AUSTRALIAN DISABILITY NETWORK

The Observership Program™

Creating Disability Confident Observership Experiences
The Observership Program

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community.

We pay our respects to the people, the cultures and the elders past and present.

Acknowledgement of People with Disability

We acknowledge people with disability on the call here today
and
thank you for joining us.

Disability Confident Observer Experiences

Agenda

- Disability confidence for individuals and organisations
- Disability in Australia
- Barriers to access and inclusion
- Inclusive communication
- How to identify individual observer needs and make adjustments to services
- Disability Confident actions you can take

Accessible Digital Meetings

How can you ensure your virtual meetings are inclusive?

- Implement any adjustments that have been requested

- Meeting rules are adhered to – one person speaking at a time, state name before speaking, five minute break at one hour mark

- For people who may be speech reading, make sure your camera is on and that your face is well-lit and you are not covering your face

Accessible Digital Meetings (continued)

How can you ensure your virtual meetings are inclusive?

- Audio visual content - where content is shared live read all content displayed

- Test the volume prior to the meeting and ensure all attendees are located close to the telephone or extension speakers. Stay on mute when not speaking

- Allow people to finish their sentences and be patient

What is disability confidence?

Why this matters

What are the benefits of creating positive Observer experiences?

- Recruitment

- Retention

- Reputation

- Rights

- Risk

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Video: Labels Are So 'Old Brain'

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W7BQrVRz6Qo

What is disability?

Disability Discrimination Act (Cth) 1992

Disability is any impairment, abnormality, or loss of function of any part of the body or mind. Including:

- Physical
- Intellectual
- Mental Illness
- Sensory

- Neurological
- Learning Disability
- Physical disfigurement
- Immunological

What is disability? (continued)

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) signed in 2006

"…in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others"
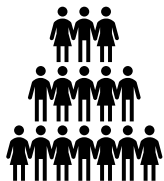
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Disability in Australia

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Profile of the Australian population

17.7% of the population has disability

4.4 million people with disability in Australia

2.3 million carers in Australia

Most disability is non-physical and non-visible

45% of Australians experience mental illness

Legislation and Protections

The rights of people with disability are protected by legislation

- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Privacy Act 1988
- Fair Work Act 2009
- Workplace Health and Safety Act 2011

- Building Code of Australia
- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)

Barriers to Access and Inclusion

Checking your own attitudes

How do I interact with people with disability?

I am confident in my communication with people with disability?

Do I make assumptions?

What are my assumptions based on?

Is there an impact of any past negative interactions?

Observers with disability:

Will be highly motivated to participate in career development opportunities, and overcome any barriers they may encounter

May withdraw from the program for the same range of reasons as other, but they are no more likely to do so

Have the same right as others to aim for careers consistent with their goals, interests and abilities

"The severity of someone's disability does not determine their level of potential. The greatest barriers that people with disabilities have to overcome are not steps or curbs, (but) expectations"

Karen McClay (disability activist)

How can we overcome barriers?

A disability confident Observership program will be:

- Flexible

- Solutions focused

- Do things differently when needed

Disability Confident Observer Experiences

Knowing the *how* not the *what*

We don't need to be experts because:

- There are many types of disability

- Every person with disability has their own specific experiences, requirements, and needs

- It would be impossible to have such a detailed understanding

Inclusive Communication

Video: Awkward Bob

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gv1aDEFlXq8

Person first language

Language and terminology should be neutral and free from emotion.

Instead of	Say
Disabled person / the disabled	Person with disability, living with disability
Wheelchair bound / confined	Person using a wheelchair / wheelchair user
Suffering from mental illness	Experiencing poor mental health
Blind person	Person who is blind or has low vision
Special needs	Workplace Adjustments

What to ask and when to ask it

- Do you have any accessibility requirements for this program?

- Is there anything else I can do to support you?

- What is your preferred method of communication for this information?

- Are there any specific accessibility features you need?

General communication tips

- Avoid asking personal questions about someone's disability.

- Be considerate of the extra time it might take for a person to do or say something.

- Be polite and patient when offering assistance.

- Listen or ask for specific instructions.

- Relax. Anyone can make mistakes.

Disability Confident Observer Experiences

Guiding principles

Australian Network on Disability's three guiding principles

- Never make any assumptions

- Always ask the person

- A person's disability, and their experience of disability, is as unique as their fingerprint

How to identify Observer needs and make adjustments

Disability Confident Observer Experiences

Providing adjustments for Observers

An adjustment could be one or more actions taken by the Observership team / Trainers/ Board to assist an individual with disability to participate in the program on the same basis as others.

Example adjustments

- Digital recordings

- Accessible equipment or software

- Adjustments to meeting times

- Auslan Interpreter or live captioning

- Note takers

- Alternatives to online assessments

- Large font on printed materials

- Physical accessibility considerations

- Typing responses instead of speaking

- Changes to the way instructions are communicated

Working together to implement adjustments

1. Offer understanding and compassion

2. Consult with the Observer

3. Implement Adjustments

4. Seek advice from AND as required

Disability Confident Observer Experiences

Disability Confidence in difficult situations

- Don't make assumptions – focus on the need

- Stay calm and listen to the person with compassion

- Use clear, easy to understand language

- Check to ensure you have understood correctly

- Remain solutions-focused to create a positive observer experience

Quick quiz – True or False?

1. There are no tangible business benefits when you provide products and services to people with disability.

False

2. A higher proportion of people with disability have non-visible disability than visible.

True

3. Disability Confident professionals provide adjustments to products and services to meet the needs of people with disability.

True

Inclusive environments

An inclusive meeting

Setting up for success

1. Send your program materials in advance of sessions

2. Ensure that all documents are accessible and in plain English

3. Ask about adjustments prior to sessions / meetings to ensure technology is accessible

4. Make sure the facilitator / Chair is at the front of the room and the tables are arranged in a U-style where possible

An inclusive meeting (2)

During the session

1. Audio describe the layout of the room at the start of the session

2. Read any content that is displayed on PowerPoint slides

3. Ensure all videos are captioned and audio described where relevant

4. Include a 5 min break every hour on the hour

5. Include everyone in the conversation and adjust delivery as required e.g., utilise break out groups

How would you provide services for…

A person who is blind or has low vision

- Introduce yourself, your role and ask if you can assist

- Do not raise your voice unless you are asked

- Be verbally descriptive when giving directions

- Give information about potential hazards

- Offer your elbow if guidance is requested

- Do not pat or distract assistance animals

A person who is d/Deaf or hard of hearing

- Introduce yourself, your role and ask if you can assist

- Do not raise your voice unless you are asked

- Speak in your usual tone and volume unless asked to speak loudly

- Be conscious of hand gestures and the direction of speech if the person is speech reading

- Move to a quiet area if possible

- Use clear and concise language

A person with disability impacting speech

- Introduce yourself and your role and ask if you can assist

- Look at and speak directly to the person asking the question, and not their companions

- Be patient if the person speaks slowly or with great effort

- Never pretend to understand if you don't

- If you don't understand, ask the person to repeat or rephrase

A person using a mobility device

- Introduce yourself and your role and ask if you can assist

- Know the location of accessible facilities (parking, bathrooms, lift access etc.)

- Stand or sit where you can make eye-contact and converse easily

- Speak directly to the person

- Advise of any known barriers

- Do not touch a person's mobility aid, unless asked

A person with Autism

- Introduce yourself and your role and ask if you can assist

- Use direct and precise explanations

- Be clear about your expectations of the client

- Avoid figurative speech or idioms

- Show respect for difference

- Use written as well as oral instructions

- Check that you have been understood

Your Call to Action

In this session you have:

- Learnt about the importance and benefits of accessibility and inclusion

- Learnt how to communicate inclusively

- Considered the Disability Confident actions you could take in day-to-day scenarios within the Observer journey

- Considered who you will work with to develop a shared vision or goal of Disability Confidence and how you will work together to ensure you achieve it.

Any questions or comments?