



TECHNIQUES FOR ACCOMMODATING IMPAIRMENTS IN THE CLASSROOM

DELIVERY

- Distribute handouts in advance of the presentation
- Make instructor notes available upon request
- Use effective public speaking techniques (clear pronunciation, appropriate volume, inflection and speed)
- Avoid slang, innuendoes, puns, acronyms, and other words that may cause confusion
- Do not ask participants to take notes when the room is darkened
- When multimedia is used, provide a script, as well as a description of the visuals
- Permit participants to record your presentation
- Never select someone from the participant audience to read aloud
- In no way communicate that learners will do better if they just “work harder”

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

- Announce that participants should see you privately to work out testing arrangements
- Provide an atmosphere that is free of distraction and adequately lighted
- Offer oral and written test formats
- Ask participants to demonstrate and explain, rather than take a written exam
- Allow participants to use calculators, when needed
- Allow participants as much time as needed to complete the assessment
- Use pass/fail method, whenever possible
- Review the participant’s completed test with him/her

TECHNIQUES FOR SPECIFIC TYPES OF IMPAIRMENTS

Physical [or] Medical Impairments	Suggested Techniques
Visual Impairments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide large-print version of handouts • Orient the person who is visually impaired to the environment (e.g., classroom and hotel) • Ask the participant where he/she prefers to sit • Position the participant near an electrical outlet, if he/she uses a laptop to take notes • Do not stand in front of a glass window or mirror • When talking about a picture, describe its content • Talk with the participant about how he/she will answer test questions (e.g., by taping or keyboarding responses)
Hearing Impairments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with the participant about the need for an interpreter and/or a notetaker • Ask the participant and interpreter where he/she prefers to sit • Minimize lecture • Provide a copy of the instructor's notes and all other relevant materials, in advance, to the interpreter • Spell out technical terms to the interpreter • Concentrate on not speaking too fast or too loudly; speak at a normal speed and volume • Repeat questions and answers from participants • Inform participants when you are moving to a new topic • Pause every 15 minutes to prevent interpreter fatigue • Talk with the participant about how he/she will answer test questions (e.g., use interpreter, require more time)

Mobility Impairments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find out whether the participant requires adaptive equipment on the job that should also be provided in a training environment Host will ensure that the training venue can accommodate the special needs of the participant Ask the participant whether it would be helpful to have a note-taker Offer to provide a copy of the instructor's notes and all other relevant materials (in lieu of note-taking) Talk with the participant about how he/she will answer test questions (e.g., respond orally, require more time)
Medical Impairments (life-threatening or chronic diseases)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be flexible about participant attendance; provide an opportunity to make up any missed training so that participant will be eligible for CEUs if he/she passes the class with a 70% Alleviate concerns of other trainees who may be uncomfortable in a training environment with someone who is ill Ensure that the training venue is comfortable Host should be aware of the accommodations required by participants and that they may need a place to lie down during breaks Talk with the participant about how he/she will answer test questions

Additional Resources

Section 508	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> www.fhwa.dot.gov/508/
Designing and Delivering Training to Disabled Persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASTD Info-line entitled, "The Americans with Disabilities Act: Impact on Training" (Issue 9203) ASTD Info-line entitled, "The Americans with Disabilities Act: Techniques for Accommodation" (Issue 9204)
Training Style Adjustments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some of the best practices for accommodating disabilities are also best practices for training in general.
Visual Aids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make your visual aids and handouts large, clear, and readable.
Vision Impaired Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face your audience; for some hearing-impaired people, it will be useful to be able to see your face while you are speaking. You are not responsible for having Braille versions of your materials or a sign language interpreter. If a participant needs this type of aid, they are generally responsible for arranging it themselves.

You may not know that you have a participant with a disability until they show up, but be prepared to make adjustments if necessary, and be flexible. Don't be afraid to ask them what else they might need.