



Disability Etiquette Tips

What To Do:

Listed below are some things you can do to be sensitive to people with disabilities:

- Use the word disability instead of handicap. A disability may not be a handicap.
- Sit at eye level when you are talking to a person who is in a wheelchair and speak directly to that person.
- Ask first before assisting a person with a disability. Wait for acceptance and instructions before you help.
- Be considerate of the extra time that it may take a person with a disability to walk, talk, or write.
- Apologize if you offend someone.

What Not To Do:

Avoid the following behavior that may suggest a negative attitude toward people with disabilities:

- Do not refer to individuals by their disability. A person is not a condition.
- Do not block ramps, curb cuts, or disability-designated parking spaces.
- Do not emphasize disability over other characteristics when describing a person with a disability.
- Do not use "normal" to describe someone who is not disabled, implying that someone with a disability is not normal. Say that the person is "non-disabled."

Disability Awareness:

How often do you:

- Challenge others who tell derogatory jokes about people with disabilities?
- Accept and reinforce the fact that not everyone has to act or look a certain way to be successful or valuable?
- Take responsibility for helping new people feel welcome and accepted?
- Empower people with disabilities, assigning responsibility to them as often as to others?
- Disregard physical characteristics when making decisions about competence or ability?
- Get to know people with disabilities?