

DISABILITY CONFIDENT

LET'S GET THE BEST FROM EACH OTHER

People are affected by disability in many different ways. Let's work together to break down some communication barriers, challenge a few assumptions and become more confident about disability. Let's put an end to feeling awkward about interacting with people for fear of doing the wrong thing.

I don't want anything special or unusual – just to be included, respected and treated like anyone else.

Disability doesn't define me. Don't judge me before you know me.

If you don't know what to do, just talk to me. Ask me if you are getting it wrong.

You don't need word perfect terminology.

Treat me as an individual. Accord me the same respect you would anyone else. Be polite, be patient.

Ask if and how you can help. I may not need your help.

Don't avoid me because you feel uneasy about saying or doing the wrong thing.

There's always a lighter side. Try to relax. If you feel you've embarrassed me, it's fine to say sorry but there's no need to dwell on it.

Refer to my disability only when necessary and appropriate.

Shake hands, even if I have limited hand use. A left-handshake is fine.

You can describe me as 'a person with disability' not 'a disabled person'. Don't use these words: handicapped, victim, crippled, invalid, wheelchair-bound, retarded.

Ask me how I would talk about my disability and which terminology I would use – but only if this feels appropriate and relevant.

Don't use words that imply that I am remarkably courageous, special, or superhuman. It's unlikely to be true.

Don't feel embarrassed if you use expressions like 'see you soon' or 'I've got to run'.

It's often simple to make a few adjustments, and at no, or very little, cost.

WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO?

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