



# SNSC

SPECIAL NEEDS SUPPORT CENTER

## Workplace Disability Etiquette

- Attitude vs. “Do’s” and “Don’ts”
- People First Language – Individual with Disabilities vs. the Disabled
- Avoid Stereotypes – e.g., a person with learning disability has below average intelligence
- Assumptions About Limitation – Doing things differently, being different vs. being less than
- Recognize and Respect Differences – Diversity & Inclusion
- Common Sense – Accommodations are usually very simple and accessibility benefits everyone



*Offer assistance, listen for response,  
and follow any specific directions.*

Disability Etiquette, 2024



# SNSC

SPECIAL NEEDS SUPPORT CENTER

## Workplace Disability Etiquette

- Recruitment
- Interview
- New Employee
- Workplace



THE MOST APPROPRIATE LABEL IS USUALLY THE ONE PEOPLE'S PARENTS HAVE GIVEN THEM.

Disability Etiquette, 2024

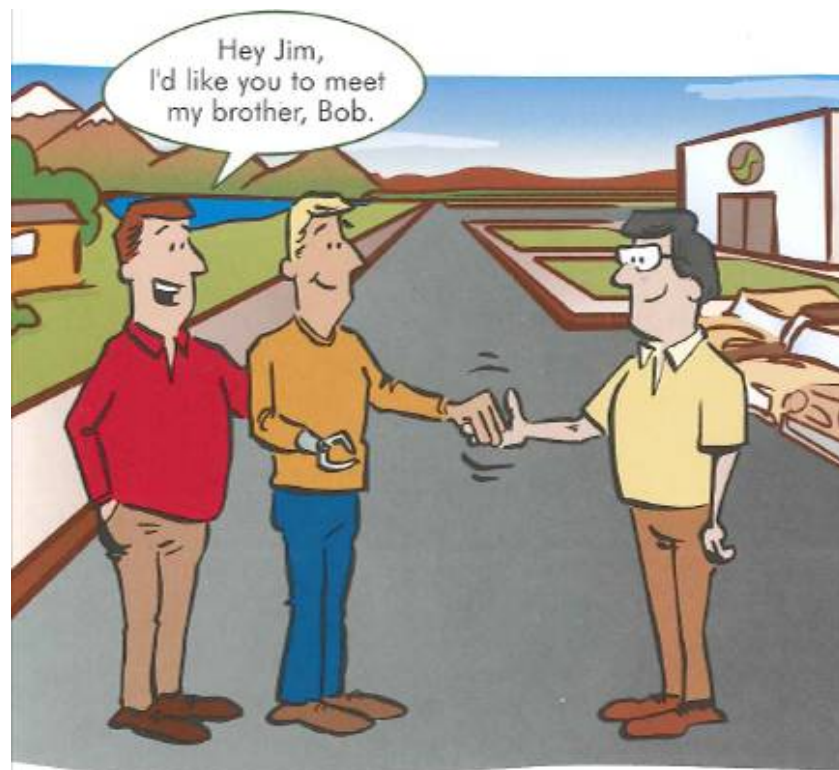


# SNSC

SPECIAL NEEDS SUPPORT CENTER

## Recruitment

- Only include qualifications in job posting that are actually required for the position.
- Require equal qualifications of all job applicants, regardless of disability.
- Advertise organization as an equal opportunity employer.



*Use common sense and extend common courtesies to everyone.*

Disability Etiquette, 2024



# Interview

- Scheduling
  - Let applicant know accommodations can be provided upon request and who to contact for more information.
  - Schedule interview at an accessible location.
- Greeting
  - Speak directly to the interviewee instead of any companion, attendant or interpreter.
  - Be aware of interview location's accessible features i.e, accessible restrooms, drinking fountains, and emergency exits.
- Interviewing
  - Ask similar questions of all interviewees, regardless of disability.
  - Conduct interview emphasizing abilities, achievements, and interviewee qualities.



# SNSC

SPECIAL NEEDS SUPPORT CENTER

## New Employee

- Review physical features of work environment and remove any potential barriers as necessary.
- Identify assistive technologies available to increase workplace accessibility.
- Consider an overall disability awareness initiative (without singling-out the person with a disability).
- Include employees with disabilities in emergency evacuation planning and procedures.



Disability Etiquette, 2024



# Workplace

- Mobility Impairments
- Vision Impairments
- Deaf or hard of Hearing
- Speech Impairments
- Respiratory/Chemical Sensitivity
- Psychiatric Impairments
- Cognitive Impairments



# SNSC

SPECIAL NEEDS SUPPORT CENTER

## Workplace Mobility Impairments

- Not all mobility Impairments are visible e.g., heart condition, asthma.
- A wheelchair, mobility aid, or service animal is a part of an individual's personal space; a extension of that individual.
- Ask whether a person with a disability needs assistance before you help. Use same courtesy as you would with others. Do not be afraid to ask how you can help.
- Language. People who use wheelchairs or scooters are not confined or bound to them. The wheelchair enables the person to get where he/she needs to go. It does not confine the person.



Handicap Awareness



# SNSC

SPECIAL NEEDS SUPPORT CENTER

## Vision Impairments

- Do not pet or distract a service animal.
- As you walk with a person with a vision impairment tell them where you are going, make note of steps or slopes, and point-out opening doors or other obstacles.
- Provide work-related materials (employee handbooks or benefit information) in alternative formats as necessary e.g., Braille, raised graphics, large print, audio files, or PDF for Kurzweil 3000, web page design compatible with screen readers.







# Workplace

## Deaf or Hard of Hearing

- Be aware that individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing communicate in various ways. Pay attention to cues such as whether the person uses sign language, is reading lips, writing or gesturing.
- Maintain eye contact and direct your communication to the person who is deaf when using an interpreter.
- Speak using a normal tone of voice unless asked to raise your voice, and rephrase rather than repeat the same words if you are not understood.
- Talk with the individual about his/her preferred method of communication for job training or complex work-related situations. When appropriate, provide a qualified sign-language interpreter, CART services, or training videos that are captioned.



# Workplace

## Individual with Speech impairments

- Be patient and listen. Do not be afraid to say you do not understand.
- Relax and communicate as you would normally.
- Repeat what you heard to verify.
- Be attentive in your mannerisms by maintaining conversational eye contact.
- Focus on content rather than the delivery of the communication.



# Workplace

## Respiratory/Chemical Sensitivity

- Be aware that products that are commonly used in the workplace (e.g., air fresheners, cleaning products, markers) can trigger a reaction for someone who has a respiratory or chemical sensitivity. Use less toxic products when possible.
- Make a commitment to maintaining good ventilation and indoor air quality. This can benefit all employees.
- Do not make assumptions based on appearance. For example, a person with asthma may not appear to be limited, but may need accessible parking because she/he is not able to walk long distances or be in the cold or humidity for long periods of time.



# SNSC

SPECIAL NEEDS SUPPORT CENTER

## Psychiatric Impairments

- Avoid stereotypes and assumptions about the individual and how he/she may interact with others. In most cases, it will not be obvious that someone has a psychiatric impairment.
- Provide support and assistance, as appropriate.
- Be patient. Allow the individual time to think and answer questions independently.
- Recognize and respect differences in people. People with psychiatric impairments may behave differently than other individuals, may have trouble interpreting social cues, or may have different ways of coping with their impairment.



*Do not pet, feed or distract service animals. They are working animals, not pets.*



# SNSC

SPECIAL NEEDS SUPPORT CENTER

# Workplace

## Cognitive Impairments

- Do not assume that because someone has a cognitive impairment, such as a learning disability, that he/she has below-average intelligence. They simply may have difficulty receiving, expressing, or processing information.
- Be patient. Allow the individual time to think and answer questions independently.
- Ask the person if he/she prefers verbal, written, or hands-on instruction, or a combination of methods in training and work-related situations.
- Treat individuals as adults.



Disability Etiquette, 2024



## Workplace Disability Etiquette

Presentation information from the  
Job Accommodation Network (JAN)  
**Disability Etiquette in the Workplace.**  
This and more information available at  
[www.snsc-uv.org](http://www.snsc-uv.org)