

Effective Communication

Webinar Series: Wisconsin ADA Coordinators Association

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1. Effective Communication

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Image: Wisconsin ADA Coordinators Association

2. Introductions

- **Rebecca Hoyt,**
Disability Rights Specialist
- **Ruben Mota,**
ADA Coordinator

3. Presentation Goals

We will review:

- ADA's effective communication requirements.
- Sign language interpreting, captioning, and other services.
- Inclusive language.
- How to write in plain language.
- Navigating communication challenges.

4. A Note About Language

This presentation will:

- Use person first language and identity-based terms interchangeably.
 - "Juanita is disabled" and "Juanita has a disability"
 - "participants with disabilities" and "Disabled participants"
- Frame deafness/being D/deaf, being hard of hearing or having hearing loss as a disability.

5. Statistics

- 1 in 4 people in the US have a disability.
- 13% of adults have difficulties with hearing.
- Hearing difficulties increase as one ages.
- Over 7 million Americans are blind or have vision loss.
- 20% of people older than 85 have permanent vision loss.

6. Disability Rights Principles

- Inclusion into **mainstream** American society.
- Provision of **equal opportunity** to independently and privately participate.

7. ADA & Effective Communication

- Communication with the public must be as effective as communication with disabled individuals.
- Must provide auxiliary aids and services.
- The type of aid or service will depend on the individual's preference, and nature, length, and complexity of the communication involved and the context.

8. Sign Language Interpreting

- Interpret spoken language into visual language.

Image: A woman with shoulder length hair provides sign language interpreting.

9. Captioning

Translate spoken language into print

- Communication Access Real-Time (CART)
- Media captioning

Image: A transcriber typing speech into text through the use of a stenograph and laptop.

10. Braille

- Written language using raised dots.
- Braille notetaker – device that translates information into Braille.

11. Prohibited Action

- Requiring an individual to bring someone to facilitate communication (unless it is an emergency).
- Requiring a minor to facilitate communication (unless it is an emergency).

12. Print

- Minimum font size of 12 point.
- Large print version of 18 point.
- Serif font for print.
- 1.15 line spacing.
- Strong color contrast.
- Available electronically.

13. Digital Communication

- Sans serif font for digital content.
- Color contrast; avoid use of color for navigation.
- Keyboard navigable.
- Alt text on images.
- Magnification/reflow.

14. Ensuring Effective Communication

- Include captions and audio descriptions on videos.
- Provide captioning for live events.
- Provide sign language interpreting for events that convey critical information, such as emergency information or when requested.
- Use alternative text for all images and symbols.

15. Inclusive Language

1. Gender neutral language.
2. Avoid metaphors, acronyms, slangs, or idioms.
3. Remove ableist metaphors such as crazy, insane, lame, suffers from/with, high or low functioning, duh, spaz, and many more from our speech.
4. “Accessible feature” vs. “Accommodation”

16. “People with Disabilities” or “Disabled People?”

- Disability is not a bad word.
- Much of the language people with disabilities use is rooted in different social movements.
- People with disabilities may describe themselves in a variety of ways.
- Allies should only use person-first or identity-first language unless a person has expressed another preference.

17. People-First Language

- The People-First movement began in the 1970’s. It literally puts the person first - “person with a disability,” “employee who is bi-polar.” This language is rooted in the idea that people with disabilities are not defined by their disabilities. They are people first.
- It was a movement that rejected the medical model of disability where people and communities were labeled by their diagnosis rather than being seen as whole people.

18. Identity-First Language

- Identity-First language is rooted in the social model of disability. ‘Disabled people’ is a political term used to emphasize the social cause and nature of the exclusion and discrimination faced as people with impairments. It uses the term “Disabled” to mean disabled by society.
- Identity-First language is also a way disabled people express pride.

19. Plain Language

1. Visually inviting.
2. Logically organized.
3. Understandable on the first reading.
4. Concise.
5. Generally written at a 6th grade reading level.

20. Tips for Writing in Plain Language

1. Short sentences.
2. Avoid clauses.
3. Write in the second person, using “you.”
4. Useful headings.
5. Word choice.
6. Conversational.
7. Define terms of art.
8. Use lists.

21. Word Choice

- Provide = give
- Receive = get
- Shall = should
- Individual = person/you
- Assistance = help
- Entity = business/employer/school
- Accommodation = different way of performing a task
- Financial burden = too expensive

22. Writing for the Web

1. F reading pattern.
2. The inverted pyramid style.
3. Chunked content.
4. Only necessary information.

Web: www.plainlanguage.gov

23. Let's Try It...

If a City of Madison resident or individual wants to access the website to expand their knowledge about Public Health Services, services provided by the County of Dane and the City of Madison, they will need to be able to comprehend the information provided. More importantly, the information will only as be as effective as it is applicable by the individual accessing the website.

24. How about...

You can learn about Public Health services from the website. The information is helpful when you can understand it and use it.

25. Communication Challenges

- Wait for folks to finish their thoughts.
- Ask questions.
- Repeat back what you understood and confirm.
- Ask for a re-cap.
- Would you like me to write it down?
- Explore language access services.

26. Questions?

Email

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