Creating a Welcoming Environment
By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Identify the elements for creating a culture of inclusion
- Understand how to effectively communicate with people with disabilities
- Know etiquette to follow when interacting with people with disabilities
- Identify when to use people first language
- Identify the applicable laws
- Know where to locate additional accessibility and inclusion information
### Two Main Elements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Commitment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hold all volunteers and members to the same high expectations regardless of whether they have a disability</td>
<td>Provide for reasonable accommodations to ensure:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Equal access</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Full Participation</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Ensure that the person with a disability can:
- communicate with;
- receive information from; and
- convey information to those they need to interact with in their service program.

Key to Effective Communication:
- Nature
- Length
- Complexity
- Context
Effective Communication Examples

- Alternative Format
- Website Accessibility
- Revising Plans
- Accessible Entrance
**Issue:** Supervisor verbally instructs member with learning disability about a task. Member is unable to follow the directions and implement the task.

**Solution:** Supervisor sends an email with the text version of his instructions.
**Issue:** Service member who is blind cannot read her sponsoring program’s internet or intranet websites with her screen reader.

**Solution:** Take necessary steps to ensure that these webpages follow website accessibility standards.
Effective Communication Examples

**Issue:** Service member who is deaf cannot follow verbal instructions during an evacuation drill and only gets ASL interpreter service for meetings and trainings, not emergency procedures.

**Solution:** Revise your emergency plan to account for the needs of people with disabilities and ensure availability of accommodations, like ASL interpretation.
**Issue:** Applicant who uses a wheelchair cannot understand how to get into the office for an interview due to a lack of signage on accessible entrances.

**Solution:** Ensure that signs are in place regarding accessible pathways from parking and street. Also provide information for the contact person for accommodations on the day of the interview.
Dos and Don'ts:

Do:
- Be Aware
- Be Direct

Don’t:
- Be Fearful
- Make Assumptions
When interacting with a person who has difficulty with attention or short-term memory:

- Use short sentences;
- Maintain eye contact.
When talking with an adult with a cognitive or psychiatric disability:

- Use age-appropriate language and mannerisms.
When talking with a person who is blind or has low-vision:

- **Always identify yourself at the beginning of the conversation and inform when you’re leaving;**
- **Ask if he/she would like verbal cues as to what is ahead when you approach steps, curbs, or other barriers.**
When talking with a person with a psychiatric disability:

- **Make eye contact and be aware of your body language;**
- **Speak normally.**
When speaking with a person who is deaf or has a hearing loss, always:

- Look directly at the person;
- Keep your mouth and face free of hands or shadows.
If you are speaking with a person with a speech disability:
• Listen carefully and repeat what you've heard;
• Don't pretend to understand if you don't;
• Don't rush the conversation.
High Quality Performance Measures

• Never lean on a person's wheelchair
• If you bump into a person's wheelchair, excuse yourself

• Respect them as extensions of the person or as personal property
• Do not move or play with them without permission

• Never pet when the animal is in a harness
• When it is without a harness, ask for permission before petting
What *Should* You Say?

**Say:**
- Service member with disability

**Don’t Say:**
- Handicapped service member
- Retarded service member
Using People First Language:

• Implementing people first language means identifying the person before their disability (person with a disability)
• Challenges stereotypical thinking associated with disability
• Changes the perception of people with disabilities
• Allows them to be seen for their own potential
Applicable Laws

Do you receive Federal funding?

- Both Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act apply to CNCS Grantees, Sponsors and Programs.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource Description</th>
<th>URL</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accommodations for service position advertising and interviews</td>
<td><a href="http://askjan.org/Erguide/Two.htm">http://askjan.org/Erguide/Two.htm</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Design</td>
<td><a href="http://www.dol.gov/odep/media/newsroom/universal.htm">http://www.dol.gov/odep/media/newsroom/universal.htm</a></td>
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<td><a href="http://askjan.org/topics/univdes.htm">http://askjan.org/topics/univdes.htm</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Accommodation Network</td>
<td><a href="http://www.askjan.org">www.askjan.org</a></td>
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* A link to additional resources does not constitute an endorsement of that organization or material but is provided as Resources that may be helpful to you.”
More Resources*

- Accommodations for website/internet/ intranet

- Accommodations in the built environment
  - Access Board: (800) 872-2253

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You should now be able to:

- Identify the elements for creating a culture of inclusion
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Thank You!

Congratulations!

You’ve successfully completed the “Creating a Welcoming Environment” module.