, wheelchair user.	Wheelchair bound, confined or restricted to a wheelchair.
Accessible parking, parking for people with disabilities.	Handicap parking
Persons who cannot speak, has difficulty speaking, uses synthetic speech, is non-vocal, non-verbal.	Dumb, mute.
Person with a speech impairment, who has a speech disability, speech disorder, or communication disability.	Stutterer, tongue-tied.
Person with cerebral palsy.	CP victim, spastic.
Person with a disability, walks with a cane, uses leg braces.	Crippled, lame, deformed.
Person with epilepsy, person with seizure disorder.	Epileptic.
Seizure, epileptic episode or event.	Fit, attack.
People with emotional disorders, mental illness, mental health disability, psychiatric disability.	Crazy, maniac, lunatic, insane, nuts, deranged, psycho, demented.
Person with a developmental disability, person with mental retardation, person with a developmental delay, person with Down syndrome or person who is brain injured, has traumatic brain injury, and is brain damaged, with a closed head injury.	Retard, mentally defective, moron, idiot, slow, imbecile, feeble-minded, Down's person, mongoloid.
Short stature, little person.	Dwarf, midget.
Person with spinal cord injury, man with paraplegia, woman who is paralysed.	Paraplegic, quadriplegic.
Congenital disability, birth anomaly.	Birth defect.
Has had polio, experienced polio.	A post-polio, suffered from polio.
Stay-at-home, hard for the person to get out.	Homebound.
Person with Alzheimer's disease, person who has dementia.	Senile, demented.
Persons with cerebral palsy	Cerebral palsied or spastic

Persons with paraplegia. He/she has quadriplegia	Paraplegic or quadriplegic
Person with Albinism	Albino
Do not rudely make comments like "you do not look disabled" If you want to know more, feel free to ask in a respectful way and you will get the answers you are looking for.	"you do not look disabled"
Expressions should not generate pity or sorrow	"I am sorry you are disabled"

HEARING IMPAIRMENT ETIQUETTE: TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING WITH PEOPLE WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENTS.

Always get their attention - Getting the listener's attention before you start speaking will give them an opportunity to shift their attention and attend to you. Try saying their name, politely touching them on their arm or use a gesture to signal to get their attention. Might also be helpful to ask the person how they want you to get their attention for future purposes.

Maintain eye contact - Make sure that you are face to face with your hearing-impaired listener. This will allow them to attend to what you are saying, to lip-read and read facial expression to help them better understand what you are saying.

Speak naturally and clearly - DO NOT SHOUT. You must speak clearly, at a normal rate and perhaps at a slightly slower pace and make sure you enunciate all your words. Try speak in a slightly louder voice, this may help your listener understand but be careful not to shout as it make it difficult for your listener to lip-read and may distort the sound of your words. Do not be condescending in doing all this.

Avoid excessive background noise Background noise makes listening conditions difficult for those with hearing loss, try to avoid situations where there will be loud noises whenever possible. Turn off the television/radio, move away from noisy areas and if you are in a social environment, try to find a quiet place to sit or a seat in a restaurant that is away from the kitchen or large gatherings.

Feel free to use gestures and visual cues, such as holding up items that you are discussing.

If your listener uses an interpreter - SPEAK TO THE PERSON, NOT THE INTERPRETER. Make sure that you maintain eye contact with your listener and speak to the listener not the interpreter.

Rephrase, enunciate and speak slower - you might find yourself where you are asked to repeat yourself by a hearing-impaired person. Be patient, rephrase and use different words to help the listener understand what you are saying. Make sure you also ask clarification or leading questions throughout the conversation to ensure your message is clear and understood.

Talk into their "good ear" or "good side" - Many people who suffer from hearing loss tend to have one ear that is stronger than the other. Look for cues as to which ear that is, ask them if appropriate, and situate yourself on that side of your listener.

PHYSICAL DISABILITY ETIQUETTE: PEOPLE WHO USE WHEELCHAIRS HAVE VARYING CAPABILITIES AND HERE ARE SOME HELPFUL TIPS TO HELP YOU WHEN HELPING THOSE WITH PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENTS:

REARRANGE furniture to create a clear path for wheelchairs.

Some people that use wheelchairs can walk with aids or for short distances. They use wheelchairs because they help them to conserve energy and to move about with greater efficiency.

Only push or lean on a WHEELCHAIR with permission If your conversation lasts more than a few minutes, consider sitting down, etc. to get yourself on the same eye-level as the person who uses the wheelchair. It will keep both of you from getting a stiff neck!

Do not hang or lean on a person's wheelchair because it is part of that person's personal body space.

It is ok to use terms like "running along" when speaking to a person who uses a wheelchair. The person is likely to express things the same way

It is appropriate to shake hands with a person who has a disability, even if they have limited use of their hands or wear an artificial limb.

Give clear directions, including distance, weather conditions and physical obstacles that may hinder the person's travel

SPEECH IMPAIRMENT ETIQUETTE: BELOW ARE SOME HELPFUL TIPS TO HELP YOU WHEN HELPING THOSE WITH SPEECH IMPAIRMENTS

Be patient listen closely. Do not finish sentences for the person

If you have trouble understanding, do not nod. Just ask him/her to repeat. In most cases, the person will not mind and will appreciate your effort to hear what he/she has to say. If, after trying, you still cannot understand the person, ask him to write it down or to suggest another ways of facilitating communication.

Look for facial, hand, or other responses. Speech is not the only form of communication.

Strive to understand what the individual is saying by focusing on what he or she says rather than how he or she is saying it.

Be aware that you may need to use a variety of communication methods such as writing notes, emailing, or technological options.

A quiet environment makes communication easier.

Speak clearly and distinctly but naturally. Be aware that people might feel like you are "talking down" to them if you speak too slowly.

Keep your manner encouraging rather than correcting

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT ETIQUETTE: BELOW ARE SOME HELPFUL TIPS TO HELP YOU WHEN HELPING THOSE WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

Identify yourself when greeting someone who has vision loss, even if the person knows your voice.

Talk directly to the person. Do not ask questions through another person. Do not speak in a loud voice. Also, do not assume that other senses are different because of vision loss.

Do not assume an individual walking with a cane needs or wants your help. Ask, "May I help you?" or "May I walk with you?" Invite the individual to take your arm, rather than taking his or her arm or pushing in the right direction.

When assisting a person with a visual impairment, allow that person to take your arm. This will enable you to guide, rather than propel or lead the person. Use specific directions, such as "left in 100 feet" or "right in two yards" when directing a person with a visual impairment.

When you are escorting or trying to give directions or warning a visually impaired person about obstacles, avoid using phrases like: 'come here' walk straight" because they may struggle to follow your direction as they cannot see. Rather be the one to take the lead and show him/her how or where to move.

Do not touch the person's cane or guide dog. The cane is part of the individual's personal space. If the person puts the cane down, do not move it. Let him know if it is in the way.

Guide dogs are trained dogs do not be afraid of them. HOWEVER, do not pet, feed, or talk to a guide dog unless the person gives permission. To avoid distracting the dog, as they are working animals

When entering a new building, a walk-through helps an individual understand the building's layout. As you walk together, point out key locations such as safety exits, restrooms, and so forth. Help the individual feel comfortable and safe.

