Accessibility Accommodations: A Primer for Fostering Inclusion for People with Disabilities

by Colin Wong, Accessibility Lead, February 2023

What is an accommodation?

An accommodation provides equitable and equal access for people with disabilities. It enables them to perform tasks, obtain information, and participate in activities similarly to others. When working with people with disabilities, it's important to ask about their accommodation needs. Some people may not feel comfortable sharing so respecting privacy is essential. The Americans with Disabilities Act allows people with disabilities to decline accommodations if they don't require them. Accommodations are individualized, depending on the person's disability, skill levels, abilities, and preferences. The following is a list of accommodation examples and is not exhaustive, and people may need some, all, different, or no accommodations at all.

Examples of Accommodations for Specific Disabilities

Blind Accommodations

- Alternative formats for documents, such as braille, electronic, or large print.
- Verbal or written descriptions of visual information, such as charts, tables, or images.
- Reader/writer services when accessible documents are not available.
- Additional time/driver/transportation.

Low Vision Accommodations

- Adaptations to print material, including changes to text/background color, different font, or different font size.
- Changes to lighting in the room.
- Additional time to complete certain tasks.

Mobility Disabilities Accommodations

- Wheelchair accessible seating.
- Wheelchair accessible ramps.
- Elevators.
- Transportation with larger vehicles to accommodate wheelchairs.
- Writer for transcription.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing Accommodations

- Live captioning.
- Sign language interpreter. *Note that sign language varies by language. ASL = American Sign Language.

Neurodiverse/Cognitive Disabilities Accommodations

- Extra time to complete tasks.
- Extra breaks.
- More opportunities for questions and clarification.
- Recording of presentations/projects for the person to refer back to.
- Quieter or less distracting work environment.
- More concise or condensed information. *Avoid long blocks of text or long lecture videos/audios. If required, provide a break in between.

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