

Disability Awareness Training – Briefing Document

Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes

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Educator



Workshop Overview



This interactive workshop builds foundational understanding of disability and inclusion, explores lived experiences, and equips participants with practical tools to challenge ableism and create more accessible environments.

Learning Objectives



- O1 Understand key models of disability and how they shape attitudes.
- O2 Explore the diversity of impairments and access needs.
- O3 Identify and challenge ableist language and behaviour.
- O4 Gain confidence in using inclusive communication and practices.
- O5 Commit to at least one change that can be implement immediately.

Welcome Grounding **Duration: 10 minutes** Content:

- Brief introductions (name, role, pronouns, audio description)
- Access check-in (e.g. "What do you need to engage comfortably today?")
- Shared group agreements (e.g. respect, confidentiality, no pressure to share, honor lived experience

Activity: "What Does Disability Mean to You?"

Prompt:

"What words, thoughts, or feelings come to mind when you hear the word 'disability'?"

- Invite participants to take 1–2 minutes to write down a few words or ideas individually.
- Then share in pairs or small groups.
- Bring the group back together and invite a few volunteers to share. Capture key words on a flipchart or virtual whiteboard if possible.

Purpose:

- Surfaces existing perceptions, biases, or curiosity
- Allows people to hear a range of perspectives
- Provides a baseline that the rest of the workshop can build on or challenge

Understanding Disability

Duration: 15 minutes

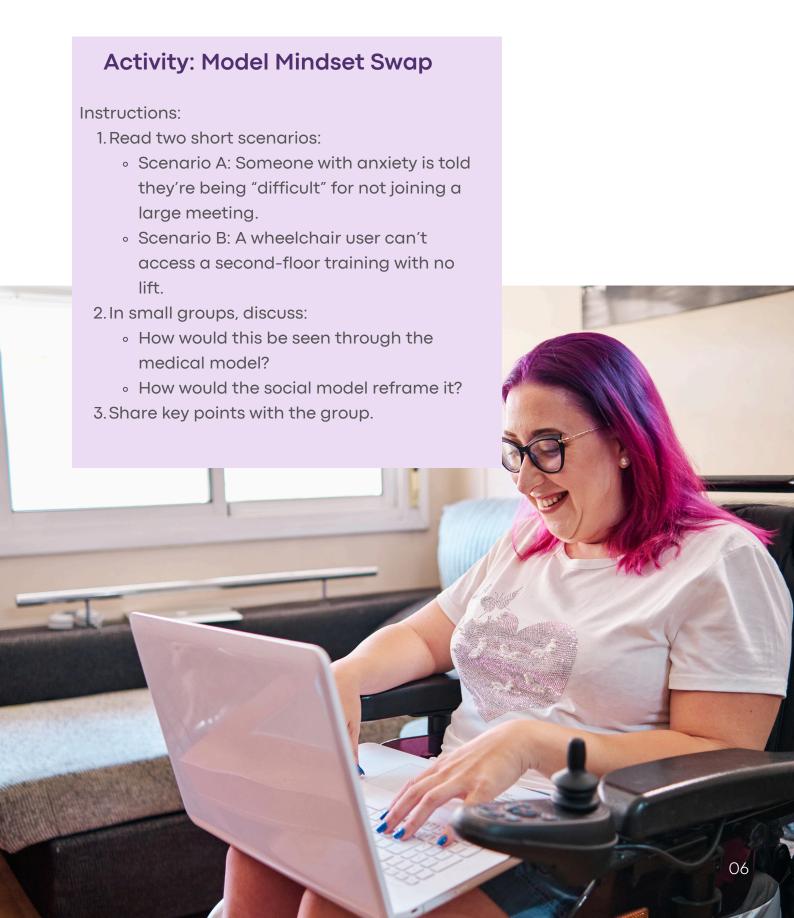


- · Social Model vs. Medical Model
- Medical model sees disability as a problem within the person that needs to be fixed.
- Social model sees disability as caused by barriers in society — physical, attitudinal, or systemic.
- Example: A person using a wheelchair isn't disabled by their body, but by a building with no lift.
- Disability as a Cultural and Political Identity
- Disability isn't just medical for many, it's a source of identity, community, and pride.
- Disabled people have their own culture, language, and history of activism.
- Intersectionality and Ableism
- People experience disability differently based on race, gender, class, etc.
- Ableism = discrimination against disabled people. It can be visible or subtle (like low expectations or assuming helplessness).



Understanding Disability

Duration: 15 minutes



Overview of Impairment Types

Duration: 15 minutes

Disability is diverse and not always visible. Common types include:

- Physical: mobility, chronic pain
- Sensory: blind, low vision, D/deaf
- Neurodivergent: autism, ADHD, dyslexia
- Mental health: anxiety, depression, PTSD
- · Chronic illness: fatigue, fluctuating conditions
- Cognitive/learning disabilities: processing, memory
- Many people have multiple or invisible impairments

Activity: Myths & Assumptions Poll

Ask a few true/false or yes/no questions:

- "You can always tell if someone is disabled."
- "All disabled people want to be cured."
- "Disability always means using a wheelchair."
- Discuss the answers as a group and challenge assumptions.



Language: Do's and Don'ts

Duration: 20 minutes



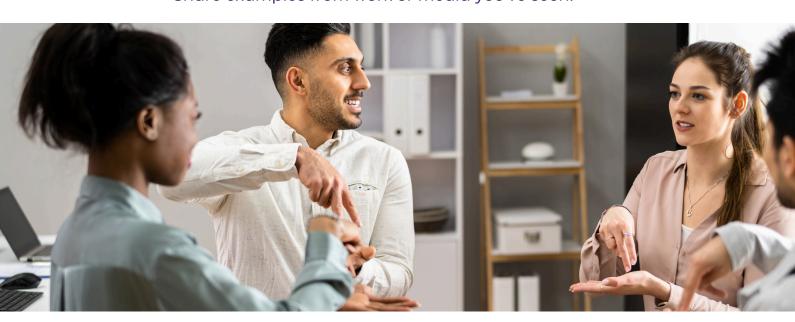
Words matter. Avoid ableist or outdated terms.

- Don't say: "handicapped," "suffering from," "wheelchairbound"
- Use: "disabled person," "person with..." (check preference)
- Avoid euphemisms like "differently-abled"
- Respect identity-first or person-first language ask, don't assume
- Focus on access, not pity or inspiration



Activity: Language Swap

- Small groups match harmful phrases to better alternatives.
- Discuss: Why do these words matter?
- Share examples from work or media you've seen.



Inclusive Practices

Duration: 20 minutes



Content:

- Inclusion is about removing barriers and normalizing access
- Ask everyone what they need don't wait for disclosure
- Inclusive meetings: send info in advance, allow breaks, use captions
- Avoid assumptions access needs vary
- Make flexibility part of your culture

Activity: Scenario Fix

Groups are given a workplace example (e.g. a team event, job interview).

They identify what's inaccessible and suggest 2–3 ways to improve it.

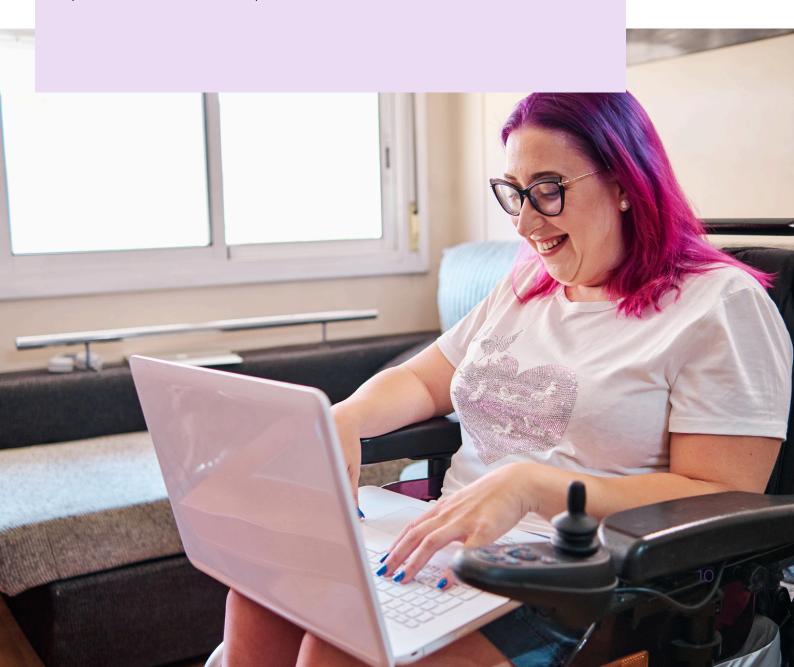
Q&A and Reflection

Duration: 10 minutes

Activity: Personal Commitment

Each person writes down one thing they'll change or do differently. Invite volunteers to share.

Open the floor for final questions or reflections.





Contact Information

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