1. **Disability Relevance**: Do not refer to a person’s disability unless it is relevant to the situation or discussion.

2. **People First Language**: Say “person with a disability,” rather than “disabled person.” This emphasizes that the individual should not be defined by his or her disability.

3. **Negative Descriptions**: Never use language that elicits sympathy or pity such as “suffers from,” “a victim of,” “afflicted with,” or “crippled.”

4. **Gratuitous Praise**: Don’t portray people with disabilities as overly courageous, brave, or special. This implies that it is unusual for people with disabilities to contribute to society.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words and Phrases to Avoid:</th>
<th>Preferred Alternatives:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Disabled Person</td>
<td>Person with a disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The handicapped or the crippled</td>
<td>Person with a disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>normal, healthy, able-bodied person</td>
<td>Person without disabilities, typical person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>confined to a wheelchair</td>
<td>A wheelchair user, uses a wheelchair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mentally retarded, a retard, slow</td>
<td>Person with an intellectual disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Down’s person or Mongoloid</td>
<td>Person with Down Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mentally ill, crazy, psycho, nuts,</td>
<td>People/Person with a mental illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the blind or blind as a bat</td>
<td>Visually Impaired, people who are blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hearing impaired, deaf and dumb</td>
<td>Person who is deaf/hard of hearing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A victim of ________</td>
<td>A person who has ________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth defect</td>
<td>Congenital disability, birth anomaly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTERACTIONS

Some Things to Consider When Interacting with Someone with a Cognitive Impairment that Affects Learning, Intelligence, or Brain Function

1. Keep your communication simple. Use short sentences and rephrase questions for clarity.

2. Stay on point by focusing on one topic at a time.

3. Allow the person time to respond before jumping in to answer.

4. Focus on the person and his or her body language as he or she responds to you.

5. If appropriate, repeat back any messages to confirm mutual understanding.

Some Things to Consider When Interacting with Someone Who Uses a Wheelchair

1. The wheelchair is part of the person’s personal space. Do not lean on, or push it.

2. Rearrange furniture or objects to accommodate a wheelchair before the person arrives.

3. Know where someone can find accessible restrooms, telephones, and water fountains in the building.

4. When giving directions to a person in a wheelchair, consider the distance, weather conditions, and physical obstacles (curbs, stairs, steep hills, etc.)

5. Try to put yourself at eye level with the person by squatting or sitting down.
INTERACTIONS

Some Things to Consider When Interacting with Someone with a Visual Impairment or Disability that Affects Vision

1. When first meeting the person, introduce yourself.

2. Don’t leave the person without excusing yourself first.

3. When asked to guide someone, never push or pull the person. Offer your arm. Point out doors, stairs, and curbs as you approach them.

4. Be specific when describing the location of objects.

5. If the person has a guide dog don’t pet or distract the guide dog. The dog is responsible for the owner’s safety. Remember, the dog is a service animal, not a pet.

Some Things to Consider When Interacting with Someone with a Disability that Affects Speech

1. Pay attention, be patient, and wait for the person to complete a word or thought. Do not finish the person’s sentence.

2. Ask the person to repeat what is said if you do not understand. Tell the person what you heard and see if it is close to what he or she is saying.

3. Don’t be afraid to communicate with someone who uses an alphabet board or a computer to communicate. Persons may use assistive technology to enhance or augment speech.

Some Things to Consider When Interacting with Someone with a Psychiatric Disorder

1. Write information down for the person to read.

2. Speak in a calm, normal voice.

3. Try to keep the person focused on their task.

4. You may need to repeat information and explain things that seem obvious to you.
INTERACTIONS

Some Things to Consider When Interacting with Someone Who is Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or Uses an Assisted Listening Device

1. Get his or her attention before speaking. Call out the person’s name, tap them on the shoulder, or wave.

2. Let the person take the lead in establishing the communication mode, such as lip-reading, sign-language, or writing notes.

3. Talk directly to the person even when a sign language interpreter is present.

4. If the person lip-reads, face him or her directly, speak clearly and with a moderate pace. Use short sentences. They are easier to understand.

5. Don’t shout or over enunciate. It distorts your mouth. Avoid turning away.

6. Do not place anything in your mouth while speaking.

Some Things to Consider When Interacting with Someone with a Hidden Disability

1. A person with a heart disease might prefer to sit instead of stand.

2. When giving a task to someone with learning disabilities, break tasks into smaller steps and give written and verbal instructions.

3. Give people with reading difficulties plenty of time to read and understand the text. Do not expect them to read aloud in public.
1. Understand the need for accessible parking and leave it for those who need it.

2. Encourage participation of people with disabilities in activities by making sure that the activity is accessible.

3. Speak up when negative words or phrases are used in connection with disabilities.

4. Accept people with disabilities as individual human beings with the same needs and feelings you might have.