

Socially Acceptable Language

ASK THE PERSON BEFORE YOU HELP

Adults with disabilities want to be treated as independent people. When a person with a disability wants help, ask "How can I help?" before you act.

DON'T MAKE ASSUMPTIONS

People with disabilities are the best judges of what they can and cannot do.

SPEAK TO THE PERSON

Always speak directly to the person with a disability; not to the companion, aide or sign language interpreter.

BE SENSITIVE ABOUT PHYSICAL CONTACT

Avoid touching a person's wheelchair or mobility device. People with disabilities consider their equipment part of their personal space.

RESPOND TO REQUESTS

When someone asks for an accommodation in the workplace, it is not a complaint. It shows that the person feels appreciated and has confidence in your understanding.

THE BASICS

This document is provided for information purposes only. The content provided is not legal advice and should not be used or relied upon as such. Applicable law may differ from jurisdiction to jurisdiction; if you are seeking legal advice, you are advised to consult a lawyer in your province or territory.

Disability Etiquette: Tips on Interacting with People with Disabilities. United Spinal Association.
Retrieved from the Syracuse University Disability Cultural Center website <http://www.unitedspinal.org/pdf/DisabilityEtiquette.pdf>



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HIRE for TALENT has made every effort to use the most respectful words possible while writing these materials. We realize, however, that the most appropriate terminology may change over time. We developed these materials with the intent to respect the dignity and inherent rights of all individuals.