



# *Opening Doors: Empowering people with disabilities*

A project of

**The University of Kansas  
Center for Research on Learning  
Division of Adult Studies**

Funded by

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Notice: This document was created using the definitions and regulations from the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The ADA Amendments Act was passed in 2008 to address different interpretations of what constitutes a disability under the original act, stressing a broad scope of protection under the law. See <http://www.jan.wvu.edu/bulletins/adaaal.htm> for more information.

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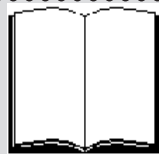
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# ***I***ntroduction

The information contained in this manual has been developed in response to discussions we have had with service providers, administrators, and educators. The overall purpose of the information is to help you work with persons who have disabilities and, ultimately, to increase their employment success.

The first part of the manual deals with disability etiquette. We heard from many of you that you are unsure of how to interact with people with disabilities. Hopefully, this section will help to make you feel more comfortable and knowledgeable as you work with increasing numbers of people who have disabilities.

The second part of the manual provides information on legal issues as they pertain to people with disabilities in both the service and employment settings. Employment provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) are discussed, as are the issues of disclosing disabilities and requesting accommodations.

Next are sections on various kinds of disabilities, the functional limitations they may result in, and strategies for accommodation. Finally, we have provided descriptions of various accommodations and assistive technology, and additional resources to utilize in learning more about legal issues, accommodations, and specific types of disabilities.

Our hope is that these materials will truly empower you to “Open Doors” for people with disabilities so that they can enjoy the satisfaction of competitive employment and a good quality of life.



# *Disability Etiquette*

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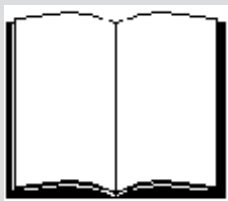
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# Disability Etiquette\*

Imagine how shocked you would be if a colleague referred to someone as “colored” or “Negro.” Using terms like “handicapped,” “challenged,” or “special” to describe people with disabilities is equally as inappropriate and insulting. The following pages include tips to help you feel more comfortable when communicating with and about people with disabilities. Affirmative phrases are shown in **bold** print along with examples of negative phrases and explanations of why they are inappropriate shown in non-bold type.

## Words

- ◆ Because people are not defined by their disability, but rather the person that they are, use the person-first rule. For example, “**person with mental retardation**” is appropriate while “retarded,” “mentally defective,” or “special” are not.
- ◆ Do not use “confined or restricted to a wheelchair” or “wheelchair bound.” People use wheelchairs as convenient modes of transportation and can engage in activities without their wheelchairs, so saying “**person who uses a wheelchair**” is appropriate.
- ◆ Refer to **persons who are blind** as such, not as simply “the blind.” Furthermore, the word “blind” refers to total loss of eyesight, while phrases like “**person who is visually impaired**” or “**person with low vision**” should be used to refer to individuals who have some degree of sight. Do not use the term “non-sighted.”
- ◆ “**People who are deaf**” or “**person who is hard of hearing**” is preferred to “the deaf” or “suffers a hearing loss.”
- ◆ Avoid victimizing or defining a person by a disease. Use “**person living with AIDS**” rather than “AIDS victim;” “**person with epilepsy**” rather than “she is an epileptic;” “**person who has multiple sclerosis**” rather than “afflicted by MS;” “**person who has muscular dystrophy**” rather than “stricken by MD;” “**person with diabetes**” rather than “he is diabetic.”

\*Portions of this information was adapted from: Digh, P. (1999). “Misplace Modifiers.” *The Disability Messenger*, 12. and Tracey, W.R. (1995). *Training Employees with Disabilities*. New York, NY: Amacom.

- ◆ Do not use the terms “handicap” or “handicapped.” This word, derived from the phrase “cap in hand,” refers to a beggar which stereotypes people with disabilities as needing charity. Instead of these offensive terms, use “**disability**” or “**person with a disability**.”
- ◆ Avoid the term “incapacitated” when talking about **persons with disabilities**. This term implies that the person is somehow inferior or incapable.
- ◆ Terms like “crippled,” “lame,” “freak,” “grotesque,” “deformed,” or “defective” should be avoided. Use the generic term “**person with a physical disability**,” or more specifically for example “**person born without legs**” because in fact the person is not defective nor deformed.
- ◆ Avoid using the terms “normal,” “able-bodied,” “healthy,” or “sound” to refer to **people without disabilities**. This terminology is inaccurate because it implies that the person with a disability is not normal or healthy in comparison.
- ◆ Group designations such as “the blind,” “the deaf” or “the disabled” are inappropriate because they do not reflect the individuality or dignity of people with disabilities. Again, use “**person with a disability**” instead.
- ◆ Do not say that a person has “overcome” his or her disability. Use adjectives like **successful** or **productive** just as you would for any person. Similarly, it is also inappropriate to imply that a person is courageous simply because of having a disability.
- ◆ Seizures are episodes in which sudden, unexpected brain disturbance occurs. **People with seizure disorders** should not be referred to as “epileptic,” nor should the seizures themselves be referred to as “fits.”
- ◆ Avoid using the euphemisms “differently abled,” “physically challenged,” or “handi-capable.” These terms are patronizing to people with disabilities.
- ◆ Do not refer to **persons who are unable to speak or use synthetic speech** as “dumb,” “deaf-mute,” “deaf and dumb,” “mute,” or as having a “speech impediment.” These terms incorrectly imply an inferiority or lack of intelligence based on mode of communication.



- ◆ Avoid using “dwarf” or “midget,” which people may find offensive. The term “**person of short stature**” is preferable.
- ◆ Never use the terms “retarded,” “backward,” or “dim-witted.” Instead say “**person with mental retardation**.”
- ◆ Persons may experience psychiatric disabilities such as schizophrenia or depression. Frequently used, yet inappropriate terms to describe these individuals include “crazy,” “schizo,” “psycho,” “lunatic,” “looney,” “feeble-minded,” “nuts,” or “mentally ill.” These terms are inaccurate and offensive; use the term “**person with a psychiatric disability**” instead.
- ◆ Do not use terms such as “slow” or “stupid” to describe **people with learning disabilities**. People with LD simply process information differently.
- ◆ **A person who no longer lives in an institution** should not be referred to as “the deinstitutionalized,” for this term takes away a person’s individuality.
- ◆ Avoid saying that an individual “admits he or she has a disability.” Simply state that the individual “**says he or she has a disability**,” otherwise the implication is that having a disability is wrong and should be kept hidden or unknown.
- ◆ Quadriplegia is a substantial loss of function in the arms and legs, while paraplegia is a substantial loss of function in the legs. Do not simply use the terms “quadriplegic” or “paraplegic.” Use of these terms define an individual by their disorder rather than by their humanity, instead use “**person with paraplegia**” or “**he or she has quadriplegia**.”
- ◆ Do not refer to **a person with cerebral palsy** as “palsied,” “spastic,” or “a spaz.”
- ◆ The chromosomal condition of Down syndrome causes developmental disabilities. Avoid using archaic terms such as “mongoloid” or “mongol.” Instead use, “**person with Down syndrome**.”

While being sensitive in your language is important, don’t get so worried about everything you say that you end up not communicating at all. Preferred terms change over time, and some people with disabilities prefer different terms. When in doubt, ask the person what he or she prefers.

### **Actions**

Outlined below are the “Ten Commandments for Communicating with People with Disabilities”<sup>\*</sup> to further help you in communicating with persons with disabilities.

1. When talking with a person with a disability, speak directly to the person rather than through a companion or sign language interpreter.
2. When introduced to a person with a disability, it is appropriate to offer to shake hands. People with limited hand use or who wear an artificial limb can usually shake hands. (Shaking hands with the left hand is an acceptable greeting.)
3. When meeting a person who is visually impaired, always identify yourself and others who may be with you. When conversing in a group, remember to identify the person to whom you are speaking.
4. If you offer assistance, wait until the offer is accepted then listen to or for directions.
5. Treat adults as adults. Address people who have disabilities by their first names only when extending the same familiarity to all others. (Never patronize people who use wheelchairs by patting them on the head or shoulder.)
6. Leaning on or hanging on to a person’s wheelchair is similar to leaning on or hanging on to a person and is generally considered annoying. The chair is part of the personal body space of the person who uses it.
7. Listen attentively when you’re talking with a person who has difficulty speaking. Be patient and wait for the person to finish, rather than correcting or speaking for the person. If necessary, ask short questions that require short answers, a nod or shake of the head. Never pretend to understand if you are having difficulty doing so. Instead, repeat what you have understood and allow the person to respond. The response will clue you in and guide your understanding.

8. When speaking with a person who uses a wheelchair or a person who uses crutches, place yourself at eye level in front of the person to facilitate the conversation.
9. To get the attention of a person who is deaf, tap the person on the shoulder or wave your hand. Look directly at the person and speak clearly, slowly, and expressively to determine if the person can read your lips. Not all people who are deaf can read lips. For those who do lip read, be sensitive to their needs by placing yourself so that you face the light source and keep hands, cigarettes and food away from your mouth when speaking.
10. Relax. Don't be embarrassed if you happen to use accepted, common expressions such as "See you later," or "Did you hear about that?" that seem to relate to a person's disability.

Remember, don't be afraid to ask questions when you're unsure of what to say or do.

*\*Ten Commandments for Communicating with People with Disabilities* produced by:  
National Center for Access Unlimited  
155 North Wacker Drive  
Suite 315  
Chicago, IL 60606

### **Attitudes\***

Perhaps even more than language, attitudes can influence your interactions with people with disabilities. Even if you personally do not have any of the following attitudes, your clients with disabilities will have experienced them from others, and may thus be wary. In addition, you will probably encounter them in working with employers. Some of the attitudinal barriers are:

#### **Pity**

People feel sorry for the person with a disability, which tends to lead to patronizing attitudes. People with disabilities generally don't want pity and charity, just equal opportunity to earn their own way and live independently.

#### **Ignorance**

People with disabilities are often dismissed as incapable of accomplishing a task without the opportunity to display their skills. In fact, people with quadriplegia can drive cars and have children. People who are blind can tell time on a watch and visit museums. People who are deaf can play baseball and enjoy music. People with developmental disabilities can be creative and maintain strong work ethics.

#### **The Spread Effect**

People assume that an individual's disability negatively affects other senses, abilities or personality traits, or that the total person is impaired. For example, many people shout at people who are blind or don't expect people using wheelchairs to have the intelligence to speak for themselves. Focusing on the person's abilities rather than his or her disability counters this type of prejudice.

#### **Stereotypes**

The other side of the spread effect is the positive and negative generalizations people form about disabilities. For example, many believe that all people who are blind are great musicians or have a keener sense of smell and hearing, that all people who use wheelchairs are docile or compete in paralympics, that all people with developmental disabilities are innocent and sweet-natured, that all people with disabilities are sad and bitter. Aside from diminishing the individual and his or her abilities, such prejudice can set too high or too low a standard for individuals who are merely human.

### **Backlash**

Many people believe individuals with disabilities are given unfair advantages, such as easier work requirements. Employers need to hold people with disabilities to the same job standards as co-workers, though the means of accomplishing the tasks may differ from person to person. The ADA does not require special privileges for people with disabilities, just equal opportunities.

### **Denial**

Many disabilities are “hidden,” such as learning disabilities, psychiatric disabilities, epilepsy, cancer, arthritis and heart conditions. People tend to believe these are not bona fide disabilities needing accommodation. The ADA defines “disability” as an impairment that “substantially limits one or more of the major life activities.” Whether a condition is visible or not, it still can result in substantial limitations.

### **Breaking Down Barriers**

Unlike physical and systemic barriers, attitudinal barriers that often lead to illegal discrimination cannot be overcome simply through laws. The best remedy is familiarity, getting people with and without disabilities to mingle as coworkers, associates and social acquaintances. In time, most of the attitudes will give way to comfort, respect and friendship. You can do your part by overcoming these attitudes in your own work and helping employers to overcome them as well.

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\*adapted from “Think Ability,” published by the President’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, 1999.





# *Legal Issues*

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# **Definition of Disability**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) utilizes a three-pronged definition of an individual with a disability. Thus, a person with a disability is one who has:

- ◆ a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of the individual;
- ◆ a record of such an impairment; or
- ◆ been regarded as having such an impairment.

The phrase “physical or mental impairment” may include such diseases and conditions as orthopedic, visual, speech, and hearing impairments, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, cancer, heart disease, diabetes, mental retardation, emotional illness, specific learning disabilities, HIV disease, tuberculosis, and recovery from drug addiction or alcoholism. Examples of major life activities include caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking,

# **Public Entities**

Title II of the ADA applies to “public entities,” including state or local governments and any of their departments or agencies. Under Title II, public entities must ensure that they do not intentionally or unintentionally discriminate against persons with disabilities.

Integration is fundamental to the purposes of the ADA, and by adhering to these provisions, state entities will meet that goal. Requirements for public entities include:

- ◆ They may not refuse to allow a person with a disability to participate in a service, program or activity simply because the person has a disability.
- ◆ They must ensure that all programs and services are accessible to individuals with disabilities, when viewed in their entirety. (see Facility Accessibility Checklist, pp. 25-27).

## ***Opening Doors: Empowering people with disabilities***

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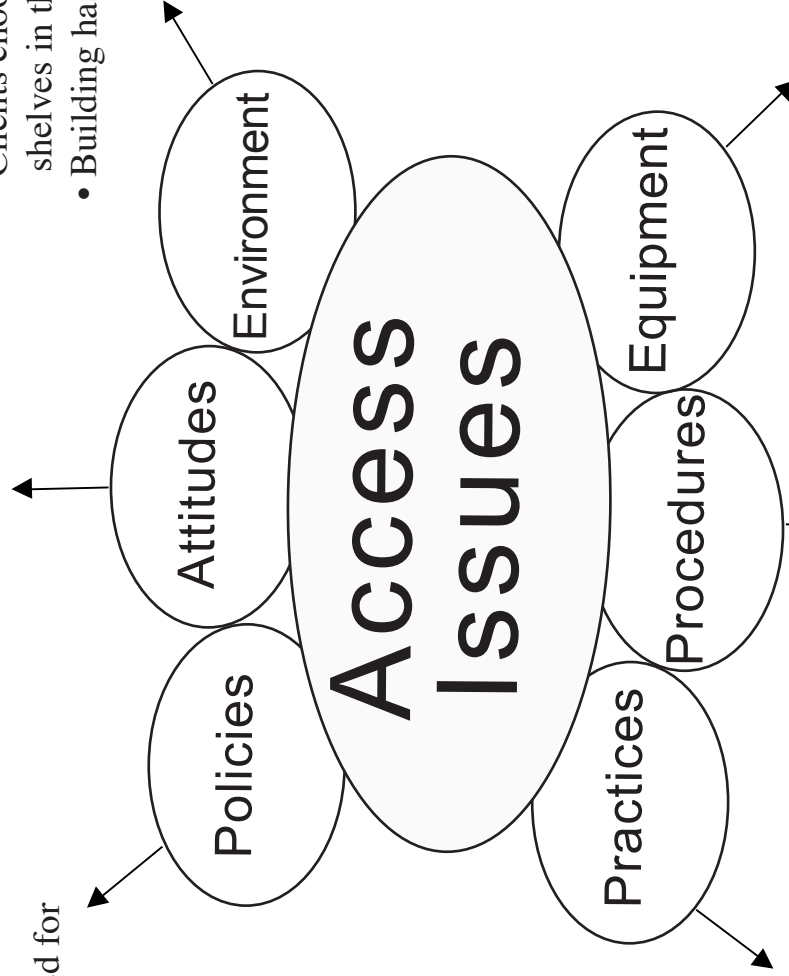
- ◆ They must ensure that communications are accessible to individuals with a range of disabilities. Access can be provided through the provision of auxiliary aids and services such as qualified interpreters, assistive listening devices, television captioning and decoders, telecommunications devices for the deaf (TDDs), readers, taped texts, brailled materials and large print materials. (see Communications Checklists, pp. 21-24).
- ◆ They must make reasonable modifications in policies, practices or procedures to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability. For example, if a policy exists to administer a screening or interview in a group setting and a person with a mental health impairment has difficulty functioning in groups, then the policy should be modified to allow a one-on-one administration for that individual.

Ensuring the accessibility of your offices is an important step in providing effective services to clients with disabilities. It is important for you to remember that being “accessible” means more than making your facility usable by people who use wheelchairs. In all of the United States, there are less than one million people who use wheelchairs. In contrast, four times as many people have serious visual impairments and 24 times as many have hearing impairments. Thus, you must make sure that your programs are accessible to people with many different types of disabilities. The following diagrams and checklists will help you to think about ways to do this.

The diagram on the following page illustrates examples of specific access issues in the areas of policies, practices, procedures, equipment, environment, and attitudes. The second diagram offers solutions to these issues.

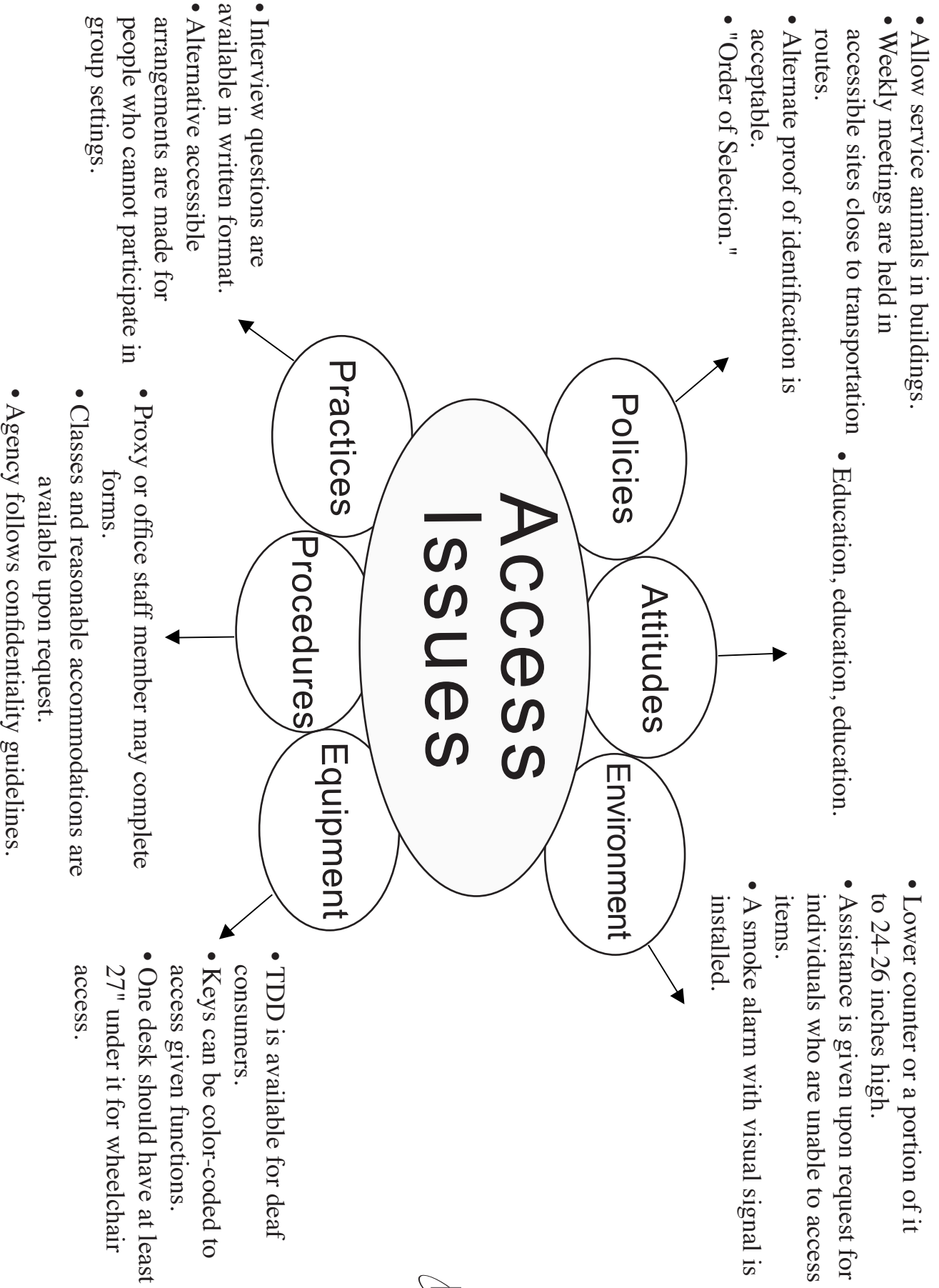
The communications and facility accessibility checklists (beginning on page 21) are available to give you ideas on how to ensure that your services are accessible to people with disabilities.

- We do not serve people with disabilities because they have never requested services.
- People with disabilities could not benefit from our services because we place people in jobs.
- Reception area has a high counter.
- Clients choose their own items from shelves in the back room.
- Building has a audible smoke alarm.



- No animals are allowed in the building.
- Weekly meetings are rotated to different sites.
- A driver's license is required for identification.
- "Order of Selection."

- An oral interview is required of all clients.
- Intakes, exams, and classes are done in groups.
- Videos are purchased for use with consumers.
- Client must complete all forms.
- Classes are offered to the public.
- Program approval depends upon certification from other agencies.
- Organization has a telephone available to consumers.
- Consumers use computers.
- Standard height desks are available for completing forms.



# Communications Checklists

If your agency has information that is communicated visually, such as printed materials or forms, you need to consider ways to make that information accessible to people with visual and cognitive disabilities. Similarly, if you have information that is usually presented aurally (i.e., must be heard) you need to consider ways to make that information accessible to people with hearing impairments. And, finally, if you have procedures that require a person to use oral communication (e.g., answer questions in an interview), you must think of alternate ways that a person with a speech impairment can respond.

In the assessment of communications your office uses, consider communication involved in all aspects of services, including outreach, public meetings and hearings, and day to day activities. Examples might include:

- telephone conversations
- video tapes
- interviews
- brochures
- forms

The Communications Checklists provide examples of alternative forms of communication that you can use to make your services accessible to people with a variety of disabilities. Also, keep in mind that many of the strategies for making communications accessible, such as simplifying forms and providing documents in larger print, will make your communications more user friendly for all clients, not just those who have disabilities.

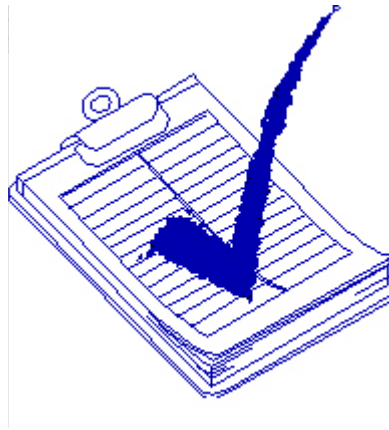
For each type of communication, check those accessible formats that your office already has available. Be sure to consider accessibility of all program communication, not just communication that occurs within your office (e.g. brochures, telephone conversations). If you can provide the auxiliary aid or service within your office, note this in the "Provider Information" column. For example, if you can provide written documents on computer diskette, indicate this. If your office does not have a certain accessible format available at the time, investigate ways of obtaining it so it will be available if needed and list the provider name and contact information in the space provided.

## ***Opening Doors: Empowering people with disabilities***

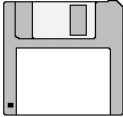


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Find out the processing time for each provider so that you can inform an individual how long it will take to provide a requested format. You may also want to check to see if your regional or state office has standing provider contracts for obtaining any of the formats. Centers for independent living and other agencies listed in the *Resources* section are also good places to ask about possible providers.

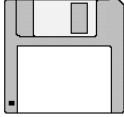


After you have completed the checklists, inform the public (in flyers, brochures, advertisements, etc.) that you have alternative formats available. Establish procedures for timely response to requests for alternative formats. A person with a disability should not be forced to wait an inordinate period of time to receive materials in an accessible format.



# Visual Communications Checklist

Auxiliary aid or service 	Currently Available 	Provider Information 
large print	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>	Provider: Address: Phone #: Processing time:
Braille	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>	Provider: Address: Phone #: Processing time:
audio tape	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>	Provider: Address: Phone #: Processing time:
readers	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>	Provider: Address: Phone #: Processing time:
computer diskette	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>	Provider: Address: Phone #: Processing time:
verbal descriptions	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>	Provider: Address: Phone #: Processing time:
computer adaptations (e.g., enlarged text, voice synthesizer)	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>	Provider: Address: Phone #: Processing time:
others (list)	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>	Provider: Address: Phone #: Processing time:

# *Aural/Oral Communications Checklist*

<b>Auxiliary aid or service</b> 	<b>Currently Available</b> 	<b>Provider Information</b> 
sign language interpreters	Yes    No <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	Provider: Address: Phone #: Processing time:
written materials	Yes    No <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	Provider: Address: Phone #: Processing time:
TDD (Telecommunications Device for the Deaf)	Yes    No <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	Provider: Address: Phone #: Processing time:
telephone amplification	Yes    No <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	Provider: Address: Phone #: Processing time:
real time captioning	Yes    No <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	Provider: Address: Phone #: Processing time:
assistive listening devices	Yes    No <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	Provider: Address: Phone #: Processing time:
word processors	Yes    No <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	Provider: Address: Phone #: Processing time:
others (list)	Yes    No <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	Provider: Address: Phone #: Processing time:



# *Facility Accessibility Checklists*


In a broad sense, facility accessibility can be considered a type of accommodation – one which makes the overall program available to people with disabilities.


This checklist is provided for case managers and other staff who want to review the accessibility of their facility. The checklist is not designed to be a comprehensive evaluation tool but rather a starting point for evaluating overall accessibility.


The Facility Accessibility Checklist provides questions about accessibility for persons with various disabilities. For each question, check whether or not your office is compliant with the particular feature. You may find that there are some features that need to be addressed by your office in order to make it more accessible.

Although these features are categorized by disability, any change to improve accessibility will probably improve accessibility for all people with and without disabilities. For example, by installing a ramp to make facilities accessible for people who use wheelchairs, you also make it accessible for parents pushing children in strollers.

# Facility Accessibility Checklists

<b>Questions of Accessibility</b> Persons Who Have Mobility Disabilities	<b>Currently Compliant</b> 
Are accessible parking places closest to the accessible entrance?	Yes      No <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Do curbs on routes of travel have curb cuts?	Yes      No <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Is a route of travel available that does not require the use of stairs?	Yes      No <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Are the slopes of ramps no greater than 1:12?	Yes      No <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Are all pathways and ramp surfaces slip-resistant?	Yes      No <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Are doorways at least 32" wide?	Yes      No <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Are pathways through the facility and ramps at least 36" wide?	Yes      No <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Can accessible doors be easily opened (e.g. by a person with limited strength or dexterity)?	Yes      No <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Are counter heights/reception windows in public areas accessible to people using wheelchairs (28"-34" high)?	Yes      No <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Are knee spaces at work areas at least 27" high, 30" wide, and 19" deep?	Yes      No <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Is a 5 foot circle available along the route of travel for a person using a wheelchair to turn around?	Yes      No <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Do wheelchair accessible bathroom stalls have a least a 5' x 5' area, clear of the door swing?	Yes      No <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Is the toilet seat in the accessible stall 17 to 19 inches high?	Yes      No <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Are soap, towels, faucets and hand-dryers in lavatories 48" or lower?	Yes      No <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Are the public phones no higher than 48" and have clear space to allow maneuvering?	Yes      No <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

<b>Questions of Accessibility</b> Persons Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing 	<b>Currently Compliant</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Does the office have a TDD phone device available for the deaf or hard of hearing?	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>
Do alarm systems have flashing lights?	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>
Does staff use the Kansas Relay Service in order to get pertinent information to persons via phone? (800) 766-3777	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>
Are visible floor indicators in place on elevators?	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>
If emergency intercoms are in use in elevators, are they usable without voice communication?	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>

<b>Questions of Accessibility</b> Persons Who Are Blind or Have Low Vision 	<b>Currently Compliant</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are obstacles within pathways cane-detectable (located within 27" of the floor or higher than 80" and protruding no more than 4" from the walls)?	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>
Is there a sign on the jamb at each floor identifying the floor in raised and Braille letters?	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>
Do posted materials have large type and strong contrast?	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>
Are carpets and door mats low-pile, tightly woven, and securely attached along the edges?	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>

<b>Questions of Accessibility</b> Persons Who Have Cognitive Disabilities	<b>Currently Compliant</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Do signs (e.g. restroom signs) have pictorial as well as written information?	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>
Is posted material written so people with low-reading and cognitive levels can understand?	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>
Are materials available on audio tape?	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>

The following “Action Plan for Accessibility” is another tool you can use to increase accessibility for people with disabilities. It contains several questions that illustrate the various steps and obstacles encountered when implementing changes or additions to your program. This “Action Plan” is available for duplication in the Appendix (page 137).

## Action Plan For Accessibility

1. Selected task: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. How will this task improve your services? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Who needs to be involved in getting it implemented? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Who can help you solve any implementation problems? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What could be the most significant barrier(s) to implementation? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Employment Provisions of the ADA

Title I of the ADA contains the employer provisions of the law, including non-discrimination requirements, qualification criteria, limits on medical examinations, and the obligation to provide reasonable accommodations. Case managers need a basic understanding of these provisions to better match clients with jobs and to help advocate for needed accommodations.

Title I of the ADA applies to all employers with 15 or more employees; however, the Kansas Act Against Discrimination (KAAD) extends the ADA requirements to all employers with 4 or more employees in Kansas. Thus, virtually all business with whom you place clients will be subject to the requirements listed on the following pages.

# Non-discrimination and Qualified Individuals

The ADA prohibits employment discrimination against “qualified individuals with disabilities.” A qualified individual with a disability is defined as someone who “meets the skill, experience, education, and other job-related requirements of a position held or desired and who, *with or without reasonable accommodations* can perform the *essential functions* of a job [italics added].”

In this definition, the concepts of reasonable accommodation and essential job function are important to understand, and are discussed on the following pages.

# Reasonable Accommodations

Many misconceptions exist about hiring a person with a disability. The main one is that it is too difficult or expensive to accommodate that individual at work. According to the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), job accommodations are typically low cost and easy to implement. Reports show that businesses that have accommodated people with disabilities have benefited financially.

When considering accommodations for a person with a disability, it is important to remember this process must be conducted on a case by case basis with input from the individual. The person's abilities and limitations should be considered and problematic tasks must be identified. Limitations may range depending on the type of disability. See section on *Disclosure and Self-Advocacy*.

An accommodation is any change in the work environment or in the way things are usually done that results in an individual with a disability having an equal employment opportunity. Reasonable accommodations fall into three categories:

In general, the term "essential job function" means the fundamental job duties of the position the individual with a disability holds or desires. A job function may be considered "essential" for any of several reasons, including 1) the reason the position exists is to perform that function, 2) a limited number of employees are available to perform the function, 3) the function is so specialized that the applicant is hired for his or her expertise in performing this function

- ♦ modifications or adjustments to a *job application process* that enable a qualified applicant with a disability to be considered for the position such qualified applicant desires;
- ♦ modifications or adjustments to the work environment, or to the manner or circumstances under which the position held or desired is customarily performed, that enable a qualified individual with a disability to perform the essential functions of that position; or
- ♦ modifications or adjustments that enable a covered entity's employee with a disability to enjoy *equal benefits and privileges* of employment as are enjoyed by its similarly situated employees without disabilities.

Many individuals with a disability will need no accommodation at all.

The law explains that there are limits on what constitutes a “reasonable” accommodation. To be reasonable, an accommodation must:

- ◆ be effective, though it need not be the best or most expensive accommodation available;
- ◆ reduce barriers to employment related to the person’s disability, i.e., it is not primarily for personal use; and
- ◆ not be unduly costly; extensive; substantial; disruptive; or fundamentally alter the nature or operation of the business.

When an employer is asked to provide a reasonable accommodation, the employer may ask the individual for relevant documentation about his/her disability and functional limitations. The employer needs to know that the individual has a covered disability for which he or she needs accommodation. As a case manager, you can help to ensure that your client has appropriate documentation available for this purpose.

Remember, it is generally the responsibility of the person with a disability to request reasonable accommodation. Case managers may assist in this request process if the consumer wants or needs them to. Some examples of reasonable accommodations are provided on the following pages.

## **Making facilities accessible**

**Situation:** *A computer programmer in a manufacturing company is a person with cerebral palsy which affects her fine motor control. The employee uses a wheelchair and as a result can not access certain areas of the worksite.*

**Solution:** *A bathroom stall was enlarged and safety rails installed. The employee’s desk was raised several inches so her wheelchair would fit underneath, and computer space was made available on the first floor of the building. A ramp and automatic doors were installed and a personal parking place close to the elevator was identified. These accommodations were at no cost to the employer. The building owners provided materials and absorbed costs for building remodeling.*

### **Job restructuring**

Job restructuring, also called job modification, is a type of reasonable accommodation that involves reallocating or redistributing the marginal functions of a job. However, an employer is not required to reallocate essential functions of a job as a reasonable accommodation. Essential functions, by definition, are those functions that a qualified individual must perform, with or without an accommodation.

Job restructuring frequently is accomplished by exchanging marginal functions of a job that cannot be performed by a person with a disability for marginal job functions performed by one or more other employees.

***Situation:** A cleaning crew works in an office building. One member of the crew wears a prosthetic leg which allows him to walk very well, but makes climbing steps painful and difficult. Although he can perform his essential functions without problems, he cannot perform the marginal function of sweeping the steps located throughout the building.*

***Solution:** The marginal job functions of a second crew member include cleaning the small kitchen in the employee's lounge, which is something the first crew member can perform. The employer can switch marginal functions performed by these two employees.*

### **Modified Work Schedules**

Modified work schedules may include flexibility in work hours or the work week, or part-time work.

***Situation:** A highly skilled electronics technician who has AIDS needs to take medications three times a day. Currently he is allowed two 15 minute breaks a day.*

***Solution:** The employer provides the employee with three ten minute breaks per day.*



## **Acquisition or modification of equipment and devices**

Purchase of equipment or modifications to existing equipment may be effective accommodations for people with many types of disabilities. There are many devices that make it possible for people to overcome existing barriers to performing functions of a job.

***Situation:** A mechanical assembly worker acquired a cumulative wrist/hand trauma disorder that affected handling and fingering. This decreased his ability to perform the twisting motion needed to use a screwdriver.*

***Solution:** A rechargeable electric screwdriver was purchased to reduce repetitive wrist twisting. Electric screwdrivers were subsequently purchased for all employees as a preventative measure.*

***Situation:** A custodian with low vision was having difficulty seeing the carpeted area he was vacuuming.*

***Solution:** A fluorescent lighting system was mounted on his industrial vacuum cleaner.*

## **Adjusting and modifying examinations, training materials, and policies**

Employers may be required to modify, adjust, or make other reasonable accommodations in the ways that tests and training are administered in order to provide equal employment opportunities for qualified individuals with disabilities.

The ADA requires that tests be given to people who have impaired sensory, speaking or manual skills in a format and manner that does not require use of the impaired skill, unless the test is designed to measure that skill. (Sensory skills include the abilities to hear, see and to process information.)

The purpose of this requirement is to assure that tests accurately reflect a person's job skills, aptitudes or whatever else the test is supposed to measure, rather than the person's impaired skills.

*Situation:* A person with dyslexia, a problem which impairs the ability to read, is required to take a written test before accepting a job as a receptionist.

*Solution:* The person should be given the opportunity to take the test orally since the test is not designed to test reading skills and reading is not an essential function of the job.

There are many other reasonable accommodations that may be effective for people with different disabilities in different jobs. The accommodations mentioned above are not the only types of accommodations that might be required.

# ***Undue Hardship***

Under the ADA, an employer does not have to provide a reasonable accommodation if it would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the business. However, if a particular accommodation would impose an undue hardship, the employer must consider whether alternative accommodations are available that would not impose the hardship. An undue hardship is defined as an action that requires “significant difficulty or expense” in relation to the size of the employer, the resources available, and the nature of the operation.

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# *Disclosure & Self-Advocacy*



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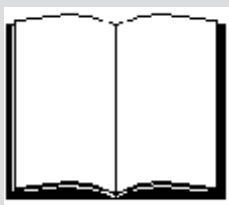
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Diedre is a writer for a major national corporation. She had mild dyslexia that caused her to reverse letters, words, and numbers. She was also hyperactive due to ADHD. Her coping strategy was to take breaks and walk once around the block. When she was wrestling with a tough writing problem she took longer walks, since her hyperactivity made it difficult for her to think clearly about creative problems while sitting still.

Despite these challenges, she produced more work than her coworkers. Her supervisor, John, gave her the most complicated writing assignments he had. When John left for another job, Tom took over. Tom was concerned about Diedre's "typos." John had simply made the changes required and never bothered Diedre about it. In addition, Tom objected strongly to Diedre being "away from her desk." Diedre and Tom frequently conflicted over these issues. After a month of difficulties, Diedre disclosed her learning disability to Tom through a memorandum that included medical documentation. Tom did not believe her. She appealed to Tom's boss who ignored the situation, refusing to meet with her or answer her memos.

Tom's apparent reluctance to accommodate Diedre's disability could be discriminatory under the ADA, unless the company could prove that providing the accommodations (which had been given to Diedre before) would result in undue hardship on the operation of the business.

In this story, Diedre did not pursue a complaint and was laid off one year later. Interestingly enough, Diedre was soon earning more than her old salary as a freelance writer. John, the first manager, never realized he was accommodating her disabilities. He felt he was simply doing what was necessary to help his employee be productive.

This example serves as a point of entry into our next sections that discuss disclosure of disability and self-advocacy. While Diedre did not need to disclose her disability to her first boss, John, it may have been helpful to her to have had a history of accommodation in place when working under her next boss, Tom. When she did disclose it was too late. Also, her method of disclosure, a memorandum, was inappropriate and too late, the damage had been done. Diedre may have benefited from some self-advocacy advice.

# Disclosure of Disability

The decision to disclose or not disclose is an issue that will be faced repeatedly by every person with an invisible disability. The issue of disclosure is often most problematic when the person is attempting to enter or re-enter the job market. Once your client has identified realistic employment options and the type of job preferred, a choice must be made as to whether, when, and how to disclose their disability in the job-seeking process. In the case of a person who has an invisible disability (e.g., many chronic illnesses, learning disabilities, hearing impairments, emotional disorders, etc.), disclosure of the disability to an employer is necessary in order to obtain any needed accommodation.

Under the ADA, a person with a disability can choose to disclose at any time, and is not required to disclose at all unless he or she wants to request an accommodation or wants other protections under the law.

Clients with disabilities must be able to determine their strengths and limitations relative to the specific requirements of a job and evaluate which, if any, accommodations may be needed to perform the job successfully. You should work with your client, perhaps in a role-play situation, to consider what to say to an employer and how to respond to questions that may be asked. Together, you can decide :

- ◆ How specific to be in describing the disability –  
Your client can choose to disclose his or her disability in very general terms (e.g., a disability, difficulty reading, a medical condition, an illness, etc.) or in specific terms (e.g., learning disability in reading, insulin-dependent diabetes) or somewhere in between. He or she should be prepared to answer any questions about the disability that the employer may ask.
- ◆ Possible accommodations to request –  
When requesting accommodations, the client should have some suggestions for accommodations that might be effective. These suggestions should include a description of how the client has successfully utilized the accommodation in the past. This process will be facilitated by your having worked with the client to determine appropriate accommodations for his or her needs and job preferences (see *Accommodations* section).

The issue of disclosure hinges on whether or not the disability is visible and if it will impact job performance. Staff at the University of Missouri (Hughes & Graham, 1994) provide the following guidelines for disclosure:

1. If the disability will require the employer to provide a reasonable accommodation, the applicant should bring it up, and explain the nature of the accommodation needed and how it will enable him or her to perform job tasks.
2. If the disability will not require an accommodation, but is obvious (visible, e.g., use of a wheelchair or crutches) and the average employer would have concerns about how someone with the disability would perform the job, the applicant should bring the subject up, and explain how the functions in question will be performed.
3. If the disability is not obvious and will not impact job performance, then the applicant should not bring it up because it has no bearing on the job or performance of tasks.

Ultimately, the decision of whether to disclose is up to the individual. If it is determined that disclosure is appropriate, consideration must be given to when and how to disclose. Advantages and disadvantages of various options are presented on the following page. Generally speaking, disclosure is best done *before* any problems arise on the job, because disclosure **after** a problem occurs may be seen as making an excuse for poor performance. A problem, even one that is a direct result of a disability, can be legally used as a basis for termination even if the disability **could** have been accommodated with prior disclosure. Also, note that disclosure is not synonymous with requesting an accommodation. As mentioned above, many people with disabilities need no accommodations at all.

**Time of Disclosure**

**Advantages**

**Disadvantages**

On the job application

- Honesty/peace of mind
- Easy

- Might disqualify you with no opportunity to present yourself and your qualifications

During the interview

- Honesty/peace of mind
- Opportunity to respond briefly and positively, in person, to specific disability issues

- Puts responsibility on applicant to handle disability issues in a clear, non-threatening way
- Too much emphasis on the disability indicates a possible problem - abilities are not being evaluated

After the interview  
(when a job has been offered but not yet accepted)

- Honesty/peace of mind
- If the disability information changes the hiring decision, and the applicant is sure he or she can perform the job, then there may be legal recourse

- Employer might feel you should have told him before a hiring decision was made
- Might lead to distrust with personnel or HR department

After starting work

- Opportunity to prove oneself on the job before disclosure
- If disclosure affects the employment status and the disability doesn't affect the ability to perform the job or job safety, legal protections may apply

- Nervousness on the job
- Possibility of problems
- Could change interaction with peers

After a problem on the job

- Opportunity to prove oneself on the job before disclosure

- May be too late to correct a problem situation

Never

- Disability will not be an issue
- Privacy maintained

- May leave you with no legal recourse if you are fired



# Self-Advocacy

An essential element of the ADA is that an individual with a disability must request an employer provide a reasonable accommodation if one is necessary. As mentioned on the previous pages, to receive an accommodation an individual must disclose that he/she has a disability. For many people this level of self-advocacy may be uncomfortable. Most people do not like to call attention to themselves or to problems that they may encounter. Many individuals with disabilities have low self-esteem and this, coupled with the need to self-advocate, makes for a troublesome situation when it comes to looking for a job or handling difficulties on the job.

You can assist the individual become more comfortable in the process by providing information and role playing. To self-advocate successfully an individual needs to know the following:

- His/her rights under the law;
- Facts about his/her disability
- Essential and marginal job functions of jobs he/she is interested in;
- Potential accommodations that would allow performance of the essential functions of the job; and
- Ways to approach employers that will encourage positive rapport.

## Rights under the law

The Legal Issues chapter in this book will help you to apprise your clients of their legal rights under the ADA. It is important for them to know that they *may* receive accommodations under the law but to receive accommodations they must disclose their disability (see the Disclosure section immediately preceding this section.) It is also important for them to know that accommodations are a result of a negotiation process in which the employer has the final say. You and the individual may feel that you have the best idea for accommodation but the employer may not agree. He is within his rights to recommend another accommodation that accomplishes the same purpose. The employer also may not agree that the accommodation that the employee recommends will work in the particular situation. It is important that the lines of communication remain open throughout the negotiation process.

### **Facts about disability**

While your client does not have to be a doctor or converse in medical terminology it is important that he or she be able to explain their disability in a concise but explicit way. They should specifically be able to describe their functional limitations in light of the job at hand and to immediately give examples of how the limitations can be eliminated by an accommodation.

**Example:** An applicant for a secretarial position might say, “I have a learning disability that makes spelling accurately difficult for me. I rely on spell check on the computer and a careful proofreading to assure accuracy. For important work it would be helpful if someone else would proofread my work before it goes out.”

### **Essential/marginal job functions**

In order to advocate for oneself it is important that the applicant or employee know exactly what is expected of them. (See the *Legal Issues* section for the definition of essential and marginal job functions.) When applying for a job your client should ask for a job description. If a job description is not readily available have them ask what the specific job duties are. Armed with this knowledge, the job seeker can match his/her skills with the job in question and develop accommodation strategies, if necessary. The “Essential Job Functions Table is available in the Appendix (page 138) as an example of a worksheet that can help you and your client determine essential job functions and his or her skills and/or needed accommodations. A blank version of this table is also provided for use and duplication purposes (page 139).

## **Potential accommodations that would allow performance of the essential job functions of the job**

**Example:** Joyce is applying for the job of dishwasher at a local hotel. The essential job functions include:

- Taking dishes from a conveyor belt and loading the dishwasher, glassware on the top shelf, plates on the left, bowls on the right, and silverware in a basket on the door. [This would probably not be how the job description was worded but it is helpful to know this information in this example.]
- When the dishwashing cycle is complete the dishes must be returned to their proper storage places in the kitchen. There are separate cabinets for each item.

Joyce knows that she can accomplish this task but she is also aware that she has trouble remembering and has difficulty sequencing. As Joyce's case manager you think that you can help Joyce. You look at the *Accommodations* chapter and get some ideas about some accommodations that might help Joyce succeed in this job.

Under "Remembering" you see that one strategy is for Joyce to keep a cue card that might help her remember what she is to do, however, you suspect that this will not be the problem. You and Joyce feel that remembering where the dishes go both in the dishwasher or the cabinets will be a bigger problem. Joyce thinks that if she had a picture of what the dishwasher should look like when loaded and a picture or label on each cabinet she could accomplish the task.

## **Ways to approach employers that will encourage positive rapport**

Once Joyce has some ideas about what might help her on the job, she needs to communicate her needs to her employer in a way that will allow him/her to hear in an open way. When a realtor talks about the three most important aspects of a house when it is on the market they frequently claim "Location, Location, Location." When looking for work it can be claimed that the three most important aspects of a person that an employer is looking for are "Attitude, Attitude, Attitude."

## ***Opening Doors: Empowering people with disabilities***

Learning to present a positive attitude and image to an interviewer or employer is part of becoming a successful self-advocate. Employers are often nervous around individuals with disabilities and focus on their disabilities instead of their abilities. Unfortunately, it is often the role of the person with a disability to change the attitude of employers by presenting themselves as capable and self-assured individuals. This is not an impossible task, but for many with disabilities it is a daunting one.

Body language can tell a prospective employer a great deal about a person's attitude toward work. For example, good eye contact, facing the person speaking, presents an image of a person who places a value on what is being discussed and is interested and attentive. Body language can advocate for a person or against them.

The following are examples of positive and negative body language signals:

<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>
Facing interviewer	Gazing around the room
Sitting straight in chair	Slouching in chair
Leaning forward slightly when listening	Leaning back in chair
Smiling	Frowning
Firm handshake	Limp handshake
Relaxed posture, placing hands in a relaxed manner	Clenching hands in a tense fashion during interviews

As a case manager, you can role play situations with your clients or suggest that they role play with a friend or family member. Videotape is a great way to give an individual feedback about how they appear to others.

Another aspect of self-advocacy is positive self-talking. Employers are not impressed with individuals who are not positive about themselves and what they can do. Right or wrong, this is doubly true for individuals with disabilities. In the example above, Joyce needs to be positive about her skills and needs to be as articulate as possible when discussing her memory problem. She also needs to be assertive when asking for accommodation

Assertive behavior can be seen as active self-advocacy whereas aggressive behavior achieves little, and can be very detrimental to relationships between employer and employee, or between fellow employees. If Joyce tells an employer that she needs accommodation on the job and she will sue him if he does not give them to her. Joyce will not get the job. If Joyce, states her case in a clear and assertive manner she may or may not be hired, but the employer may be more likely to give her constructive feedback about why she was not hired.

It is essential that self-advocacy results in a win-win situation for both employer and employee. Little is gained when demands and requests are viewed as unreasonable, or when threats are made. Effective self-advocates understand both sides of the issue and do not expect standards to be lowered on their behalf. Effective self-advocates also have appropriate social and interaction skills. While some may fear that an individual may misuse his/her new found skill to make unreasonable requests, the ADA states that ultimately the employer decides whether or not an accommodation is reasonable.

### *Some Do's and Don'ts when asking for an accommodation*

DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have your client know in advance what he/she is going to ask for.</li><li>• Script the request carefully, and have him/her practice the request until they have it word perfect.</li><li>• Have your client be as accommodating as possible. (For example, if your client requires a special chair with extra back support and the cost involved is going to be in the region of \$500, then the client could offer to put something toward the cost himself. In all probability the employer would be willing to provide the chair, but by offering to work with the employer to meet his needs your client has shown himself as a person who is aware of the financial constraints the most companies work under. This alone may tip the odds in their favor.)</li><li>• Be willing to compromise.</li><li>• Have your client make the request in a positive and assertive manner.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Your client should not apologize for their disability</li><li>• Demand the most expensive accommodation when a less costly one will meet the need.</li><li>• Make the accommodation sound more complicated than it is.</li><li>• Apologize for having to ask for an accommodation.</li></ul>

Joyce, from our earlier example, needs to approach her potential employer with a firm handshake, eye contact, and an understanding of her needs and a well-rehearsed request for an accommodation. Something like: "I sometimes have difficulty remembering because I had a brain injury several years ago. Specifically I have difficulty remembering how I am supposed to do something. I usually do very well if I can compare what I need to do with a picture of how it is to be done. If I had pictures of a dishwasher in different stages of being filled I know that I can do a good job for you."

Resources: If your client needs self-advocacy training beyond what you are able to provide, the following are useful referral sources:

- Your local center for independent living (this is one of their core services) see pages 130-133.
- Your adult education center (all centers in Kansas have a curriculum that teaches individuals with disabilities self-advocacy.)

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# *Possible Challenges*

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# ***I***ntroduction

It is unrealistic – and unnecessary – for you to become an “expert” in all aspects of a disability in order to provide effective services. Focus on the individual rather than the disability.

Remember that every person’s constellation of strengths and challenges will be unique; no two people with the same disability will approach employment in the same way. The *ADA Handbook* explains: “public entities are required to ensure that their actions are based on facts applicable to *individuals* and not on presumptions as to what a class of individuals with disabilities can or cannot do.”

The following pages of lists are provided to give examples of challenges people with disabilities may face in the employment setting. The issues addressed coincide with the heading in the *Accommodations* section so that you can target the issues a client may confront in the workplace.

# **Possible Challenges in the Work Environment**

## **Vision Loss**

- ◆ Reading regular size print (or reading any print at all if one has little or no vision)
- ◆ Reading without good reading light
- ◆ Seeing detail (such as print) without good contrast
- ◆ Following a line of print without losing one's place or finding the next line
- ◆ Reading so slowly that context is lost
- ◆ Writing legibly, especially with standard pens or pencils (or writing at all if one has little or no vision)
- ◆ Dealing with glare (often much more sensitive than those without vision loss)
- ◆ Moving around the workplace without bumping into objects or tripping over cords, etc. that are of low contrast
- ◆ Knowing who is addressed in a conversation, especially when in a room with many people

## **Hearing Loss**

- ◆ Hearing directions, explanations, etc. given by the supervisor
- ◆ Hearing questions, comments, etc. offered by other workers
- ◆ Hearing only part of what is going on; misunderstanding what is said
- ◆ Dealing with ambient noise in the work place
- ◆ Communicating wants and needs verbally (depending on the extent and onset of the hearing loss)
- ◆ Speaking more loudly than necessary
- ◆ Writing with proper sentence structure, grammar, etc. (depending on the duration and extent of the hearing loss)
- ◆ Communicating by telephone
- ◆ Frustration, fatigue, or stress due to straining to hear

### **Mental or Emotional Disabilities**

- ◆ Concentrating for an extended period of time
- ◆ Feeling restless
- ◆ Feeling anxious or withdrawn
- ◆ Getting started on tasks
- ◆ Feeling frustrated
- ◆ Dealing with changes in the classroom setting
- ◆ Staying on task
- ◆ Interacting with others
- ◆ Displaying unusual repetitive physical behaviors or verbalization

### **Recovery from Substance Abuse**

- ◆ Memory loss
- ◆ Cognitive impairments (which can mimic some of the difficulties experienced by those with learning disabilities)
- ◆ Attending work on a fixed schedule – may need flexibility to attend therapy sessions and find alternate transportation to and from work (if license has been revoked)
- ◆ Difficulty dealing with loose structured tasks and settings
- ◆ Staying on task or working toward goals without frequent and regular reminders or reviews

### **Physical or Orthopedic Disabilities**

- ◆ Walking
- ◆ Maintaining balance
- ◆ Sitting for a period of time without experiencing pain, discomfort or fatigue
- ◆ Writing
- ◆ Turning pages, lifting, or repositioning books and/or other materials, etc.
- ◆ Holding head upright or steady to read and write
- ◆ Expressing self verbally
- ◆ Stabilizing books, paper, etc.
- ◆ Staying on task without becoming fatigued or losing endurance

### **Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)**

- ◆ Attending to and staying on task
- ◆ Staying organized
- ◆ Getting started and/or staying on task

### **Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)**

- ◆ Attending to and staying on task
- ◆ Getting started
- ◆ Sitting to complete a task or sitting without becoming restless or fidgety
- ◆ Dealing with frustration/becoming frustrated easily
- ◆ Staying organized
- ◆ Getting along with others in the work place
- ◆ Controlling impulsiveness

### **Learning Disabilities**

- ◆ Strong preference of one or more areas of work over others
- ◆ Word recognition
- ◆ Reading comprehension
- ◆ Listening comprehension
- ◆ Math calculations
- ◆ Math reasoning tasks
- ◆ Understanding written information
- ◆ Written expression
- ◆ Oral language expression
- ◆ Monitoring performance
- ◆ Remembering information
- ◆ Understanding auditory information (such as verbal instructions)
- ◆ Attending to only the relevant information
- ◆ Getting or staying organized
- ◆ Changing from one task to the next
- ◆ Getting started
- ◆ Social perception and interactions

### **Head Injury or Stroke** - Challenges vary widely, depending upon the location and extent of the injury

- ◆ Any of the challenges noted under “Physical/Orthopedic Disabilities”
- ◆ Any of the challenges noted under “Vision Loss”
- ◆ Dealing with verbal language – speaking, understanding, reading, writing
- ◆ Remembering/retaining information
- ◆ Dealing with impulsiveness and low frustration tolerance
- ◆ Attending to task
- ◆ Getting started
- ◆ Handling change in the classroom

**Systemic Conditions-** This includes chronic health problems such as AIDS, asthma, cancer, diabetes, epilepsy, etc.

- ◆ Dealing with chronic or intermittent pain or discomfort
- ◆ Dealing with fatigue or low endurance
- ◆ Concentrating
- ◆ Attending work during “flare-ups”
- ◆ Attending work during certain times of the day
- ◆ Dealing with changes in behavior during medication adjustment periods
- ◆ Nausea, drowsiness, dry mouth or other side effects from medication

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For a more extensive list of conditions and job accommodations see the following website: <http://www.jan.wvu.edu/media/ideas.html>





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# Introduction

Once an individual has been identified as having a disability, the case manager and the individual with a disability should sit down and discuss types of jobs that might best match the individual's skills while working around the individual's weaknesses. At the same time discussion should take place regarding accommodations that support the individual's successful employment. It will probably never be possible to find a job that will not require some tasks that use skills the individual lacks or is not proficient in. These tasks may need some reasonable accommodation.

To help you think about possible accommodation strategies we have included many examples in the following pages. We feel that accommodation selection can be looked at several different ways. For this project we selected the Ecology of Human Performance (EHP) Model to organize our accommodation strategies (Dunn, Brown, & McGuigan, 1994). The EHP Model was chosen because it considers the relationships among persons, what persons want and need to do, and where the person needs to conduct their activities.

According to the EHP, understanding the person also requires understanding the person's context; the person's influence on their context; and the context's influences on the person. When we refer to context we are referring not only to the person's physical environment but also to the person's social context, the person's cultural context, and the person's temporal context.

The EHP offers a framework for designing accommodations to support a person's skills and abilities. This framework encourages you to consider skills the client has and ways to change tasks and contexts to facilitate successful performance. The EHP encourages you to focus on the transaction between the client's skills and the resources of the context. This focus on skills and the environment facilitates job placement that supports the individual's performance rather than causing struggles for the individual.

Four accommodation strategy categories are offered for addressing client needs:

- ◆ Establish/Restore
- ◆ Modify/Adapt
- ◆ Alter
- ◆ Prevent

## ***Opening Doors: Empowering people with disabilities***

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The **ESTABLISH/RESTORE** strategies address individuals' abilities. These strategies are useful when you feel that a person can improve his or her skills, not by modifying the task or the environment but by changing the person.

***Situation:*** A clerk needed extra support when performing duties which included answering the phone, distributing pamphlets, entering "leads" into the computer, and answering questions. She had difficulty knowing what jobs to do first and when it was appropriate to switch to another task.

***Solution:*** A job coach was assigned for two weeks and was then utilized as needed for reinforcement.

The **MODIFY/ADAPT** strategies address features of the context and of the task so they support the person's performance. These strategies build on what the person's strengths are and what he or she needs so that weak areas do not interfere with performance.

***Situation:*** A custodian was assigned several duties and had trouble remembering which one he was supposed to be doing. He also had difficulty reading the job postings.

***Solution:*** As an accommodation, the person was assigned only one job task at a time. And, when a position was open, it was brought to the person's attention rather than requiring him to read the written job postings.

The **ALTER** strategies address the possible need to find an optimal context for the individual. For example, a worker who is distractible finds that she can complete independent work more efficiently in a private office or cubicle, as opposed to the more chaotic shared workroom.

**Situation:** *A clerk with a learning disability maintained files and had difficulty categorizing and sorting paperwork.*

**Solution:** *The office was rearranged to eliminate visual distractions. Task sequencing (one job is completed before the next one is started) was used in the office. Also provided were reading templates (see typoscope in the Resources chapter), colored marker tabs, and incandescent lighting.*

The **PREVENT** strategies address the ability to anticipate a problem in the future. When using this strategy, remember the problem does not currently exist but is likely to occur in the future if no changes are made. We do not have to wait for a person to face failure before offering a strategy for making a situation better.

**Situation:** *A worker in retail sales with Attention Deficit Disorder was increasingly frustrated by day-to-day responsibilities on the floor.*

**Solution:** *Breaking her day into highly structured pieces prevented her from becoming frustrated.*

The accommodation strategies that are presented in this text are listed by performance deficits rather than by specific diagnosis. We believe that the person's diagnosis is less relevant than the problems that the individual is encountering. As we know, not all disorders affect people exactly the same way. The focus of your accommodation quest should be on what the individual wants and needs to do; what the employer wants and needs him or her to do; and how they can, together, identify strengths to overcome the barriers to job performance. The "Accommodations Interview" will, along with other information about the client, help you to prepare the client for this interaction.

Before reviewing the accommodation tables it might be helpful to spend time with your client to help him or her get more specific about what kinds of problems they encounter. We have included the "Accommodations Interview" to give you a systematic way to discuss a client's abilities and needs.

This interview is an example of one that has been helpful to others in the past. It is by no means meant as a requirement, however, you can gain helpful information about your client and the questions will help to stimulate your and the client's thinking about what accommodations he or she might want to request on the job.

# ***The Accommodations Interview***

The *Accommodations Interview* is an individually administered assessment procedure. The interview is useful for assessing a client's areas of difficulty and approaches to difficulties. Approaches include accommodations or other interventions previously used regardless of the outcome. The interview questions also elicit information about the client's current approaches to successful functioning in problem areas.

Upon completion of the interview, the client and case manager will have a basis for planning appropriate interventions or other accommodations strategies.

## ***Training Requirements***

The *Accommodations Interview* is intended for use with adults. Learning to administer the interview can be accomplished by carefully reviewing the instructions below and the interview itself. The following reminders are provided to ensure that the interview yields valid information:

- The structure of the interview is provided as a guide to economize the use of your and the client's time. The order of questions can be changed to accommodate the client's needs.
- The wording of the items helps to focus the discussion on those aspects that are relevant to accommodations for work, but the items can be reworded to improve the client's understanding.
- The information is confidential and thus, the interview should be conducted in a setting that protects the rights of the client. Similarly, the results should be protected from review by others.
- Read the entire directions for administration of the interview and become familiar with its format so that the interview will flow smoothly.
- Maintain an engaged approach with the client, but be careful that your comments are supportive and not judgmental. You want the client to feel comfortable in your discussion.
- Recall that the interview can be repeated as necessary. Some of the reasons that an interview might be repeated are that rapport was not as good as hoped, new information about the client's disability became available, or the client's goals changed.
- Follow-up questions can be important for eliciting information that will confirm your understanding of the clients intent. Examples of follow-up questions include: Could you tell me more about that? What is an example of how you worked out an accommodation? What else should I know to help you with this? How do you think this difficulty will affect your work? Be careful about not leading the client to a particular answer or conclusion.

### **Administration Directions**

#### ***Step One: Build rapport with your client***

The interview items request personal information from the client. Since most people are reluctant to discuss their limitations, good rapport is essential.

#### ***Step Two: Introduce the interview to the client***

Interviews should be conducted in an area so the client has a reasonable expectation of confidentiality. If other people are likely to hear the client's answers, the answers may not be honest.

Explain that when seeking employment it is important that the client is knowledgeable about both his or her strengths and limitations. This interview is designed to open discussion with the client regarding areas of limitations and how he or she has accommodated for them in the past. Listening to how the person has handled difficult situations in the past helps you to assess his or her needs.

The following text may be paraphrased to suit the client:

**I want to spend a little time with you to help us think about areas that might be troublesome for you on the job. For some people with disabilities, changes (accommodations) can be provided in the workplace that may help overcome some difficulties.**

**I want to assure you our discussion is confidential and I will only share the information that you feel comfortable with me sharing. For the most part, these discussions are to help me to find out your strengths and weaknesses so that I can help you find a job that meets your abilities. It will also help find ways for you to accomplish tasks that you might find difficult.**

**Please feel free to ask me about any of the questions that you find confusing. Are you ready? Let's begin.**

Record responses in detail. As much as possible, use the client's exact words. Do not record everything that is said, only relevant perceptions and facts are important.

Answer any questions the client may have.

If you are unsure of a response, ask for clarification. One way to clarify is to paraphrase the answer and ask if you are correct.

### Part 1

The client is asked to identify difficulties he or she may have. Read through the entire list and check the areas of difficulty that the client identifies.

**Which of the following areas do we need to focus on to help you achieve your goals?**

### Part 2

After marking individual areas, go to the page indicated next to the problem area and ask those questions.

**This page has some additional questions. Let's see what kinds of challenges you encounter in each area. This will help us when we need to think about accommodations for you.**

Each page of detailed questions refers you to accommodation tables that address the problems sited in the interview. Based on interview answers, discuss some possible accommodation strategies with your client.

Some of the accommodations mentioned in these tables are explained further in the *Resources* section. These accommodations are marked with either an "r" for reference to a section within the *Resources* with the same heading or with "r-t" for those items that are addressed in a separate discussion on assistive technology in the *Resources* section.

Once you and your client have decided on some accommodations, it would be helpful to try these out in a volunteer or work situation and assess their effectiveness. If found effective discuss with your client how he or she would approach an employer about his or her needs (see *Disclosure and Self-Advocacy* chapter).

**An example of the first page of the *Accommodations Interview* is provided on the following page. For duplication purposes, the complete *Interview* is provided in the Appendix (pages 140-155).**

# *Accommodations Interview*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Which of the following are problems or potential problems, related to working? Please tell me all that apply to you.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Reading (pages 2, 3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Seeing things around the room (pages 2, 3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Writing/Spelling (page 4)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Doing math (page 5)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Paying attention (page 6)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Staying on track (page 6)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Getting used to changes (page 6)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Remembering (page 6)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Being organized (page 6)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Getting frustrated (page 7)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hearing (page 8)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Talking with the boss and others (page 9)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Getting your ideas across to the boss and others (page 9)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Getting into or around in the jobsite (page 10)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sitting still or in one place for very long time (page 11)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Finding my way around (page 12)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Getting along with my boss and co-workers (page 13)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Knowing what tasks are most important (page 14)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Following what someone is telling me (page 14)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Difficulty thinking or understanding (page 15)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Health or medical condition that affects ability to work (page 16)

2. Are there other areas in which you think you need help? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Let's put all of these areas in order of importance, most important being first:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Did you have any problems in these areas when you were in school or on previous jobs?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Are you taking any medications that might affect your work, maybe medications that make you drowsy, thirsty or nauseated? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# *Accommodations Tables*

Once you have completed the “Accommodations Interview” and determined the accommodation need(s) of your client the next step is to select a specific accommodation to meet that need(s). The accommodations tables presented in this section are examples of strategies that might be considered if an individual is dealing with a barrier similar to the ones listed (for example, difficulty getting a task started or reading). The accommodations are categorized into five issues – cognitive/information processing (academic and organizational), physical, sensory, social and disability-specific issues.

**Note: These accommodations are not meant to be all-inclusive; the model provides a framework within which you and your client can work together to design the best accommodation strategies to support performance.**

# **Cognitive/Information Processing Issues- Academic**

## *Solving Math Problems*

<b>Establish/ Restore</b>	<b>Modify Task</b>		
<b>Build compensatory skills</b>	<b>Use assistive technologies</b>	<b>Change task or task expectations</b>	<b>Use another person</b>
Teach the worker to break tasks down into smaller tasks.	Use and provide manipulatives (e.g. rulers, counter, abacus)  Use different colors of pencil or print.  Provide a calculator. Consider use of a talking calculator, one with large buttons, or one with tape output to increase accuracy (r).  Provide graph paper to improve organization of problem solving on paper (r). Consider color coded columns.  Provide computer software (r).	Break instructions down into small steps.  Allow extra time.	Have someone check calculations.

# *Expressing Self*

## *Verbally*

<b>Establish/ Restore</b>		<b>Modify Context</b>	
<b>Reduce the impairment</b>	<b>Build compensatory skills</b>	<b>Use assistive technologies</b>	<b>Change task or task expectations</b>
Refer to speech/language pathologist (r).	Refer for augmentative communication (r-t).	Provide computer synthesized speech. Provide a communication board. Provide an interpreter.	Accept alternative forms of information sharing (such as demonstration or written report).  Allow employee to use a work partner.

# Reading

Establish/ Restore	Modify Task	
<b>Build compensatory -skills</b>	<b>Use assistive technologies</b>	<b>Change task or task expectations</b>
<p>Allow workers to use highlighters</p>	<p>Provide speech synthesis for “reading” on the computer (r-t).</p> <p>Material can be scanned, enlarged, and read back to workers using voice output software. (r-t)</p> <p>Manuals can be provided on disk to be enlarged and/or read back to workers using voice output software. (r-t)</p> <p>Basic tape recorders are helpful for recording directions or messages so that learning can be accomplished through listening.</p>	<p>Allow extra time for reading and reviewing written materials.</p> <p>Use graphic presentations and visual reminders, such as drawings, diagrams, and flowcharts.</p> <p>Provide materials with less text on each page.</p> <p>Encourage worker to use a typoscope. (r).</p> <p>Decrease or eliminate the need to read handwritten materials, such as notes, comments on work, etc.</p> <p>Talk to employee rather than giving written instructions.</p> <p>Let employees know what is most important to read (highlight).</p>

<b>Modify Task (cont.)</b>	<b>Modify Context</b>	<b>Prevent</b>
<b>Use another person</b>	<b>Change the environment</b>	<b>Prevent the problem from occurring</b>
<p>Have individuals work in pairs.</p> <p>Allow another worker to read materials to worker before he or she reads it.</p> <p>Have co-workers explain new</p>	<p>Use adjustable lighting for tasks.</p> <p>Allow to read in an environment without distraction.</p>	<p>Design forms well. Print should be dark and clear, sufficient white space provided, and each section distinct.</p>

# *Visual Processing* (see also, Reading)

<b>Establish/ Restore</b>	<b>Modify Task</b>	
<b>Build compensatory skills</b>	<b>Use assistive technologies</b>	<b>Change task or task expectations</b>
<p>Encourage worker to keep his or her work together.</p> <p>Allow color coding.</p> <p>Use colored markers or pencils to outline specific information to focus on.</p> <p>Use marker under lines when reading.</p> <p>Use fingers and thumb to frame words.</p>	<p>Talking, large print browsers that allow workers with visual processing problems to use the Internet. (r-t)</p> <p>Enlarged cursors.</p> <p>Magnification hardware or software that enlarge and enhance text and graphics, worker can also alter color, font or print size.</p> <p>Software program options that enable the user to change background text colors and font size. (r-t)</p> <p>Provide talking calculators. (r)</p> <p>Use speech synthesis to prevent having to read off of computer screen. (r-t)</p>	<p>Encourage worker to wear a visor or ball cap under bright lights to reduce glare.</p> <p>Use large print or extra wide space between lines.</p> <p>Make instructions more auditory than visual, or at least supplement all visual materials with auditory repetition.</p>

<b>Modify Context</b>	<b>Alter</b>
<b>Change the environment</b>	<b>Change the environment</b>
Turn off bright overhead lights, especially fluorescent.	In training, seat employees with visual processing difficulties in the front row near the center of the chalkboard, projector, or easel.

## ***Cognitive/Information Processing Issues- Organizational***

# ***Expressing Self in Writing***

<b>Modify Task</b>	
<b>Use assistive technologies</b>	<b>Use another person</b>
<p>Word processing enables worker to write without having to be overly concerned about making errors. This freedom can release persons from concerns about the mechanics of writing, allowing them to redirect their efforts toward meaning.</p> <p>Spell check, dictionary and thesaurus enable workers to verify or correct spelling and access word definitions and synonyms.</p> <p>Grammar check and proofreading software programs scan documents and alert the user to probable errors in grammar, usage, structure, spelling, style, etc. (r-t)</p> <p>Brainstorming and outlining programs enable users to approach writing tasks by “dumping” information in an unstructured manner and then organizing.</p> <p>Voice output software that highlights and reads. (r-t)</p> <p>Voice input allows individual with good oral expression to input information into the computer. (r-t)</p>	<p>Have another employee proofread and correct errors.</p> <p>If employee has difficulty composing text, it can be helpful if someone else produces an outline or fills in blanks for routine correspondence.</p>



# Getting Started

Establish/ Restore	Modify Task	
<b>Build compensatory skills</b>	<b>Change task or task expectations</b>	<b>Use another person</b>
<p>Teach the worker to break tasks down into smaller tasks.</p>	<p>Allow the worker to choose what to start on first, second, third, etc.</p> <p>Set a timer, beeper, buzzer, etc. to encourage worker to make choice.</p> <p>Help worker to set a time goal.</p> <p>Help worker develop a checklist for each step of the task.</p>	<p>Assign a peer coach to cue worker to set time, set goals, get started, etc.</p>

# *Staying on Track*

<b>Establish/ Restore</b>	<b>Modify Task</b>
<b>Build compensatory skills</b>	<b>Change the task or task expectations</b>
Have employee write a daily work schedule.	Specify time limitations for each activity.  Provide checklists for assignments.  Have individual checkoff tasks as completed.  Encourage use of a typoscope if employee is distractible when reading (r).

**Supervisor:** Give feedback or incentives for accuracy and timeliness.

<b>Modify Context</b>	<b>Alter</b>	<b>Prevent</b>
<b>Change the environment</b>	<b>Change the environment</b>	<b>Prevent the problem from occurring</b>
<p>Post a time chart that is easily visible to the worker, listing work activities.</p>	<p>Provide a private work space or locate the work in a distraction free area.</p>	<p>Use headphones or ear plugs to shut out distractions.</p> <p>Allow employee 15 minutes at the beginning of each day for planning.</p> <p>Do not overschedule.</p>

# *Attention to Task*

<b>Establish/ Restore</b>	<b>Modify Task</b>	
<b>Build compensatory skills</b>	<b>Use assistive technologies</b>	<b>Change the task or task expectations</b>
Have employee concentrate on one subject/work assignment at a time for short periods of time.	Use a typoscope when reading (r).	Allow extra time to complete work assignments.  Specify time frame for tasks.  Build slack time into the day.  Vary tasks regularly to increase ability to concentrate on current task.

<b>Modify Context</b>	<b>Alter</b>	<b>Prevent</b>
<b>Change the environment</b>	<b>Change the environment</b>	<b>Prevent the problem from occurring</b>
<p>Provide appropriate storage space for materials not in use (to lessen distractions in the room).</p> <p>Make a time oriented flow chart that is easily visible to the worker, listing daily job responsibilities.</p> <p>Post daily routine and discuss changes</p>	<p>Have worker sit at a cubicle or own office.</p> <p>Use “white noise” to drown out distractions.</p>	<p>Have worker take a break every half hour and encourage him or her to leave the work area.</p> <p>Encourage worker to get some physical exercise during breaks.</p> <p>Have worker work with a partner who will cue him or her to stay on task.</p>

# *Paying Attention to Oral Directions/Spoken Words*

<b>Establish/ Restore</b>	<b>Modify Task</b>		
<b>Reduce the impairment</b>	<b>Build compensatory skills</b>	<b>Use assistive technologies</b>	<b>Change task or task expectations</b>
<p>Make sure worker does not have a correctable hearing problem.</p>	<p>Encourage worker to repeat back information given orally.</p>	<p>Make variable-speed tape recordings of instructions to allow worker to listen at own pace.</p> <p>Multi-media/ multi-sensory approach, reading machines that combine visual and voice output, videotapes, and videotape players with closed captioning.</p> <p>FM amplification devices will isolate and amplify sound source, reducing distractive noise. (r)</p>	<p>Establish eye contact before speaking.</p> <p>Break oral directions in small steps.</p> <p>Encourage listeners to take notes.</p> <p>Touch the listener or call his or her name before speaking.</p> <p>Leave outline or notice to remind listener later.</p> <p>Demonstrate directions being given.</p> <p>Talk clearly, use short sentences, avoid jargon.</p> <p>Provide visual cues on board or overhead.</p>

<b>Modify Task (cont.)</b>	<b>Alter</b>	<b>Prevent</b>
<b>Use another person</b>	<b>Change the environment</b>	<b>Change the environment</b>
<p>Have co-worker take notes for employee on pressure sensitive paper or make Xerox copy of notes.</p> <p>Provide a partner to cue worker or provide repetition, when necessary.</p>	<p>Stand directly in front of the employee when speaking to him or her.</p> <p>Have the worker sit in the front of the classroom or group.</p>	<p>Allow the employee to work in a quiet, distraction free environment.</p>

# ***Sitting or Standing Tolerance***

*Sitting or standing for long periods of time causes increased agitation and decreased attention to task*

<b>Establish/ Restore</b>	<b>Modify Task</b>
<b>Build compensatory skills</b>	<b>Change the task or task expectations</b>
<p>Have “fidget” objects, e.g., paper clips, small balls, etc. available. Encourage use of these items to relieve building tension.</p> <p>Have worker chew gum, licorice, lollipop or chew on tubing. (r).</p> <p>Allow food. (r).</p> <p>Encourage worker to wear comfortable clothing.</p>	<p>Allow extra time to complete job assignments.</p> <p>Allow different types of chairs (e.g. rocking chair, beanbag chair, therapy ball) (r).</p> <p>Allow flexible break times.</p> <p>Use flex-scheduling, allowing employee to work at times when fewer workers are present, if others increase agitation.</p> <p>Provide written instructions.</p> <p>Break tasks into small pieces.</p> <p>Allow tape recording of meetings.</p> <p>Allow worker to work in a variety of positions and to change positions frequently.</p>



<b>Modify Context</b>	<b>Alter</b>	<b>Prevent</b>
<b>Change the atmosphere</b>	<b>Change the environment</b>	<b>Prevent agitation</b>
<p>Have worker sit close to the speaker, on the fringes of a quiet corner, and/or away from the window.</p> <p>Lower the lights.</p> <p>Adjust the room temperature.</p> <p>Clearly define task requirements, due dates, and make changes only with proper notice.</p>	<p>Have employee sit in a quiet, low-traffic area.</p> <p>Use room dividers</p>	<p>Have employee take a break every half hour and encourage him or her to take a walk.</p> <p>Have employee work with a partner who will cue him or her to return to task.</p>

# *Frustration*

<b>Establish/ Restore</b>	<b>Modify Context</b>	<b>Alter</b>	<b>Prevent</b>
<b>Reduce the impairment</b>	<b>Change the environment</b>	<b>Change the context</b>	<b>Prevent the problem from occurring</b>
<p>Make referral for stress management (r).</p> <p>Make referral for relaxation techniques (r).</p>	<p>Have the worker sit by the door so that he or she may leave if difficulty controlling behavior occurs.</p> <p>Use soft, relaxing music if worker does not find it distracting.</p> <p>Have a rocking chair at the workplace for a calming effect on the worker.</p>	<p>Provide private work area to decrease distractions.</p>	<p>Set up regular break times, with possibility of engaging in light exercise (e.g., walking during breaks).</p> <p>Allow worker to help set up his or her own schedule.</p> <p>Set up a signal system with the employee to signal the supervisor when he or she is beginning to get frustrated.</p>

# *Dealing with Changes*

<b>Modify Context</b>	<b>Prevent</b>
<b>Use another person</b>	<b>Prevent the problem from occurring</b>
<p>Allow worker to use appropriate support person when difficult changes are anticipated.</p>	<p>Help the worker to know what to expect. Organize the day for him or her - for example, spend 15 minutes on task 1, 20 minutes on task 2, etc.</p> <p>Give the person a head start on changes.</p> <p>Post daily routine; discuss changes in routine as soon as possible.</p> <p>Provide frequent review of the task sequence and any anticipated revisions.</p> <p>Thoroughly introduce and acquaint employee with other employees, new staff, and new work areas; allow adequate time to acclimate.</p> <p>Ask for worker to participate in orienting others to changes or to assist in making changes (i.e. helping rearrange furniture) and having some control over changes (such as choosing his or her own workspace in a room).</p> <p>Provide predictable break between two activities, allowing definite ending of one task before break and definite initiation of another task after break.</p> <p>Allow adequate time for “set up” between tasks. Set timer for set up/acclimation period prior to starting new task.</p>

# Remembering

Establish/ Restore	Modify Task
<b>Build compensatory skills</b>	<b>Change the task or task expectations</b>
<p>Tape record important information.</p> <p>Have employee take notes and record meetings – that way they won’t have to re-listen to the entire meeting, only the portions they need.</p> <p>Teach employee to make cue notes to place in his or her work area.</p> <p>Write all assignments in a book.</p> <p>Have worker stop and summarize in writing what has just been instructed.</p> <p>Have workers keep a checklist of tasks to be completed.</p>	<p>Teach or instruct workers using as many modalities (visual, auditory, tactile) as possible.</p> <p>Keep distractions to a minimum.</p> <p>Have employee repeat directions verbally.</p> <p>Provide an audiotape of directions (or have the worker make a tape).</p> <p>Provide verbal clues with written instructions.</p> <p>Provide demonstration of tasks to be completed, providing only small chunks at a time.</p>

**Supervisor:** Never assume that the employee will remember tomorrow what he or she knows today, nor that because he or she has trouble learning something today the same problem will occur tomorrow.

<b>Alter</b>	<b>Prevent</b>
<b>Change the environment</b>	<b>Prevent the problem from occurring</b>
<p>Use e-mail. It's easily stored and organized.</p> <p>Encourage employee to use compute software that has an announce feature that reminds him or her of activities of appointments.</p>	<p>Have instructions listed on a blackboard.</p> <p>Do not give employee instructions when he or she is doing something else.</p>

# *Staying Organized*

<b>Establish/ Restore</b>	<b>Prevent</b>
<b>Teach compensatory skills</b>	<b>Use strategies to prevent disorganization</b>
Teach mnemonics (r).	Use notebooks and folders.  Color code papers and folders to keep assignments straight (e.g. use green paper and folders for a specific task).  Write down assignments and check them off as they are completed.  Use an organizer and develop a workable system for writing down long and short term assignments.  Use a backpack or briefcase to keep things together.  Work on only one work assignment at a time and keep all papers, books, or other needed equipment for each assignment together.  Provide adequate storage space for materials that are not in use.  Use highlighters.  Use colored index cards to keep track of information.  Do not overschedule.  Use beepers, buzzers, timers, computer software, etc. to remind workers to go to next task.

# *Directionality*

<b>Establish/ Restore</b>	<b>Modify Task</b>	<b>Prevent</b>
<b>Build compensatory skills</b>	<b>Use assistive technologies</b>	<b>Change the environment</b>
<p>Encourage worker to ask directions when confused about directions.</p> <p>Teach landmarks.</p>	<p>Software programs are available that enable users to explore on-screen a neighboring city, or larger geographic area. Once the user has decided route, directions can be printed out or entered in tape recorder.</p> <p>Highlight maps and best routes.</p>	<p>Paint colors, pictures, or other decorations to give visual cues.</p> <p>Maps can be hung on the wall at various places in the building.</p> <p>Work stations should not be symmetrical, should have distinguishing features to facilitate spatial organization.</p> <p>Put a piece of tape on left or right of worker's desk or computer.</p>



## ***Physical Issues***

# ***Physically Accessing Facilities***

<b>Modify Context</b>	<b>Prevent</b>
<b>Change the environment</b>	<b>Prevent the problem from occurring</b>
<p>Change width of doorways so that entrances are accessible via wheelchair (r).</p> <p>Change width of aisles.</p> <p>Raise height of any desk or work table used by an employee in a wheelchair (r).</p> <p>Make bathroom, water fountains, break areas, etc. wheelchair accessible.</p> <p>Ensure that any on the job transportation is accessible.</p>	<p>Store cords and other objects that may hinder safe mobility away from traveled areas.</p>



# *Sitting or Standing Tolerance*

*Sitting or standing for long periods of time causes pain or fatigue*

<b>Establish/ Restore</b>	<b>Modify Task</b>		<b>Alter</b>	<b>Prevent</b>
<b>Build compensatory skills</b>	<b>Use assistive technologies</b>	<b>Change task or task expectations</b>	<b>Change the environment</b>	<b>Prevent the problem from occurring</b>
Allow employee to stand up or lie down whenever necessary.	Use lumbar support in chair (r).  Use footstool.  Allow portable phone so employee can walk around while doing phone work.	Allow extra time to complete work assignments.	If it is not possible for employee to maintain a comfortable position, allow him or her to work at home checking in by telephone, Email, or weekly or bi-weekly visits to the workplace.	Encourage worker to change positions every 10-15 minutes to prevent pain and fatigue.  Allow worker to work in whatever position is most comfortable.

# Handwriting

Establish/ Restore	Modify Task
<p><b>Build compensatory skills</b></p>	<p><b>Use assistive technologies</b></p>
<p>Allow alternative methods of grasping the writing utensil: for example, a two-handed technique with the opposite hand stabilizing the writing hand.</p> <p>Encourage employee to proof read written work by reading it aloud to himself or herself.</p>	<p>Use adaptive writing devices such as different pencil grips, rulers, guides, paper with raised lines, or a universal cuff (r).</p> <p>Provide a paper stabilizing device. (r).</p> <p>Set up a computer for use by employee, perhaps with some of the following modifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keyguard to prevent person from hitting more than one key;</li> <li>• Voice input program (r-t).</li> <li>• Abbreviation expansion software - allows users to create their own abbreviations for frequently used words or phrases, cutting down the number of keystrokes. (r-t)</li> <li>• Word prediction software gives the writer a variety of word choices based on the first letters typed. (r-t)</li> </ul>

<b>Modify Task (cont.)</b>		<b>Prevent</b>
<b>Change the task or task expectations</b>	<b>Use another person</b>	<b>Prevent the problem from occurring</b>
<p>Allow learner to experiment with other types of writing implements (felt tip pen, pencil, oversized pencil).</p> <p>Try different writing surfaces (put sand paper under paper, different types of paper, multiple layers of paper).</p> <p>Provide paper and forms that are well spaced and clearly lined.</p> <p>Allow more time; avoid setting time limits.</p>	<p>Have employees work in groups where different individuals have different strengths and the particular individual would not have to write.</p> <p>Have someone (a scribe) write for the individual.</p>	<p>Instruct employee to take a break every 10 minutes to rest his or her hands to prevent cramping and fatigue.</p> <p>Set a timer as a reminder to rest every 10 minutes.</p> <p>Require less writing (e.g., outlines, brief notes, short phrases) or restrict job so that no writing is required.</p>

## ***Sensory Issues***

# ***Accessing Information with Low Vision***

<b>Establish/ Restore</b>	<b>Modify Task</b>	
<b>Reduce the impairment</b>	<b>Use assistive technologies</b>	<b>Change the task or task expectations</b>
<p>Refer for low vision treatment (including visual efficiency training) (r).</p> <p>Teach the worker to use an appropriate magnification device (r).</p> <p>Teach use screen enlarging software (r-t).</p>	<p>Provide yellow acetate overlays (to enhance contrast of print) (r).</p> <p>Software program options that enable the user to change background text colors and font size.</p> <p>Provide yellow filters (sunglasses) (r).</p> <p>Provide the worker with a tape player and materials on audiotape.</p> <p>Screen text enlargers can enlarge print on computer screen. (r-t)</p> <p>Provide talking calculators. (r-t)</p> <p>Provide a CCTV if reading is a job requirement. (r-t)</p>	<p>Provide written work materials in large, bolded print (r).</p> <p>Provide large print books (r).</p> <p>Require copying from near point rather than from a long distance.</p> <p>Provide a reader to read materials directly to the worker, and/or to tape needed materials.</p>

<b>Modify Context</b>	<b>Alter</b>	<b>Prevent</b>
<b>Change the environment</b>	<b>Change the environment</b>	<b>Prevent the problem from occurring</b>
<p>Allow worker to sit close to materials or individuals that must be viewed.</p> <p>Color code keys on keyboard or calculator.</p> <p>Provide an adjustable reading lamp (r).</p> <p>Color code all materials for easy recognition.</p>	<p>Allow worker to read printed materials in a room with better natural or artificial lighting.</p> <p>Allow worker to read at home where needed equipment is available.</p>	<p>Allow worker to take magnifier home each evening to complete work, if needed.</p> <p>Allow learner to wear a cap with a brim if bothered by glare.</p>

# *Accessing Information with No Functional Vision*

<b>Establish/ Restore</b>	<b>Modify Task</b>	
<b>Build compensatory skills</b>	<b>Use assistive technologies</b>	<b>Change the task or task expectations</b>
<p>Encourage and support employee to learn braille. (r).</p> <p>Teach use of print scanner and voice synthesis (r-t).</p> <p>Use computer with voice output (r-t).</p>	<p>Optical scanners can scan text and “read it” into a computer or voice synthesizer. (r-t)</p> <p>Closed circuit televisions magnify printed materials for a person with some usable vision. (r)</p>	<p>Make sure the person can fill out an application or allow them to mail it to you at a later date.</p> <p>Tape record training materials or manuals, or better yet put on computer and install a screen reader so the persons can access only the information they need.</p> <p>Provide worker with a tape player and reading materials on cassette.</p> <p>Provide brailer.</p> <p>Provide braille user with appropriate reading materials in braille (r).</p> <p>Provide a reader for direct reading or taping of appropriate materials.</p>

<b>Modify Task (cont.)</b>	<b>Alter</b>
<b>Use another person</b>	<b>Change the context</b>
Allow another person to read necessary information to the worker (e.g. application or training materials.)	Allow employee to read/ study at home where equipment/ technology is available that is <u>not</u> available at the workplace.

# *Accessing Information with Impaired Hearing*

<b>Modify Task</b>	
<b>Use assistive technologies</b>	<b>Change task or task expectations</b>
<p>Use e-mail to communicate with employees.</p> <p>Provide visual and tactile pages for communication, instructions, and as an alerting system.</p> <p>Store information via networked computers.</p> <p>Use a microphone/amplifier (supervisor wears a microphone and the worker wears an amplifier) (r).</p>	<p>Provide written rather than oral instructions.</p> <p>Provide visual cues (such as flashing lights) in place of auditory cues (such as timers or bells for timed tasks) (r).</p>



<b>Modify Context</b>	<b>Prevent</b>
<b>Change the environment</b>	<b>Prevent the problem from occurring</b>
<p>Arrange the room to support the employee's needs.</p> <p>Stand directly in front of the employee when speaking.</p> <p>If group discussions are held, place employees in a semicircle so that the employee who is hearing impaired can see the supervisor and observe others while they speak. Make sure there are not others behind who cannot be observed by the employee.</p> <p>Arrange work station in a way that the employee can readily see when someone is entering their office or work-site.</p> <p>Consider placing the employee in a quieter environment if noise interferes with communication.</p>	<p>Eliminate possible sources of background noise. Strategies may include closing windows and doors or using a carpeted room or providing mats under desks, chairs and feet.</p>

# Accessing Information with No Hearing

Modify Context			Alter
Use assistive technologies	Change task or task expectations	Use another person	Change the environment
Have TDD's available. (r-t)	<p>Provide written rather than oral instructions.</p> <p>Provide visual cues in place of auditory cues.</p> <p>Allow applicant to take application and obtain their own assistance in filling it out or provide a sign language interpreter.</p>	<p>Provide a personal assistant/interpreter.</p> <p>Provide CART (r-t).</p> <p>Use note takers in meetings and groups.</p> <p>Consider "communication cops" at meetings (one person who monitors the meeting to ensure that only one person speaks at a time)</p>	<p>Arrange room to support the employee.</p> <p>Conduct interview in quiet, well lit environments.</p> <p>Stand directly in front of person who is lip reading.</p> <p>If group discussions are held, place employees in a semicircle so that the employee who is deaf can observe others while they are speaking.</p>

# *Accessing Facilities with Low or No Vision*

<b>Establish/ Restore</b>	<b>Modify Context</b>	<b>Alter</b>	<b>Prevent</b>
<b>Build compensatory skills</b>	<b>Change the environment</b>	<b>Change the environment</b>	<b>Prevent problems from occurring</b>
<p>Teach individual without vision the layout of the workplace and any other areas of the facility that will need to be accessed.</p>	<p>Enhance visibility of objects that may be difficult to locate (such as computer mouse, door knobs, or tape recorder buttons) by adding brightly colored tape or contrast</p> <p>Allow individual to make modifications to work station that facilitate access.</p> <p>Label soft drink, vending, copy machines, files, etc. with braille.</p> <p>Place different sized strips of tape to identify parts bins for production employees.</p>	<p>A dot of silicon on a knob, switch, or button permits a person to align controls on a machine.</p> <p>Make sure building signs, emergency alert features, water fountains, etc. meet the Americans with Disabilities Act.</p>	<p>Keep room arrangement constant (for access by employees with impaired vision) unless a change is necessary for improved access.</p> <p>Store cords and other objects that may hinder safe mobility away from traveled areas.</p> <p>Enhance contrast of desk edges and other protruding objects with colored tape.</p>



# *Social Issues*

## *Social Behavior*

Establish/ Restore	Modify Task		
<b>Build compensatory skills</b>	<b>Use assistive technologies</b>	<b>Change task or task expectations</b>	<b>Use another person</b>
<p>Remind worker to keep one step back from listener.</p> <p>Teach worker to develop thought before speaking.</p>	<p>Tape record rules for worker to listen to.</p>	<p>Explicitly review “rules” on a periodic basis, have worker restate rules in his or her own words.</p> <p>Use a chart or outline of agenda or discussion so individual has a visual cue.</p> <p>Pair verbal and non-verbal cues when addressing the individual.</p>	<p>Establish a mentorship program. Mentor articulates hidden policies and under currents of workplace politics.</p> <p>Provide a job coach.</p>

**Supervisor:** Be direct and specific – individual may not pick up on day-to-day cultural mores that are not ordinarily articulated.

<b>Modify Context</b>	<b>Prevent</b>
<b>Change the environment</b>	<b>Prevent the problem from occurring</b>
Post rules.	Remind individual of current topic.  Provide time for other questions, but ignore inappropriate responses.  Prompt worker when it is appropriate for him or her to say things.

## **Disability Specific Issues**

### **Cognitive Issues**

<b>Establish/ Restore</b>	<b>Modify Task</b>	
<b>Build compensatory skills</b>	<b>Use assistive technologies</b>	<b>Change the task or task expectations</b>
Teach employee how to follow the example of co-workers to learn work routines and appropriate work behaviors.	Allow the employee to use alarm watches or timers to keep him or her on track.	Simplify job applications and interviews.  Clarify and give assistance with job application.  Conduct a verbal interview to obtain more complex information.  Adjust length of interview to maximize applicant's ability to remain attentive.  Break job tasks down into smaller steps.  Develop a set routine on a job.

**Supervisor:** Describe job requirements clearly, concisely, and simply. Always use very clear and basic language and be clear about expected level of quality and quantity of work.

<b>Modify Task (cont.)</b>	<b>Modify Context</b>	<b>Alter</b>
<b>Use another person</b>	<b>Change the environment</b>	<b>Change the context</b>
Consider employing a job coach.	Develop pictures or diagrams showing job sequence to assist in learning tasks.	Interview in a quiet, informal, distraction-free environment.  Encourage co-workers involvement in on-going support.

# Psychiatric Issues

*It is impossible to generalize about the characteristics of all people with psychiatric disabilities. Workers who take medications to control their psychiatric symptoms may experience side effects such as hand tremors, excessive thirst, or blurred vision. Some report difficulty focusing on multiple tasks simultaneously, particularly amid noise and distraction.*

	<b>Modify Task</b>	<b>Modify Context</b>
<b>Use assistive technologies</b>	<b>Change task or task expectations</b>	<b>Change the environment</b>
Use e-mail to communicate daily job assignments.	<p>Use schedules which incorporate flexible time-line, self-pacing, part-time jobs, or job sharing.</p> <p>Give time off for scheduled medical appointments or support groups.</p> <p>Use of break time according to individual needs rather than a fixed schedule.</p> <p>Extending additional leave to allow worker to keep his or her job after a hospitalization.</p> <p>Allowing worker to phone supportive friends, family, or professionals during the work day if necessary.</p>	<p>Physical arrangements (such as partitions or an enclosed office space) to reduce noise or visual distractions.</p> <p>Use a job coach.</p>

**Supervisor:** Good management practices will produce many of the workplace accommodations needed by people with psychiatric disabilities. Like all employees, workers with psychiatric disabilities may benefit from supervisors who: 1) approach each employee with an open mind about his or her strengths and abilities; 2) clearly delineate expectations for performance; 3) deliver positive feedback without criticisms of performance in a timely and constructive fashion; and 4) are available during the workday for consultation with employees, demonstrate flexibility and fairness in administering policies and work assignments.



# Medical Issues

Establish/ Restore	Modify Task		Modify Context	Prevent
<b>Reduce the impairment</b>	<b>Change task or task expectations</b>	<b>Use another person</b>	<b>Change the environment</b>	<b>Prevent the problem from occurring</b>
Rearrange schedule or use vacation time for individual to attend medical	<p>Flexibility of work schedule around need for multiple meals, medication schedule, rest, etc.</p> <p>Restructure job around marginal job functions that employee is best suited.</p> <p>Reassign employee to alternate vacant positions if unable to perform essential duties of current position.</p> <p>Allow for part-time employment.</p> <p>Restructure job so that the employee does more strenuous tasks at the time of day they feel best.</p>	Develop a job sharing situation.	<p>Modify workstation.</p> <p>Redesign tools.</p> <p>Provide accessible building.</p>	<p>Design work stations and environments that minimize the likelihood of injury.</p> <p>If condition is variable (either with exacerbations and remissions, or flare-ups) develop a plan so the employee knows what is expected of him or her at times when he or she is not feeling up to par.</p> <p>Make sure facility is ergonomically designed to prevent workplace injury.</p>

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# Introduction

This compendium contains descriptions of the accommodations listed in the *Accommodations* section of this manual and listings of resources that are useful in obtaining additional information on accommodations and legal issues.

## Accommodation Descriptions by Functional Need

This section describes possible accommodations for the following functional needs:

- ◆ Reading
- ◆ Impaired vision
- ◆ No vision
- ◆ Handwriting
- ◆ Math
- ◆ Attention
- ◆ Staying on Track
- ◆ Organization
- ◆ Frustration
- ◆ Impaired Hearing
- ◆ Verbal Expression
- ◆ Accessibility
- ◆ Sitting Tolerance

## Reading

**Enlarged print** may prove to be significantly easier to read for those with reading difficulties, even when vision itself is intact. Limited enlargement can be done on a copy machine. Computer text size adjustment is generally more effective when preparing materials. Boldness of print (to heighten contrast) is equally as important as size.

A **typoscope** is simply a template—a piece of cardboard with an opening cut in it that will allow the individual to read only a portion of the print on a page without being distracted or confused by the remainder of the print. These are available commercially but are also easily made and can be cut according to the needs of the individual (see figure 1 below).

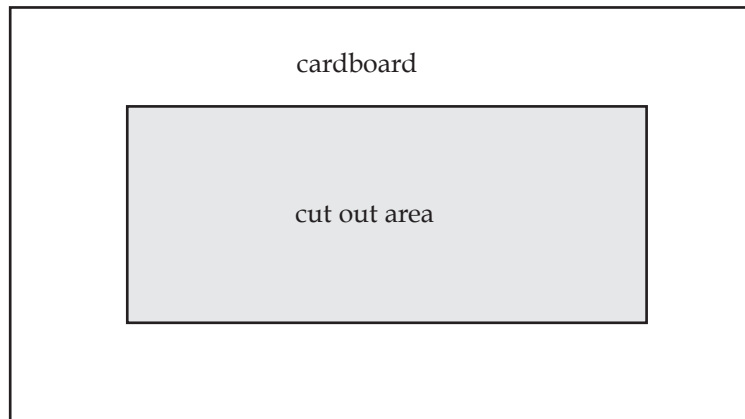


Figure 1 - Typoscope

## Impaired Vision

**Low vision specialists** evaluate visual status and current functional concerns of the individual; they then recommend the most appropriate visual aids. Some then provide training in optimal use of those aids. Some also provide training to increase the efficiency of available vision. These specialists are generally ophthalmologists or optometrists who have specialized in low vision, or they are other professionals (such as occupational therapists) who work in partnership with a referring doctor.



**Lighting** is usually a critical concern for people with low vision. Overhead lights are generally inadequate. The best lamp for reading, writing or engaging in other near-vision tasks is an adjustable reading lamp that allows light to be focused directly onto the print material. It should be directed over the shoulder, on the same side as the better or preferred eye, and should be below the level of the eye itself. These lamps are available in desk or floor models.

A 50 to 75 watt halogen bulb or 75 to 100 watt incandescent bulb is considered effective for people with many eye conditions. Florescent lights are generally less effective.

Natural light coming in through a window may be adequate for some, but is difficult to control (e.g., changes according to time of day or level of cloudiness). If used, light is generally considered best if coming from over the shoulder or from the side, and not shining directly into the eyes of the individual.

**Magnifiers** are available in a wide range of strengths and designs, and often must be “custom fitted” for the individual. Drug and variety stores may sell magnifiers, but their ranges are extremely limited – usually only very weak ones that work for a very limited portion of the low vision population.

Remember that the stronger the magnifier, the smaller its diameter, and the closer it must be held to the paper.

**Enlarged print** is necessary for many individuals with low vision, either with or without use of a magnifier. Limited enlargement may be done on a copy machine. Computer text size adjustment is generally more effective when preparing materials. Boldness of print (to heighten contrast) is equally as important as size.

**Yellow acetate overlays and yellow filters (sunglasses)** often provide enhanced contrast and decreased glare for individuals with low vision. A roll of yellow acetate paper can be purchased at an art supply store. Yellow filters (as well as other colors of filters) are available from low vision specialists; however, they can often be found at drug stores or other stores that cater to older adults. One company that manufactures good quality filters is *NoIR*

A **typoscope** is simply a template – a piece of cardboard with an opening cut in it that will allow the individual to read only a portion of the print on a page without being distracted or confused by the remainder of the print. These are available commercially but are also easily made and can be cut according to the needs of the individual (see figure 1, page 112).

**Keyboard/Calculator enhancement** can be done with colored tape; simply tape a bright color over the “f” and the “j,” or the “+” sign, for example. The individual may prefer other keys to be marked instead of, or in addition to, those mentioned. Color preference is very individual but primary colors or black are usually the best.

Stick-on, large print high-contrast letters and numbers are also available from MaxiAids, Inc., as are large button calculators. (see Catalogue List on page 127).

### **No Functional Vision**

**Braille** is a method of written communication that needs to be taught by an experienced instructor.

Grade I consists of the alphabet, numbers and some punctuation marks. It is functional for personal reading and writing of short notes (like telephone numbers, labels, addresses, etc.).

Grade II Braille consists of more than two hundred contractions and short forms that allow reading and writing to be done much more quickly (and for text to be less cumbersome).

**Braille writing devices** (non-technological) include the braille or slate and stylus. The former is somewhat like a typewriter, and is faster and appropriate for lengthier writing and notetaking. The latter is more like writing long hand; it is appropriate for writing shorter notes, taking down a message or phone number, etc.

Some people who are blind write well and only need assistance with knowing where to write. For these individuals, plastic and aluminum guides are available for tasks such as writing checks or letters. These inexpensive items are available from MaxiAids, Inc.

Because most people who are blind do not read braille, accommodations found under “visual deficits” in the assistive technology section may be more appropriate (see page 122).

**Tape players** used by individuals with visual impairment are usually standard tape players, perhaps with tactual (or very bright markings) on the buttons to allow for easier access. Some machines already have raised symbols on their buttons; otherwise, these can be added quite easily. Puff paint or several layers of Elmer's glue can be used. A commercially available product, Hi-Marks, allows the user to make raised, bright orange-red marks on plastic or other surfaces. It is available from a number of sources, including Maxi-Aids (see Catalogue List on page 127).

## Handwriting

A variety of **adaptive handwriting devices** are available from a number of sources. They include:

1. Triangular grips and foam grips (both slip-ons) – for those with some weakness in grip.
2. Sta-Pen, attached to a stabilizing base/writing frame – holds the pencil in place, at correct angle, and allows an individual to grasp base rather than writing utensil itself. For those with limited strength and/or control in hands.
3. Foam tubing, which can be custom cut with scissors, to build up writing instrument. For those with limited grip or grip strength.
4. Weighted pens/pen holders – for those who have difficulty with hand control (such as tremor).
5. Slip-on pencil holders/universal cuffs – band attaches securely around the hand and holds the pencil in place and at the correct angle. For those with little or no grasp. These are available from Sammons-Preston or Smith & Nephew, Inc.

## Math

**Talking calculators, calculators with large buttons, or those with tape output** are available from such retail outlets as Radio Shack. One catalogue source is Maxi Aids, Inc. (see Catalogue List on page 127).

**Graph paper** can be very helpful in organizing math problems on the paper. Furthermore, a variety of different kinds of paper is available and can prove helpful.

### **Attention to Task**

A **typoscope** is simply a template – a piece of cardboard with an opening cut in it that will allow the individual to read only a portion of the print on a page without being distracted or confused by the remainder of the print. These are available commercially but are also easily made and can be cut according to the needs of the individual (see figure 1 on page 112).

### **Staying on Track**

A **typoscope** is simply a template – a piece of cardboard with an opening cut in it that will allow the individual to read only a portion of the print on a page without being distracted or confused by the remainder of the print. These are available commercially but are also easily made and can be cut according to the needs of the individual (see figure 1 on page 112).

### **Organization**

**Mnemonics** can be used to organize one's approach to remembering facts. This technique simply involves using first letters of words to form a new word or sentence to jog the memory. ROY G BIV helped many learn the colors of the rainbow – red, orange, yellow, etc. This can continue to be a helpful strategy on the job.

### **Frustration**

**Relaxation and stress management** are skills that are taught and monitored by various professionals such as psychologists. The learner's personal physician is one individual who might be able to make an appropriate referral.

A number of self-help books available at local bookstores or libraries suggest ways to learn these skills without professional intervention.

## **Impaired Hearing**

**Amplification** can be provided by a system such as the “Pocket Talker Pro” which is available for less than \$150.00 from Maxi Aids, and includes an amplifier, a microphone, and a mini earphone. The microphone is placed near the origin of the sound to be heard (such as the speaker at a presentation or staff meeting).

**Visual cues** can be given through any of a number of alarm clocks that will alert the individual via a flashing strobe or halogen light. Available from Maxi Aids.

**Sign language and lip reading instruction** must be provided by professionals in the field. Audiologists are hearing care professionals who specialize in prevention, identification, and assessment of hearing disorders and provide treatment and rehabilitative services. They may provide training in speech reading (formerly called lip reading), recommend other professionals who train in sign language, or may refer you to the appropriate agency or individual in the community who might provide these services. Your local Vocational Rehabilitation office or Center for Independent Living may also be able to provide a listing of professional interpreters in your area or try calling the Kansas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (785) 267-6100 (V/TTY) or outside Topeka (800) 432-0698.

## **Verbal Expression**

A **speech and language pathologist** is an allied health professional, usually with a master’s degree, who can evaluate speech and language difficulties and assist in determining whether intervention might result in improvement of the identified barrier(s). This professional is also knowledgeable about communication devices that might be appropriate.

Speech and language pathologists can be found in most medical centers and schools. The individual’s physician is a good source for a referral to an appropriate individual in this field.

### **Accessing Facilities with Little or No Vision**

**Teaching the employee the layout of the facilities** may be necessary for an individual with little or no vision. This service is best provided by a professional known as an “orientation and mobility specialist,” if available in your community. Contact your local Vocational Rehabilitation office, the Division of Services for the Blind (785) 296-4454, or Center for Independent Living (see pages 130-133) for information on orientation and mobility services.

Some aspects of safe access to the environment can be addressed directly by employers or employees. For example, one can critically examine the working environment, looking for obstacles such as cords, loose carpet, sharp protruding edges, etc.

Move what can be moved. Then think about enhancing the **contrast** of those things that cannot be moved by marking them with a sharply contrasting color (other than red); most individuals with vision loss can see such contrast. Vinyl tape of various colors and widths can be purchased at most hardware stores.

**Color/contrast enhancement** can also be extremely important for easier location of materials and equipment in the work space. For example, place a light colored computer mouse on a dark mousepad. Wrap pens and pencils with strips of bright yellow vinyl tape so that they won't disappear on a tabletop.

### **Accessing Facilities in a Wheelchair**

**Raised desks or tables** at an appropriate and comfortable height for a person using a wheelchair must allow for armrests to slide underneath the desk or table surface. Choose one that does not have a front “apron.” Adjustable tables can be purchased from rehabilitation supply catalogues, but they are quite expensive (\$500.00 and up). Both *Sammons-Preston* and *Smith-Nephew* provide such tables (see Catalogue List on page 127). Tables can be modified to the appropriate height simply by adding bricks or blocks under each leg of a table or desk. However, be certain that such an adaptation is stable and secure.

## Sitting Tolerance: Agitation and Decreased Attention

**Relaxation and Stress Management** are skills that are taught and monitored by various professionals, such as psychologists. The person's physician is one individual who might be able to make an appropriate referral.

A number of self-help books available at local bookstores or libraries suggest ways to learn these skills without professional intervention.

**Chewing** can be a powerful stress reliever/agitation deceiver for some individuals. If done within acceptable limits, it may be very helpful for the employee to bring food, gum, or rubber tubing to chew on while doing work. One must be sensitive, however, to other workers who may be distracted by loud chewing or "smacking."

**Comfortable clothing**—loose fitting, appropriate to indoor temperature and of a soft fabric—may help to decrease agitation when sitting for any length of time. Some individuals are sensitive to the tactile stimulation provided by certain clothing.

**Providing a variety of seating options** within the worksite can help the employee to move about and change positions when needed. Rocking and beanbag chairs should be considered; even carpeted areas with pillows can be provided for working prone or lying on the floor.

Inflatable cylinders, rolls or balls (commonly used in therapy settings) can provide additional seating options. These are available through a supplier such as *Sammons-Preston*. (see Catalogue List on page 127).

## Sitting Tolerance: Pain, Discomfort, Fatigue

**Increased sitting tolerance** may be an appropriate goal for a worker. Seek advice or assistance from a physical or occupational therapist who specializes in working with individuals with pain, or with orthopedic or work tolerance issues.

A **lumbar support** is simply a soft, firm (usually foam) roll that can be attached to a chair back at the point where the mid to lower back curves inward. It is designed to help relieve or prevent lower back pain by promoting correct posture while sitting. Some are actually designed to tie around the waist so that workers who move from chair to chair can take the support with them.

# Assistive Technology

This section on assistive technology is separate from the accommodations sections because the previous accommodations are higher incident examples. In other words, the previous accommodations will be useful for most employees most of the time. The assistive technology that will be discussed in this section will be used primarily by workers with more severe functional limitations.

“Assistive Technology” is defined by the Technology-Related Act of 1988 (Tech Act), Public Law 100-407, as “any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off-the-shelf, modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain or improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.” Many of the accommodations we have discussed in the prior section would meet the definition of assistive technology.

When you encounter a person who has a severe physical or sensory disability (hearing or vision) you will probably need help from an outside resource like the *Assistive Technology for Kansans Project* (see page 124), an occupational therapist, or a rehab technology specialist. While many of these people will come to you with some type of technology already in place, there may be times when this equipment will be inadequate or will need modification. This is when you need to rely on the experts.

The following is a general discussion of some types of assistive technology and how they might help on the job. A table summarizing this information can be found at the end of the section (see page 123).



## **Oral Communication**

You may encounter a person whom you cannot understand when he or she speaks to you. This person may use or need an augmentative communication device.

Generally, a speech-language pathologist is the person most highly qualified to help a person with a disability to decide what kind of communication device would work best for him or her. Low tech systems like alphabet boards or cards with words or symbols work well for some people, but devices are also available that can be preprogrammed with sentences or words that people carry with them and access by pushing buttons. Many of these high tech devices use symbols to represent words or phrases and when buttons are pushed in a certain sequence the device speaks the words the person wants to express.

## **Aural Communication**

People who are deaf need TDDs (Tele-communications Devices for the Deaf) when using the phone. If you are calling a person who is deaf and has a TDD you can access the Kansas Relay Service at 1-800-766-3777. This is a free service with an operator who translates your spoken conversation to typed text for the recipient to read on his or her TDD.

CART (computer-aided real-time captioning) is another way to make communications accessible to people who are deaf or hard of hearing. In CART, stenographers type what is being said in a meeting and the text simultaneously appears on a computer or video monitor.

### **Written Communication**

If the employee in question cannot produce writing, both hardware and software can be used with computers to assist in the writing process. Individuals who are not able to use standard keyboards because of limited range of motion, poor ability to press keys, limited coordination skills, tremors or excessive movements may benefit from a **large** or a **small keyboard**, a **head controlled input device**, or a **keyboard emulator**. These are all hardware devices that work with a standard computer. Most come with the software that allows them to interact with the software the individual needs, like a word processor.

Software is also available to make the typing process less laborious. One type is **abbreviation expansion software**. When the letters “ku”, for example, are typed, the words “University of Kansas” appear on the screen if that is what is programmed. Many current word processors like WordPerfect have this capability built in. With **word prediction software**, the letter “t” is typed and on the screen many common words beginning with “t” are spelled out. The person doing the typing picks the word he or she wants by pressing the number next to the word, thus eliminating the keystrokes usually necessary to type the words.)

An individual who cannot use a keyboard can also use different input methods. These may be as simple as a mouse or a trackball or some kind of a switch. Individuals who cannot use a keyboard may input information through an on-screen keyboard with a **scanning array**, or a **touch screen**. Also **voice input devices** are available that allow a person to talk into the computer.

### **Visual Deficits**

For people with visual deficits, programs are available that will magnify images on the computer screen (this software is included on Macintosh computers and with Windows 95 although other packages are also available to do this). **Closed circuit TV's (CCTV's)** can magnify text from books, newspapers, magazines, etc., so that a person with low vision is able to read. A scanner with **optical character recognition** can convert written text into computer documents. Computer documents can then be read by a speech synthesis/screen reader program. A person with visual deficits might also benefit from voice input systems as mentioned above. Many of the above suggestions for people with visual deficits might also be practical solutions for people with reading disabilities.

New devices arrive on the market daily and it is not important that you are aware of the latest devices. However, the **Assistive Technology for Kansas (ATK)** project is an invaluable resource to you and your clients. It was not our intent in these few pages to give you more than a very quick survey of the kinds of technology available and some resources to get you and the client started on the road toward the client's goal.

**Table 1** Area of disability

Assistive Technologies by area of disability	Reading	Impaired or no vision	Handwriting	Math	Staying on track	Memory	Staying organized	Impaired hearing	Verbal expression
Augmentative communication devices									X
Word processing software			X						
Spell check			X						
Modified input devices, e.g. mice, joysticks			X						
Speech recognition software			X						
Abbreviation expansion			X						
Word prediction software			X						
Indirect input methods			X						
Closed circuit TV's (CCTV)	X	X							
Optical character recognition system	X	X							
Screen enlarging software		X							
Listening aids								X	
Talking calculators		X		X					
Variable speed control tape recorders		X			X	X	X		
Personal data assistants					X	X	X		

# ***Information on Specific Accommodations***

Once you and a client have determined that an accommodation may be helpful, you may be at a loss to know what specific accommodation is appropriate. Fortunately, the organizations listed below can provide expertise and assistance in this area.

The *Job Accommodation Network (JAN)* is a free consulting service that provides information about job accommodations and the employability of people with disabilities. Anyone may call JAN for information on how to accommodate specific functional limitations. They maintain a database of more than 16,000 specific accommodations and can also suggest local resources for additional information or assistance.

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN)  
West Virginia University  
918 Chestnut Ridge Rd., Suite 1  
P.O. Box 6080  
Morgantown, WV, 26506-9901  
(800) 526-7234  
<http://www.jan.wvu.edu/>

The *Assistive Technology for Kansans Project (ATK)* is coordinated by the University of Kansas at Parsons. Kansas Rehabilitation Services has provided additional funding to identify or meet the technology needs of persons with disabilities entering or reentering the workforce. The ATK project can assist, at no charge, with:

- ♦ finding assistive technology devices or services;
- ♦ locating funding sources for assistive technology;
- ♦ finding advocacy services for accessing assistive technology;
- ♦ locating agencies that provide services, therapy, and training;
- ♦ finding someone to do public awareness presentations and training;  
and
- ♦ borrowing an assistive technology device.

The ATK project also maintains a statewide loan bank of equipment. Through the statewide loan system, individuals with disabilities have the opportunity to try devices before purchasing them and to borrow equipment during emergencies or while completing funding arrangements to purchase equipment.

Five regional access sites across Kansas have been established to help persons with disabilities access assistive technology regardless of their age, nature of their disability, or income. To contact the Access Site in your region, call 1-800-KAN DO IT (1-800-526-3648) (Kansas only).

**North Central Assistive Technology Access Site** Occupational Center of Central Kansas, Inc. 1710 West Schilling Road Salina, Kansas 67401  
Phone (Voice/TDD): (785) 827-9383  
Contact: Janice Fouard, Kathy Reed  
E-mail: [jfouard@midusa.net](mailto:jfouard@midusa.net)  
Counties served: Clay, Cloud, Dickinson, Ellsworth, Geary, Jewell, Lincoln, Marshall, McPherson, Mitchell, Morris, Nemaha, Osbourne, Ottawa, Pottawatomie, Republic, Riley, Russel, Saline, Smith, Wabaunsee, Washington

**Northeast Assistive Technology Access Site** Independence, Inc. 2001 Haskell Avenue Lawrence, Kansas 66046  
Phone (Voice): (785) 841-1067 ; (TDD) (785) 841-1046  
Contact: Jeff Kuykendall, Karen Watson  
E-mail: [NEAT@independenceinc.org](mailto:NEAT@independenceinc.org)  
Counties served: Atchison, Brown, Douglas, Doniphan, Jackson, Johnson, Leavenworth, Jefferson, Franklin, Miami, Osage, Shawnee, Wyandotte

**South Central Assistive Technology Access Site** 3340 West Douglas Wichita, KS 67203  
Phone (Voice/TDD): (316) 942-5444  
Contact: Cindy Jones, Gaye Calhoun  
E-mail: [sckatas@feist.com](mailto:sckatas@feist.com)  
Counties served: Barber, Barton, Butler, Comanche, Cowley, Edwards, Harper, Harvey, Kingman, Kiowa, Pawnee, Pratt, Reno, Rice, Rush, Sumner, Sedgwick, Stafford

**Southeast Assistive Technology Access Sites Envision**

1600 N. Walnut Pittsburg, KS 66762

Phone: (316) 235-0423

Contact: Kip Kennedy

E-mail: [kkennedy@pitton.com](mailto:kkennedy@pitton.com)

-and-

Southeast Kansas Independent Living Center 2405 West Main Parsons, KS 67357

Phone (Voice): (316) 421-5502

Contact: Curtis Dougherty, Rhonda Etter

E-mail: [asstech@terraworld.net](mailto:asstech@terraworld.net)

Counties served: Allen, Anderson, Bourbon, Chase, Chautauqua, Cherokee, Coffey, Crawford, Elk, Greenwood, Labette, Linn, Lyon, Marion, Montgomery, Neosho, Wilson, Woodson

**Western Assistive Technology Access Site**

The Assistive Technology Department of Northwest Kansas Educational Service Center 703 West Second Oakley, Kansas 67748

Phone (Voice/TDD): (785) 672-3125

Contact: Kathy Wentz, Karin Rasmussen, Jeannie Sharp

E-mail: [nkesat@ruraltel.net](mailto:nkesat@ruraltel.net)

Counties served: Cheyenne, Clark, Decatur, Ellis, Finney, Ford, Gove, Graham, Grant, Gray, Greeley, Hamilton, Haskell, Hodgeman, Kearny, Lane, Logan, Meade, Morton, Ness, Norton, Phillips, Rawlins, Rooks, Seward, Scott, Sheridan, Sherman, Stanton, Stevens, Trego, Thomas, Wallace, Wichita

# Catalogue List

Many catalogues from various companies and manufacturers are available on different types of devices and equipment. Most companies will provide a catalogue free of charge. Also, retail medical equipment outlets will often provide information on suppliers or send catalogues from their various suppliers upon request. The following is a partial list of some such companies:

## **MaxiAids, Inc.**

Aids and Appliances for Independent Living

42 Executive Blvd.

Farmingdale, NY 11735

1-800-522-6294

<http://www.maxiaids.com/>

(provide a variety of products for individuals with physical or sensory disabilities)

## **The Access Store**

VanDuerr Industries

<http://www.vanduer.com>

530-893-1596 (V/TTD) orders 1-800-497-2003

manufactures and distributes products to assist businesses, public entities, and individuals in removal of architectural barriers.

## **NFSS Communications**

8120 Fenton St.

Silver Springs, MO 20910

<http://www.nfss.com>

1-888-589-6691

Complete line of products for the hearing impaired. Offers an ADA compliance kit that can be customized.

## **Hightech Products**

Don Johnston

P.O. Box 639

Wanconda, IL 66084-0639

<http://www.donjohnston.com>

**Smith & Nephew, Inc.**

One Quality Drive, PO Box 1005

Germantown, WI 53022-8205

1-800-558-8633

<http://www.smith-nephew.com>

(provide a variety of items particularly for those with physical disabilities)

**Synapse Adaptive**

<http://www.synapseadaptive.com>

1-888-285-9988

Speech recognition, ergonomics, learning tools, vision products, ADA compliance, workstations

**NoIR Medical Technologies**

PO Box 159

South Lyon, MI 48178

<http://www.noir-medical.com>

(manufacture a variety of different colored light filters – “sunglasses” – for people who are sensitive to glare)

**Sammons-Preston, Inc.**

PO Box 5071

Bolingbrook, IL 60440-5071

1-800-323-5547

<http://www.sammonspreston.com>

(provide items for people with physical disabilities)



# Information on Alternative Funding

Numerous studies have shown that cost is often seen by employers to be one of the largest barriers to providing accommodations. In reality, according to the Job Accommodations Network, most (69%) job-related accommodations cost less than \$500, and many (19%) cost nothing at all (“Cost and Benefits of Accommodations,” a fact sheet published by the President’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, July, 1996). Because of the perceived problems with costs, we are providing ideas for possible outside funding sources for assistive devices and related items. In addition, the ATK project can assist with locating funding sources.

Funding sources for accommodations that can be pursued, depending on the individual and the type of device desired, include:

- ♦ *Medicaid* - Eligibility restricted to people who receive TANF or Supplemental Security Income. What is covered varies from state to state, but medical necessity is usually a critical factor for payment. Augmentative communication devices are covered by many states, as well as prosthetics and orthotics.
- ♦ *Medicare, Part B* - Available only to people 65 and older, or people whose disabilities are severe enough to qualify them for SSDI. Pays for durable medical equipment such as wheelchairs and braces.
- ♦ *Private Insurance*, including health insurance, disability insurance, and liability insurance – Coverage varies depending on the policy; extensive documentation by professionals is often required.
- ♦ *Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)* - VR is available to working age people with disabilities. Equipment is purchased when it can be demonstrated that it can expedite the goal of vocational placement. In some states, VR retains ownership of any equipment purchased.

- ♦ *Veterans Administration* – Several levels of eligibility based on service and financial need. Equipment is paid for when deemed part of overall medical or rehabilitation need. Funds equipment such as sensory aids, prosthetics, and mobility equipment.
- ♦ *Workers Compensation* - Varies from state to state, but equipment is often purchased as part of the rehabilitative process.

# ***Resources for Advocacy, Accommodations and Legal Issues***

In working with employers, you may at some point encounter discrimination against an individual with a disability. Hopefully, you and the individual can work with the employer to resolve any concerns about reasonable accommodations or the qualifications of the individual. However, outside assistance may sometimes be necessary. Many agencies, discussed below, provide legal information, advocacy and/or mediation services at no cost.

*Centers for Independent Living (CILs)* are non-profit, community-based organizations that provide services to people with any type of disability. In addition to advocacy services, CILs typically provide information and referral, independent living skills training, and peer counseling. The Center in your area may be able to provide information, advocate for an individual, or mediate with an employer. Listed on the following pages are the thirteen CILs that provide services to Kansas residents.

## **Independent Living Resource Center**

3330 West Douglas, Suite 101

Wichita, KS 67203-5415

(800) 479-6861 Voice/TDD - (316) 942-6300

Counties Served: Sedgwick

**Independent Living Center of Northeast Kansas**

414 Commercial  
Atchison, KS 66002  
Voice/TDD- (913) 367-1430  
Counties Served: Jackson, Atchison, Doniphan

**Center for Independent Living for Southwest Kansas**

111 Grant Ave.  
Garden City, KS 67846  
Voice/TDD - (316) 276-1900  
Counties Served: Greeley, Wichita, Scott, Lane, Ness, Hamilton, Kearny,  
Finney, Hodgeman, Gray, Stanton, Grant, Haskell, Ford, Edwards, Staf-  
ford, Kiowa, Pratt, Comanche, Barber, Stevens, Seward, Meade, Clark,  
Morton  
Satellite Offices in: Dodge City and Liberal

**Independent Connection**

1710 W. Schilling  
Salina, KS 66401  
(800) 526-9731 Voice/TDD - (785) 827-9383  
Counties Served: Jewell, Republic, Mitchell, Cloud, Lincoln, Ottawa,  
Salina, Ellsworth, Dickinson

**Three Rivers, Inc.**

408 Lincoln  
Wamego, KS 66457  
(800) 555-3994 Voice/TDD - (785) 456-9915  
Counties Served: Washington, Marshall, Clay, Riley, Pottawatomie, Geary,  
Wabaunsee  
Satellite Offices in: Clay Center and Junction City

**The WHOLE PERSON, Inc.**

301 E. Armour Blvd., Suite 430  
Kansas City, MO 64111  
Voice/TDD - (816) 561-0304  
Counties Served: Wyandotte

**Independence, Inc.**

2001 Haskell Ave.  
Lawrence, KS 66046  
Voice - (785) 841-0333 or (800) 824-7277  
TDD - (785) 841-1046  
Counties Served: Douglas, Jefferson, Franklin

**Topeka Independent Living Resource Center**

501 Jackson, Suite 100  
Topeka, KS 66603  
(800) 443-2207  
Voice/TDD - (785) 233-4572  
Counties Served: Shawnee

**Prairie Independent Living Resource Center**

915 South Main  
Hutchinson, KS 67502  
Voice- (316) 663-3989  
TDD - (316) 663-9920  
Counties Served: Reno, Harvey, McPherson

**LINK, Inc.**

2401 E. 13th St.  
Hays, KS 67601  
Voice/TDD - (800) 569-5926  
Counties Served: Cheyenne, Rawlins, Decatur, Norton, Phillips, Smith,  
Sherman, Thomas, Sheridan, Graham, Rooks, Osbourne, Wallace, Logan,  
Gove, Trego, Ellis, Russel, Rush, Barton, Pawnee  
Satellite Offices in: Colby, Osbourne, Hill City and Great Bend

**Access to Living/Coalitioin for Independence**

3738 State Ave.  
Kansas City, KS 66102  
Voice/TDD - (913) 321-5140  
Counties Served: Leavenworth, Wyandotte, Johnson

**Resource Center for Independent Living**

1137 Laing  
Osage City, KS 66523  
(800) 580-7245      Voice/TDD - (785) 528-3105  
Counties Served: Morris, Lyon, Osage, Coffey, Anderson, Linn, Miami,  
Greenwood, Allen, Bourbon, Butler, Franklin, Elk, Chautauqua  
Satellite Offices in: Emporia, Burlington, Iola, and Osawatomie

**Southeast Kansas Independent Living Center**

1801 Parsons Plaza  
Parsons, KS 67375  
(800) 688-5616      TDD - (316) 421-6551  
Counties Served: Woodson, Wilson, Neosha, Crawford, Montgomery,  
Labette, Cherokee, Chatuaqua  
Satellite Offices, in: Pittsburg, Columbus, Chanute and Coffeyville

*Kansas Advocacy and Protective Services (KAPS)* is a private, non-profit corporation that works with individuals with disabilities to protect and advance their legal rights. KAPS staff can investigate, negotiate or mediate solutions to employment discrimination based on disability, or can make referrals to other agencies or services that would be better suited to assist in a given situation. KAPS has two offices serving the state:

3218 Kimball  
Manhattan, KS 66503  
(785) 776-1541 (Voice/TDD)

3745 SW Wannamaker Ave.  
Topeka, KS 66610  
(913) 232-0889 (Voice/TDD)

Statewide Toll-free Message Line  
(800) 432-8276

*The Kansas Commission on Disability Concerns (KCDC)* is part of the state Human Resources department. KCDC provides presentations, seminars, and workshops across the state on the employment, public accommodation, and public service requirements of the ADA. For more information contact the Commission at:

Kansas Commission on Disability Concerns  
Kansas Department of Human Resources  
1430 SW Topeka Blvd.  
Topeka, KS 66612-1877  
1-800-295-5232 (toll-free phone)  
1-877-340-5874 (toll-free TDD)  
(785) 296-1722 (in Topeka)  
(785) 296-0466 (fax)

*The Great Plains Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center (DBTAC)* is a federally-funded resource that provides information, training, and technical assistance on the ADA. They can answer disability-related employment or discrimination questions at no charge. Contact the Center at:

ADA Project  
100 Corporate Lake Drive  
Columbia, MO 65203  
(800) 949-4232 (Voice/TDD)  
(573) 884-4925 (Fax)





# *Appendix*

A project of

**The University of Kansas**

**Center for Research on Learning**

**Division of Adult Studies**

Funded by

**Kansas Department of Human Resources**

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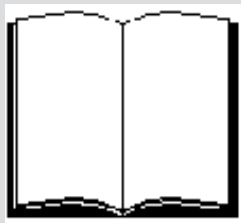
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# Action Plan For Accessibility

1. Selected task: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. How will this task improve your services? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Who needs to be involved in getting it implemented? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Who can help you solve any implementation problems? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What could be the most significant barrier(s) to implementation? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Job Title** Secretary **Employer** University of Kansas, Dept. of Physical Education **Phone** (785) 555-5555

<b>Essential Job Function</b>	<b>What can I offer</b>	<b>What makes me think so</b>
Opens, sorts, distributes mail	I am dexterous, organized and efficient.	I worked at Heart Association handling & delivering mail. I earned excellent reviews.
Answers phone, greets visitors, takes messages and gives information.	I have a good voice on the phone and excellent manners. I know a lot about physical education.	I get feedback from the people who call my home. I took PE each year I was in school and I love sports.
Types correspondence and reports	I am a good typist and I know Microsoft Word and am an eager and fast learner.	I have taken a typing test and scored 60 wpm I took an introductory course in Microsoft Word and earned an "A."
Makes copies and maintains file system.	I'm organized and have experience with a copy machine.	I have volunteered at my children's school for the past 2 years, I make copies for the teacher and file artwork. I receive excellent feedback.

<b>Essential job functions that need accommodation</b>	<b>Where I need help</b>	<b>What might help (accommodations)</b>
The ability to type.	I do not see as well as some, I am unable to see a computer screen well enough to proofread my work.	I need software program that enlarges the text on the screen. Zoom Text can be purchased for \$395.00.
Ability to sort mail.	I cannot see all addresses well.	I will need to use a magnifier when sorting mail. I can provide my own magnifier.

Job Title \_\_\_\_\_ Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Essential Job Function</b>	<b>What can I offer</b>	<b>What makes me think so</b>

<b>Essential job functions that need accommodation</b>	<b>Where I need help</b>	<b>What might help (accommodations)</b>

# Accommodations Interview

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Which of the following are problems or potential problems, related to working? Please tell me all that apply to you.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Reading (pages 2, 3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Seeing things around the room (pages 2, 3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Writing/Spelling (page 4)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Doing math (page 5)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Paying attention (page 6)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Staying on track (page 6)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Getting used to changes (page 6)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Remembering (page 6)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Being organized (page 6)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Getting frustrated (page 7)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hearing (page 8)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Talking with the boss and others (page 9)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Getting your ideas across to the boss and others (page 9)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Getting into or around in the jobsite (page 10)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sitting still or in one place for very long time (page 11)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Finding my way around (page 12)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Getting along with my boss and co-workers (page 13)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Knowing what tasks are most important (page 14)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Following what someone is telling me (page 14)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Difficulty thinking or understanding (page 15)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Health or medical condition that affects ability to work (page 16)

2. Are there other areas in which you think you need help? \_\_\_\_\_

Let's put all of these areas in order of importance, most important being first:

3. Did you have any problems in these areas when you were in school or on previous jobs?

4. Are you taking any medications that might affect your work, maybe medications that make you drowsy, thirsty or nauseated? \_\_\_\_\_

## READING

A. Is reading hard because it is difficult to see things on the page? (if yes, skip the rest of this section and go to section "B" on page 3). \_\_\_\_\_

Do you feel that your eyes are OK but you have trouble reading for some other reason? If yes, what is the reason? \_\_\_\_\_

Which of the following is true? Tell me all that apply to you.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have trouble concentrating when I read.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have trouble remembering what I have read.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have trouble figuring out words.

\_\_\_\_\_ I can read the words, but I don't understand them.

\_\_\_\_\_ I read too slowly.

\_\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify)

Do you have a problem reading your mail? If yes, how do you solve this problem?

Do you have a problem reading the menu at a restaurant? If yes, how do you solve this problem? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have problems reading directions on how to take medications or use an appliance you have not used before? If yes, how do you solve this problem?

Do you have any ideas of what might help you do better in these areas? Maybe something that has worked for you in the past? If so, what is it? \_\_\_\_\_

Are there things that you tried that haven't worked or didn't work well? If yes, what were those things? \_\_\_\_\_

Is there any other information about your reading that you would like us to know?

**SEE *OPENING DOORS* MANUAL, ACCOMMODATIONS TABLES ON "READING," PP. 68-69 AND/OR "VISUAL PROCESSING," PP. 70-71.**

B. Has a doctor told you that you have an eye problem that is causing problems with your vision? \_\_\_\_\_

Can you name or describe the problem? \_\_\_\_\_

Is your vision expected to stay the same? If no, how is your vision expected to change? \_\_\_\_\_

Which of the following is true? Tell me all that apply to you.

\_\_\_\_\_ Having the lighting just right is important for me.

\_\_\_\_\_ Regular sized print is hard for me to read.

\_\_\_\_\_ Using very dark print is important for me.

\_\_\_\_\_ I read slowly.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have trouble making sense of what I read.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have trouble following the print all the way across the page.

\_\_\_\_\_ I skip lines when I am reading.

\_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a problem reading your mail? If yes, how do you solve this problem?

Do you have a problem reading labels, prices, or expiration dates in the grocery store? If yes, how do you solve this problem? \_\_\_\_\_

Are there things that you tried that haven't worked or didn't work well? If yes, what were those things? \_\_\_\_\_

Is there any other information about your reading that you would like us to know? \_\_\_\_\_

**SEE *OPENING DOORS* MANUAL, ACCOMMODATIONS TABLES ON "ACCESSING INFORMATION WITH LOW VISION," PP. 92-93 AND/OR "ACCESSING INFORMATION WITH NO FUNCTIONAL VISION," PP. 94-95.**

## WRITING

Which of the following are true? Tell me all that apply to you.

- Regular size pencils are hard for me to hold.
- Staying on the lines of paper is hard for me.
- Writing on paper that doesn't have lines is very hard.
- I have trouble holding the paper down or keeping it still.
- I write very slowly.
- Sometimes I forget what I'm supposed to be writing down.
- I forget which way some of the letters and numbers are supposed to go.
- I can't remember how to spell words.
- I have a hard time putting my thoughts down on paper so that it makes sense to someone else.

Do you have a problem signing your name? If yes, what do you do? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Do you have a problem filling out forms? Such as when applying for a job, paying taxes, etc. If yes, how do you solve this problem? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Do you have a problem when leaving a note for someone? If yes, how do you solve this problem? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Do you have any ideas of what might help you do better in these areas? Maybe something that has worked for you in the past? If so, what is it? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Are there things that you tried that haven't worked or didn't work well? If yes, what were these things? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Is there anything else about your writing that you would like us to know? \_\_\_\_\_

---

**SEE *OPENING DOORS* MANUAL, ACCOMMODATIONS TABLES ON "HANDWRITING," PP. 90-91 AND/OR "EXPRESSING SELF IN WRITING," P. 72.**

# MATH

Which of the following statements are true? Tell me all that apply to you.

- \_\_\_\_\_ I write or copy numbers down wrong (out of order or backwards).
- \_\_\_\_\_ I get confused by symbols like “+” and “-”. (interviewer: write symbols down on paper)
- \_\_\_\_\_ I feel like I know what to do to solve a problem, but I don’t know how to go about it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have a problem keeping numbers in the correct columns when adding.

Do you have a problem counting money or knowing whether you received the correct change? If yes, how do you solve this problem? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

Do you have any ideas of what might help you do better in these areas? Maybe something that has worked for you in the past? If so, what is it? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

Are there things that you tried that haven’t worked or didn’t work well? If yes, what were these things? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

Is there any other information about your math difficulties, skills, experience that you would like us to know? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

**SEE *OPENING DOORS* MANUAL, ACCOMMODATIONS TABLE ON “SOLVING MATH PROBLEMS,” P. 66.**



# REMEMBERING, PAYING ATTENTION, GETTING STARTED, STAYING ON TRACK, STAYING ORGANIZED, GETTING USED TO CHANGES

Which of the following are true? Tell me all that apply to you.

- \_\_\_\_\_ I have a hard time remembering instructions that someone has just given me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have a hard time remembering what I have just read.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have a hard time remembering how to use what I just learned when I am supposed to apply it (like how to do something on the job).
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have a hard time keeping my place when I read or write.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I always seem to have trouble figuring out where to put things on the desk/table so that I can do the work I am supposed to do.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Its hard for me to decide when to move from one task to the next.
- \_\_\_\_\_ It takes me longer than everybody else to switch from one job task to another.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have a hard time concentrating when I am not in a quiet place.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have a hard time concentrating when the day's schedule is changed and things are different from how I expect them to be.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I start to daydream even when I am trying very hard to pay attention.

Do you often forget where you place your keys? If yes, how do you solve this problem?

---

---

Do you have a problem keeping track of your bills and important papers at home? If yes, how do you solve this problem? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Do you have any ideas about what might help you do better in these areas? Maybe something that has worked for you in the past? If so, what is it? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Are there things that you tried that haven't worked or didn't work well? If yes, what were these things? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Is there anything else about how you organize that you would like us to know?

---

**SEE OPENING DOORS MANUAL, ACCOMMODATIONS TABLES ON "ATTENTION TO TASK," PP. 76-77; "COGNITIVE ISSUES," PP. 102-103; "GETTING STARTED," P. 73; "REMEMBERING," PP. 84-85; "STAYING ON TRACK," PP. 74-75; "DEALING WITH CHANGES," P. 83; AND/OR "STAYING ORGANIZED," P. 86.**

## FRUSTRATION

Which of the following statements are true? Tell me all that apply to you.

- I get angry with my boss when he or she can't help me figure something out.
- I get angry with my boss when he or she expects me to know more than I do.
- I get angry with other workers when they make too much noise or get in my way when I am trying to pay attention.
- I get frustrated when I can't learn something and I take it out on the boss or other workers.
- I sometimes get angry with myself and give up.
- I get frustrated when I feel I am working too slowly

What do you do when you feel yourself beginning to get angry or frustrated?

---

---

Do you have any ideas of what might help you do better in these areas? Maybe something that has worked for you in the past? If so, what is it? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Are there things that you tried that haven't worked or didn't work well? If yes, what were these things? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Is there anything else that you would like us to know? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

**SEE *OPENING DOORS* MANUAL, ACCOMMODATIONS TABLES ON "FRUSTRATION," P. 82 AND/OR "SOCIAL BEHAVIOR," PP. 100-101.**

# HEARING

Has a doctor told you that you have a problem that keeps you from hearing as well as you should? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Has your hearing stayed the same for some time and is it expected to stay the same?

---

Which of the following statements are true? Tell me all that apply to you.

\_\_\_\_\_ I can hear someone only if he or she sits or stands right in front of me or to one side.

\_\_\_\_\_ I can't hear someone when there is noise in the room.

Do you have a problem getting information from people? For example, from the bank, the social security office or you're child's school, etc.? If so, what do you do to get the information you need? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Do you have a problem following what is going on in group situations or at the movies? If yes, how do you solve this problem? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Do you have any ideas of what might help you do better in these areas? Maybe something that has worked for you in the past? If so, what is it? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Are there things that you tried that haven't worked at all or didn't work well? What were these things? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Is there anything else about your hearing that you would like us to know?

---

**SEE *OPENING DOORS* MANUAL, ACCOMMODATIONS TABLES ON "ACCESSING INFORMATION WITH IMPAIRED HEARING," P. 82 AND/OR "ACCESSING INFORMATION WITH NO HEARING," PP. 100-101.**

## TALKING TO THE BOSS AND OTHERS OR GETTING MY IDEAS ACROSS TO THE BOSS AND OTHERS

Which of the following statements are true? Tell me all that apply to you.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Other people often have a problem understanding what I say.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I don't speak English very well and others can't understand me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have a hard time figuring out what I want to say to the boss. It doesn't come out right.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have a hard time asking for what I need.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Since I can't hear, communications back and forth with people who speak is hard for me.

Do you have a problem giving someone directions when they ask you for them? If so, what do you do when this happens? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Is it hard for people to understand you on the phone? If yes, what do you do to solve this problem? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any ideas of what might help you do better in these areas? Maybe something that has worked for you in the past? If so, what is it? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are there things that you tried that haven't worked or didn't work well? If yes, what were these things? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Is there anything else about your speech that you would like us to know? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**SEE *OPENING DOORS* MANUAL, ACCOMMODATIONS TABLES ON "EXPRESSING SELF VERBALLY," P. 67 AND/OR "ACCESSING INFORMATION WITH IMPAIRED HEARING," PP. 96-97.**

## GETTING INTO OR MOVING AROUND THE WORKSITE

Do you have any of the following problems when getting into or around the worksite? Tell me if any of these apply to you.

- \_\_\_\_\_ I can't get myself to work in my wheelchair or because I have crutches  
(examiner: use whatever mobility device the person is using.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have trouble getting through doors.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I can't move around the room once inside.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I can't transport items from one place to another
- \_\_\_\_\_ I can't walk all the way to the room.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I can't see things in the way when I am walking.

What have you done in the past when you're having a problem getting into or moving around in a building? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Is there anything else about getting around that you would like us to know?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**SEE *OPENING DOORS* MANUAL, ACCOMMODATIONS TABLES ON "PHYSICALLY ACCESSING FACILITIES," P. 88 AND/OR "ACCESSING FACILITIES WITH LOW OR NO VISION," P. 99.**

## SITTING OR STANDING FOR LONG PERIODS

I have trouble sitting or standing for long periods of time because...

Tell me all that apply to you.

\_\_\_\_\_ I get very tired.

\_\_\_\_\_ It hurts me or is uncomfortable for me.

\_\_\_\_\_ I need to change position to keep a sore from starting or getting worse.

\_\_\_\_\_ I get "antsy" -- I need to move around.

\_\_\_\_\_ I need to take a break to smoke a cigarette or to clear my head.

I can stay still for \_\_\_\_\_ minutes/hours when I am working. After that I need to get up because: \_\_\_\_\_

Is there anything that you do or know about that might help you in this work area? If so, what is it? \_\_\_\_\_

Are there things that you tried that haven't worked or worked only a little? What are these things? \_\_\_\_\_

Is there anything else about sitting or standing in one place that you would like us to know? \_\_\_\_\_

**SEE *OPENING DOORS* MANUAL, ACCOMMODATIONS TABLES ON "SITTING/STANDING TOLERANCE," PP. 80-81 AND/OR P. 89.**

## DIRECTIONS

Do you have any of the following problems finding your way around?

- \_\_\_\_\_ When people tell me how to get someplace I have trouble following their directions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have difficulty figuring out where I need to go on a map.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I generally travel the same route all the time, otherwise I become lost.
- \_\_\_\_\_ When I go to a new place, I find it difficult to get where I want to go.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I need to take a break to smoke a cigarette or to clear my head.

What have you done in the past when you're having a problem finding your way around a community or in a building? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

Is there anything else about getting around that you would like us to know?

---

---

---

**SEE *OPENING DOORS* MANUAL, ACCOMMODATIONS TABLE ON "DIRECTIONALITY," P. 87.**

## GETTING ALONG WITH OTHERS

Which of the following statements are true?

- \_\_\_\_\_ I have lost jobs because I couldn't get along with my boss and/or co-workers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Generally, I do not like to follow rules.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am easily upset when those around me are not doing what they are supposed to be doing.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I know the best way to do most jobs and do not like to be told otherwise.

If you are in a situation where you feel yourself getting irritated at someone what do you do? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

Is there anything else about getting along with others that you would like us to know?

---

---

---

**SEE *OPENING DOORS* MANUAL, ACCOMMODATIONS TABLE ON "SOCIAL BEHAVIOR," PP. 100-101.**



## FOLLOWING VERBAL DIRECTIONS

Which of the following statements are true? Tell me all that apply to you.

- I often can't remember what someone has told me right after I have been told.
- I have difficulty if someone tells me too many things at once.
- I do better if I have written instructions.
- I do better if someone shows me what they want me to do.
- I listen better when I am close to the speaker and when there aren't other people around me.

What have you done in the past when you're having a problem following someone else's directions? \_\_\_\_\_

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---

Is there anything else about following verbal directions that you would like us to know?

---

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---

**SEE *OPENING DOORS* MANUAL, ACCOMMODATIONS TABLE ON "PAYING ATTENTION TO ORAL DIRECTIONS/SPOKEN WORDS," PP. 78-79.**

## DIFFICULTY THINKING AND UNDERSTANDING

Which of the following are true? Tell me all that apply to you.

- I do not always catch on to what others are telling me.
- I need to do something several times before I really feel comfortable.
- I cannot understand some forms.
- Job applications are very difficult for me to understand.
- I feel that I work slower than those around me.

I learn a job better...

- When someone tells me what to do.
- When I can read the directions.
- When I can see pictures of how to do something.
- A combination of all of the above.

When you have difficulty figuring out how to do something at home, what do you usually do? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How do you usually fill out forms like job applications? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Are there things that you tried that haven't worked or didn't work well? If yes, what were these things? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Is there anything else about your thinking you would like to tell us? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**SEE *OPENING DOORS* MANUAL, ACCOMMODATIONS TABLES ON "COGNITIVE ISSUES," PP. 102-103; "REMEMBERING," PP. 84-85; "STAYING ON TRACK," PP. 74-75; "FRUSTRATION," P. 82; AND/OR "STAYING ORGANIZED," P. 85.**

## HEALTH OR MEDICAL CONDITION

Which of the following are true? Tell me all that apply to you.

- I cannot work a full eight hour day because of my condition.  
(examiner: see question 1, below)
- I miss work frequently.
- I need to attend frequent (more than one time per month) medical appointments.  
(examiner: see question 2, below)
- My condition interferes with my ability to get along with others.
- My condition requires modifications to the environment (e.g. a raised desk, files lower where they can be reached, etc.).

1. How many hours are you able to work? Do you have documentation from your doctor stating this? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you need to attend appointments or therapy sessions? If yes, how often?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Have you been hospitalized in the past year? If yes, how many times and is the problem currently under control? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Is your condition related to working (e.g. carpal tunnel syndrome)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Is there anything else about your medical/psychiatric condition that you would like us to know? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**SEE *OPENING DOORS* MANUAL, ACCOMMODATIONS TABLES ON "PSYCHIATRIC ISSUES," P. 104 AND/OR "MEDICAL ISSUES," P. 105.**

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