Basic Etiquette

- Speak directly to the person.
- It is appropriate to offer to shake hands.
- OFFER assistance; don't just give it. If accepted, listen or ask for instructions.
- Treat adults as adults.
- RELAX!
- Don't apologize if you happen to use accepted, common expressions that seem to relate to a person's disability.

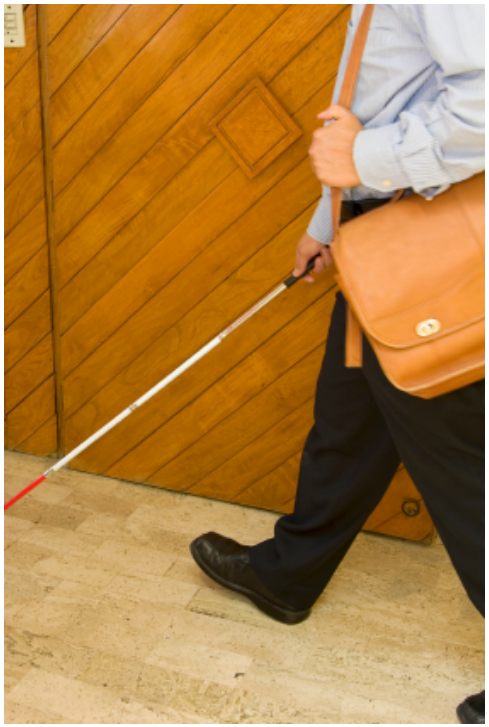
Basic Etiquette

- Don't be afraid to ask questions when you are unsure what to do.
- Service dogs are working tools. Do not pet, feed, or distract them while they are working. Ask their person before making any contact with the dog.
- Don't make assumptions.
- Know where accessible restrooms, drinking fountains, and telephones are located within your work area.

Etiquette 101: Physical disabilities

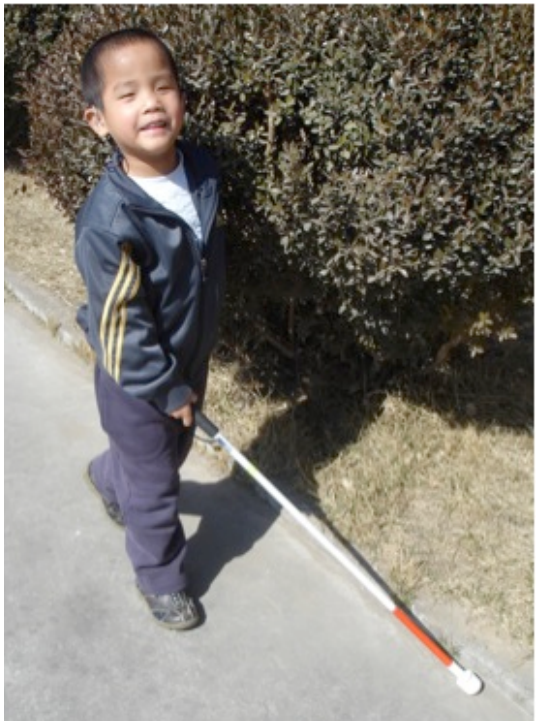
- A wheelchair is part of a person's body space.
- Pushing the chair is a skill.
- Sit at eye level for notable chats.
- Offer help, but make sure it is provided in an unassuming manner.
- Follow through on whatever needs to be done. No premature exits.
- Keep paths clear in buildings and outside.
- Don't use wide bathroom stalls if you don't need them.
- If you are driving them, go easy on the brake.

Etiquette 101: Blindness or low vision



- Always identify yourself and others with you.
- Never touch or grab a cane- or the person. In order to gain their attention, you may touch the person lightly on the arm as you speak.
- Don’t assume your help is wanted or needed, rather ask if they would like your help.
- Offer your arm, elbow, or shoulder if assistance is needed. Give them information- “I’m offering you my arm.”
- When moving, describe what is on their path ahead.
- Let them know when you are leaving the room.
- Face them when you speak.

Etiquette 101: Blindness or low vision



- Immediately greet them when they enter a room.
- When greeting, feel free to shake his or her hand after saying, “How do you do? Let me shake your hand.”
- Address them by name in a conversation so they know you are talking to them.
- Speak in a normal tone and speed of voice.
- Answer all questions verbally instead of with gestures or body language.
- Direct your conversation to the person rather than someone who might be with them as a helper.

Etiquette 101: Speech Impairment

- Allow them to speak- feeling rushed impairs speech more.
- Seek a quiet setting in which to talk.
- Don’t complete their sentences.
- Make eye contact.
- Use the same tone of voice and volume that you would normally use unless the person asks differently.
- Listen to the person’s words, not the manner in which they are said.
- If you don’t understand, ask them to repeat.
- Don’t pretend to understand if you are having difficulty doing so.

Etiquette 101: Speech Impairment

- If you're not sure you understood, repeat back what you heard
- If needed, ask them to write or use a computer
- Respect that a person with a speech impairment may prefer one-on-one conversation to group discussions
- If you are uncertain, ask the person how to best communicate instead of guessing
- If necessary, ask short questions that require short answers, a nod or shake of the head

Etiquette 101: Hearing Loss

- Speak normally- hearing aids are tuned for it
- Keep your face and mouth visible for lip reading
- Don’t exaggerate speech or emotion.
- Touch their arm or gesture to get attention
- When a translator is present, address the person with hearing loss
- Avoid sudden changes of topic in conversation

Etiquette 101: Translators

General tips and information about deaf translators

- Speak in a natural speed and tone of voice
- Try to maintain eye contact as much as possible
- Interpreters have the responsibility to do their best to interpret all communication
- Interpreters will keep all information confidential
- Do not to ask the interpreter about the Deaf consumer
- Do not engage the interpreter in conversation while they are actively interpreting
- Before the interpreting begins, you can ask the interpreter's for the best location for them
- There is typically lag time between a speaker and the interpretation

Etiquette 101: Translators

- Before the Interaction
  - Inform of any special audiovisual equipment
  - Sufficient lighting should be used at all times so the interpreter is clearly visible
  - American Sign Language (ASL) is a unique language with its own syntax and grammar
  - Sign Language does not always have specific signs for specialized or technical words
- During the Interaction
  - Avoid walking between the interpreter and the deaf person if possible
  - Speak distinctly and at a comfortable volume and pace
  - Speak one at a time in-group situations, speak one at a time
  - In-group situations, allow time for the Deaf participant to look to see who is talking before the comments are interpreted
  - Identify objects by name
  - Allow members adequate time to review the written material before beginning the discussion

Etiquette 101: Cognitive Disability

- Make no assumptions
- Might need extra time to process information
- Use clear language
- Don’t take lack of response personally- they might be overwhelmed
- Don’t take sudden emotions personally
- Direct eye contact can be intimidating
- Allow for different styles of processing information