

Disability Etiquette [MASTER COPY]

Number of questions: 6

Description

Syllabus

(Multi-correct answer): Q1: Defining Disability



Let's start with a basic definition of *disability*. According to the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), what is a disability?

Choices:

- ✓ A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities
- ✓ A person who has a history or record of such an impairment
- ✗ A person who is perceived by others as having such physical or mental impairment
- ✗ A person who is limited in their movements
- ✗ A person with a chronic disease or condition

Explanation:

In 1990, the American with Disabilities Act was signed into law. This law defined a disability as:

“A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment.” The ADA does not specifically name all of the impairments that are covered.

While it may surprise some people to read that the ADA also covers people who are perceived as having an impairment, this is important because part of what the ADA sought to address is the discrimination against people with disabilities. If someone is discriminated against because someone thinks that they have a disability, whether they do or not, they are still discriminated against.

The purpose of the ADA which is detailed on the ADA website is:

“The ADA is one of America's most comprehensive pieces of civil rights legislation that prohibits discrimination and guarantees that people with disabilities have the same opportunities as everyone else to participate in the mainstream of American life -- to enjoy employment opportunities, to purchase goods and services, and to participate in State and local government programs and services. Modeled after the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin – and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 -- the ADA is an "equal opportunity" law for people with disabilities.”

An update to the law in 1998 added further details and updates to the law. In 2008, the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) was signed into law to counteract the Supreme Court's narrow interpretation of disability and provide broad protection from discrimination.

The law and other information can be found at: ada.gov

Terms:

- Disability:* While in common use, some people dislike the use of this term. Some people prefer to focus on ability versus disability.
- Non-disabled: A person who does not have a disability.
- Able-bodied:* A person who does not have a disability, but some people in the disability community see this as implying that they lack “able bodies”.
- Creatively Able: This is a new term coming into use which captures the creativity that people with disabilities use to accomplish their daily tasks.
- Differently-Abled: A term that was used but which is now being replaced with “person with a disability” by many, but may still be used by some people.

Question Topics: definition

(Multi-correct answer): Q2: General Disability Etiquette



When you are working with someone with a disability, what should you keep in mind?

Choices:

- ✓ Don't ask personal questions, such as "What is it like to not be able to see/hear?"
- ✓ Do ask, "Can do I do anything that would make it better for us to work together/be part of a team?"
- ✓ Do use "people first language," such as "A person who uses a wheelchair."
- ✗ Don't make changes in how you conduct work, such as where you schedule meetings, so as not to single them out.

Explanation:

While you may be curious as to how someone came to have their disability or how it impacts the way they live their life, it is an invasion of their privacy to ask personal questions. Be respectful and remember, just because you can see a person's disability or you know that they have one doesn't mean you should comment on it. It is just one aspect of who they are as a person. If someone wants to share private details with you, they will but it is not ok to ask.

The terms we use are very important. What is most important is to listen to how other people describe themselves and to then use those same terms. Handicapped is a term that is no longer used, however, signs in parking lots and restrooms may still use this term. Other terms that are no longer used are crippled, disfigured, invalid, victim, wheelchair-bound or confined to a wheelchair. "People first language" – meaning that the person is mentioned first before their disability – has replaced many of these terms. So, instead of being "wheelchair-bound", someone is a "person who uses a wheelchair". Instead of being a "victim of dyslexia", they are a "person who has dyslexia".

What is appropriate to ask is, "How can we work better together?" or "Is there anything I need to keep in mind to make it possible for you to be successful at work?" or "Is there anything you need to help you be successful in your job?" Examples of what someone with a disability may need to include:

1. Large print copies of agendas or other meeting materials – or sending materials electronically ahead of the meeting time.
2. Thinking about where meetings are being held and ensuring the location is accessible or easy to get to for people with limited mobility. An example of the latter may be a location that is accessible by public transportation for people who do not drive.
3. Creating opportunities for people to give input on discussions other than in large group meetings such as one on one meetings or through written communication.

Many disabilities are not visible and can be the result of an illness, an accident or a change in a person's life about which you have no knowledge. For example, people may age into a disability while at work; such as changes in mobility, hearing or vision. To assist people with a disability to be successful at work, employers make reasonable accommodations. Whatever accommodation is made is a private topic, and is not one that is discussed with others. If an accommodation is made for a colleague, a manager will explain how it could impact workflow, but otherwise, it is not appropriate to ask why a change was made.

Humorous Three Minute Video on Disability Etiquette:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GvIaDEFIXq8>

Term

Person with a Disability: People first language recognizes the person before the disability. For example: a person is not "confined to a wheelchair," they are a "person who uses a wheelchair".

Question Topics: General Etiquette

(Multi-correct answer): Q3: Blind or Low Vision



Martin has just transferred to your department. He uses a white cane to navigate and a large monitor to read the print on his computer screen. He has joined your team as the technical support for a new project that you will be working on.

What should you do to help Martin feel welcome?

Choices:

- ✗ Email the team to tell them that a new team member has a visual impairment so that they can be helpful to him.
- ✓ Stop by his desk before the first team meeting to see if he would like assistance finding the meeting room.
- ✗ Speak more loudly in the meeting so that he can hear you clearly.
- ✓ Ask if he would like a tour or assistance in navigating his new office.

Explanation:

While a willingness to be helpful is appreciated, one thing to keep in mind is that Martin has low vision; he is not deaf or hard of hearing. Speaking loudly isn't necessary, but this is something that happens often to people who are blind or have low vision. And, while sending an email to your colleagues might be well-intentioned, Martin should be given the opportunity to interact with his colleagues without any pre-conceived notions or biases in his way. If he does ask for your assistance, follow his instructions precisely and assist him as requested.

As Martin is a new employee in a new space, stopping by his office on the way to a meeting to offer to show him where the meeting room is a nice way to make him or any new team member feel welcome. If he agrees he would like your assistance in finding the conference room, don't grab onto him, but instead ask him if he would like to take your arm or elbow so you can guide him. He will let you know what works best for him. Some people prefer an elbow, while others may prefer to place their hand on your shoulder.

When entering the meeting room, give a brief description such as "we are entering the room at the end of a conference table that seats about 12 people and there are windows to our left and another door to our right."

Do not be afraid to use the words "see" or "looking" in the meeting; this is not an offensive use of language. Also, it is helpful for people to identify themselves when they enter or leave a meeting, and each time they speak so that Martin knows who is speaking.

Terms:

- **Blind:** A person with no vision.
- **Limited Vision/Low Vision:** A person who has some vision but even with corrective lenses does not have 20/20 vision.
- **Visually Impaired:*** May or may not be preferred or offensive. Some people see this as it describes their condition as a deficiency.

*Term that can be offensive to some people

Question Topics: Blind or Low Vision

(Multi-correct answer): Q4: Deaf or Hard of Hearing



Josephina has been working for your organization for more than 30 years; she loves her work and she does a stellar job. You have noticed in the past year or so that she has been having a harder time hearing people. While you used to be able to call out to her across the cafeteria to get her attention, now you need to be close to her so that she can hear you. You have noticed this morning that she started wearing a hearing aide.

As her supervisor, what do you think you should do?

Choices:

- ✓ During your next scheduled one-on-one supervision meeting with her, ask if there is anything you can do to help her to continue to be successful in her job.
- ✗ Not mention anything to her but look for ways to help her such as having someone else take over answering the customer service questions that come in over the phone.
- ✓ At large meetings, require meeting participants to use a microphone when addressing the group as a whole.
- ✗ Make sure that you speak more loudly when you talk to Josephina at her desk.

Explanation:

When someone either ages into a disability like a hearing loss or has a temporary or permanent disability due to some other reason, it is important to realize that the person may be hesitant to bring this up because they don't know what the reaction will be from managers and fellow employees. Josephina, for example, might be afraid that her hearing loss could mean that she loses the job that she loves or that she will be passed over for interesting projects.

Making a sudden change without explanation can also raise concerns from the employee about their employment and job responsibilities. As a manager, you could tell her that she is an important part of the team and that you value her work and then ask if there is anything you can do to help her to continue to be successful in her job. It is important not to make assumptions about what Josephina wants to do, what she can or cannot do or what she may need to be successful.

You can be an ally for someone who is hard of hearing by ensuring people use a microphone in large meetings or for arranging for a Sign Language interpreter or CART reporter for someone who is deaf or hard of hearing and has requested one. Doing this routinely for certain circumstances without the employee having to ask each time makes it more comfortable for the person who is deaf or hard of hearing and sends them a message of inclusivity. You can also provide summary follow-up notes after meetings to make sure that everything important was heard and communicated. Like many accommodations, these types of practices may help other employees as well.

Lastly, speaking loud to Josephina at her desk will draw attention to the fact that she is experiencing some hearing loss and will just make everyone feel uncomfortable. Some things that may be helpful to facilitate communication include speaking in a normal tone and at a normal pace, taking care to enunciate words clearly while facing the person and keeping your hands away from your mouth while you are speaking. It is also important to keep in mind that some people's hearing is only impacted when they are in large groups or spaces that may have background noise, but they are fine in a one on one situation. It could be helpful to minimize background noise by moving into a nearby space that is quieter and more conducive to communicating.

Terms:

- **American Sign Language (ASL):** the primary language used by many North Americans who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing.
- **Deaf:** Uppercase Deaf refers to a group of deaf people who share a language – American Sign Language – and a culture while lowercase deaf refers to the audiological condition of not hearing; they are NOT interchangeable terms.
- **Hard of Hearing:** can denote a person with a mild to moderate hearing loss, or a deaf person who doesn't have or want a cultural affiliation with the Deaf community.
- **Hearing Loss:** generally reframed within the Deaf community as “Deaf gain”, e.g., better spatial visualization and problem-solving; ability to communicate across great distance or through glass.
- **Hearing Impaired:*** describes people with any level of hearing loss; this may be offensive to some people within the Deaf community.

*Term that can be offensive to some people

Question Topics: Deaf or Hard of Hearing

(Multi-correct answer): Q5: Colleagues with Limited Mobilit



The ability to move freely and without pain can be limiting in many ways. This includes diseases, such as arthritis, or degeneration of joints, such as at the knees or hips. Limited mobility may be obvious from the way a person moves, or not be obvious at all. Someone may look like they are moving freely, but

they may be hiding pain, as they don't want to be treated differently than others.

If you are working with a colleague who has limited mobility, what should you keep in mind?

Choices:

- ✗ It is considered polite to help a person who uses a wheelchair by pushing their chair.
- ✓ Do not move or touch a person's assistive devices without their permission.
- ✓ Consider mobility when choosing where to have meetings: offer to go to them instead of them coming to you.
- ✗ Tell them that they are inspirational to you.

Explanation:

A person's assistive devices such as crutches, canes, walkers and wheelchairs are their own personal property and should not be touched or moved without their explicit permission. While you might be thinking you are helping, you may in fact be doing the opposite, so seek the person's guidance about what they may want or need. Keep in mind that people with limited mobility live full and productive lives and they might not want or need any assistance at all and if they do, they will ask you for it.

When being an ally for people with limited mobility, suggestions such as, "I am happy to come to your office for our meeting" or suggesting a conference room that is close to an elevator for the next team meeting without making a public declaration about why is also supportive.

While telling someone that they are an inspiration may be intended as a compliment, it may not feel that way to the person on the receiving end. People with disabilities live ordinary lives, with adaptations. They work, pay taxes, get married, have kids, start companies, get divorced and go on vacation just like everyone else. Thus, being told that their life is "inspirational" can come across as condescending. If you want to pay them a compliment, comment on something that they have done at work that was stellar. Or, if they have recently jumped out of a plane and done a coordinated pattern with 20 other skydivers while also playing the saxophone, that may count as inspirational, but it could also be called "rad, awesome, outstanding, incredible and unbelievable" too!

Terms:

- **Amputee:** Describes a person who has had a limb amputated. Not everyone who is missing a limb has had it amputated so this is to be used only in the appropriate context and with correct knowledge.
- **People who use a wheelchair/scooter:** There are many reasons that individuals use a mobility device; some wheelchair/scooter users may have some mobility without their assistive device and some may not.
- **Persons of Short Stature:** a person with short stature, or restricted growth, does not grow as tall as other people of the same gender, age and ethnicity.
 - **Dwarfism:** a medical or genetic condition that usually results in an adult height of 4'10" or shorter, among both men and women
 - **Dwarf:** a term used in medical situations but not in everyday language
 - **Little people/little person:** commonly used term in the United States to refer to a person with the medical condition called "dwarfism." Some people do not like this term and may find it offensive.
 - **Midget/Vertically Challenged**:** Never used, considered derogatory.

*Terms that can be offensive to some people

Question Topics: Limited Mobility

(Multi-correct answer): Q6: People Who Are Not Neurotypical



When working with neurodiverse colleagues, what are some things to keep in mind?

Choices:

- ✓ Thinking in ways that aren't typical can bring innovations.
- ✗ Having neurodiverse team members requires a lot of work.

- ✓ Simple accommodations may help neurodiverse team members focus more easily at work.
- ✗ People need to treat neurodiverse colleagues with “kid gloves.”

Explanation:

Because they see the world in a different way, people who are neurodiverse may have innovative and creative solutions and ideas if people are willing to let go of “the way things have always been done” and be willing to explore new approaches. This diversity of thought and background can be a great help to teams.

Some neurodiverse people may prefer to be in a work situation that is less noisy or brightly lit and simple accommodations such as working in a quieter work environment or wearing headphones may be helpful.

Neurodiversity as a Competitive Advantage.

<https://hbr.org/2017/05/neurodiversity-as-a-competitive-advantage>

Terms

- **Autism Spectrum:** The Autism Spectrum refers to the complex group of disorders that impact brain development, and this includes autism and Asperger’s Syndrome.
 - **Down Syndrome:** A person with an extra full or partial chromosome 21.
 - **Intellectual Disability:** A disability that limits intellectual functioning and behavior.
 - **Learning Disability:** Neurological condition that makes it harder to learn.
 - **Mental Illness:*** A person with a medically diagnosed illness. Some prefer to use “A person with a mental health history” instead.
 - **Neurodiversity/Neuroatypical/Neurodivergent:** Differences that stem from ways that the brain functions; if a person’s brain does not function in a way that the medical community sees as typical or “normal”.
 - **Neurotypical:** When the brain functions in a way that is seen as “typical”.
 - **Special Needs*:** While still used in some places to describe education for children with learning or intellectual disabilities, this term is being replaced by accessible education.
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- **Terms No Longer In Use:**
 - **Retard/Mentally Retarded/Slow Learner*:** Used in the past to refer to a person with an intellectual disability. These are highly offensive terms and should never be used.
 - **Mentally Handicapped*:** This is no longer used.

*Terms that can be offensive to some people

Question Topics: Neuroatypical
