



Disability Etiquette Quick Reference Guide



Disability Etiquette refers to the respectful communication and interaction with people who have disabilities.

The principles of disability etiquette are very simple and practicing proper disability etiquette creates a more welcome and inclusive environment for all.

3 Guiding Principles:

- 1** Use common sense to guide your interactions with people with disabilities. Treat an adult with a disability as you would any other adult.
- 2** Be as courteous and respectful with individuals with disabilities that you would with anyone.
- 3** No one knows more about a disability than the individual with that disability- **ASK THE EXPERT!**

Language



Remember that **Language holds Power!** Being mindful of the way you speak and refer to people with disabilities or disabilities in general is very important. Stick with person-first language, unless an individual tells you they prefer otherwise.

Two common theories of Language:

- 1. *Person First Language*- put the person before their disability (Ex: "A person with a disability.")
- 2. *Identity First Language*- disability is a part of their identity (Ex: "Anna is Autistic.")



Avoid making negative connotations in regards to disability and avoid words such as "handicapped," "victim," or "challenged."

Offering Assistance



It is okay to offer assistance to someone who has a disability, but always ask them first!

Respect that individuals may refuse help. Treat them how they want to be treated, be mindful of your own movements, and avoid showing pity.

"always ask them first!"

Implicit Bias towards People with Disabilities



Implicit Bias is the automatic, unconscious thought processes and perceptions. It can be either positive or negative, but it ultimately makes snap judgments about people which can be unintentionally harmful or offensive.



Check your own Implicit Bias at the Door! Ask yourself-

- Have you ever assumed someone's ability to do their job was based on their disability?
- Have you ever used language that may have been offensive to someone with a disability without meaning to?
- Have you ever avoided interacting with someone with a disability because you don't know what to say or how to act?