

Creating a more inclusive environment for people with disabilities

Not all disabilities are visible.

Disability is not a barrier.

Discrimination is a barrier.

We can all be more inclusive:

Do ask - rather than assuming what is or isn't possible

Every person with disabilities is unique - ask questions, learn about the person, and bear in mind that a person's abilities may have varying effects on their day-to-day life. The impact of their disability may change day-to-day, or over time.

Don't treat people differently - unless they've made preferences known

For example, someone with hearing loss may be able to lip-read; don't adapt your communication unless the other person has communicated a preference to you. Ask about people's preferences - then you can adapt in ways that are helpful.

Do recognise - and challenge - your own assumptions and biases

If you can monitor your own thinking and be mindful of assumptions you're making, you can use this information to challenge any underlying stereotypes that are influencing your thoughts. If you notice yourself making assumptions, ask 'why' and reflect. It's easier to do this if you regularly do things that help you to take a step back from your thoughts, such as journaling and meditating.

Do speak up

Whether it's coming from a colleague at work, or a family member at home, actively speak up and challenge any negative language or stereotyping you hear. People's attitudes inform their behaviour; take all opportunities you encounter to help the person understand how to be more inclusive.



Educate yourself: Read about disability

Read resources:

Disability Matters has e-learning on Understanding Disability, Decision-Making, Behaviour, Wellbeing and Society

Enhance the UK has downloadable PDFs on increasing workplace accessibility

Enable Ireland provides free services to children and adults with disabilities. They have a resource hub, full of information, webinars and personal stories

Active Disability Ireland has a range of resources on different types of disabilities, wellbeing and inclusion

Celebrating Disability has information on accessibility and inclusion, as well as a podcast and webinars on Communication and Disability in the Workplace

Instead of acting on assumptions, ask, and seek to understand.

