



Breaking Barriers: A Cultural Accessibility Project

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“DISABILITY ONLY
BECOMES A TRAGEDY
WHEN SOCIETY FAILS
TO PROVIDE THE
THINGS WE NEED
TO LEAD OUR LIVES.”



Judy Heumann

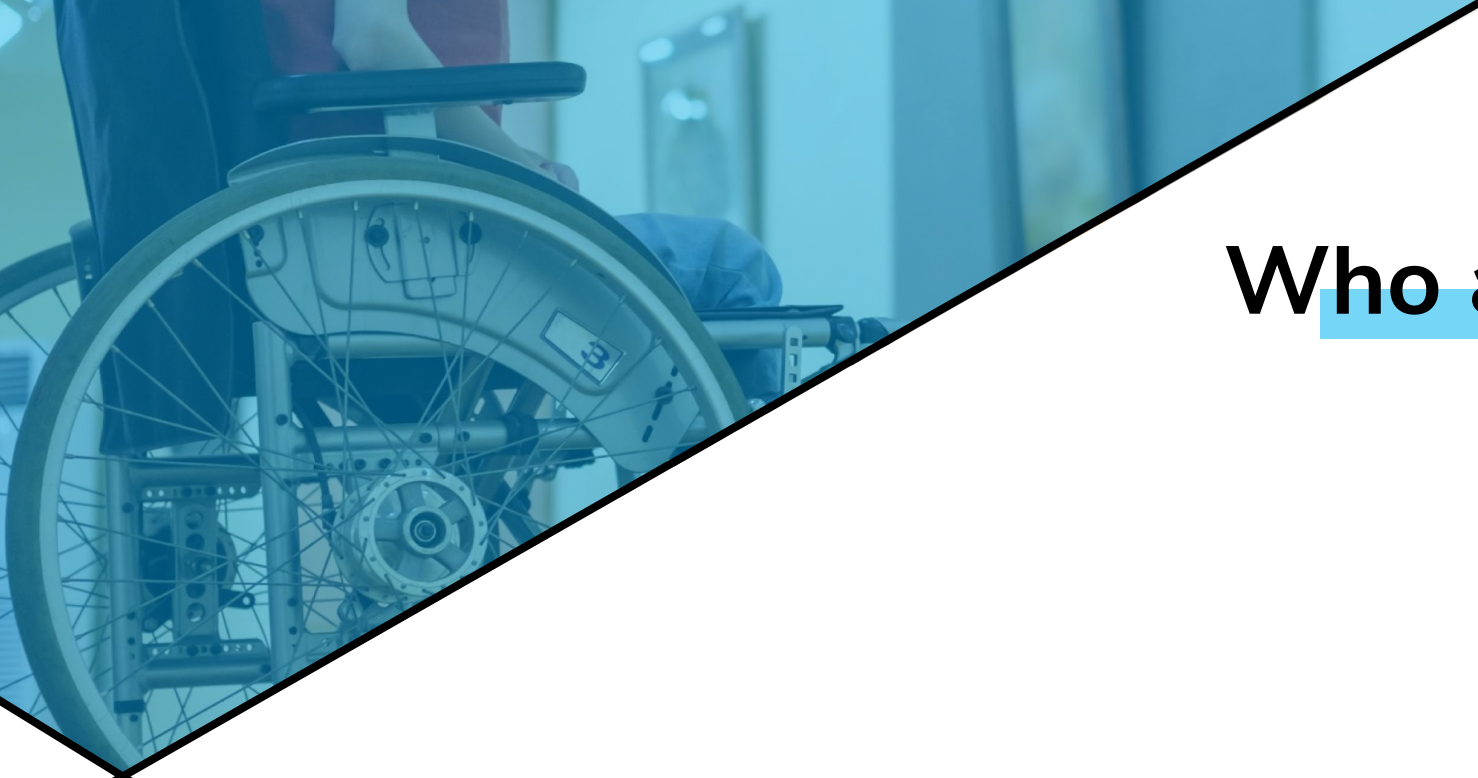
STATE DEPARTMENT SPECIAL
ADVISOR FOR DISABILITY RIGHTS.
CO-FOUNDER OF WORLD INSTITUTE
ON DISABILITY. LEADER OF DISABILITY
RIGHTS MOVEMENT SINCE 1970.
PAVING THE WAY FOR THE ADA.

IN 1990, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES PULLED THEMSELVES UP THE U.S. CAPITOL STEPS AND DEMANDED EQUAL RIGHTS—AN ACTION THAT LED TO THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT. FOR ITS 25TH ANNIVERSARY, WE CELEBRATE DISABILITY RIGHTS LEADERS, BOTH PAST AND PRESENT.

Agenda

- Partnership
- Let's Talk Disability & Accessibility
- Accessibility Plans

Breaks & Field Trip



Who are you?

Share your...

Name

Position

Pronouns

What do you hope to gain from this experience?



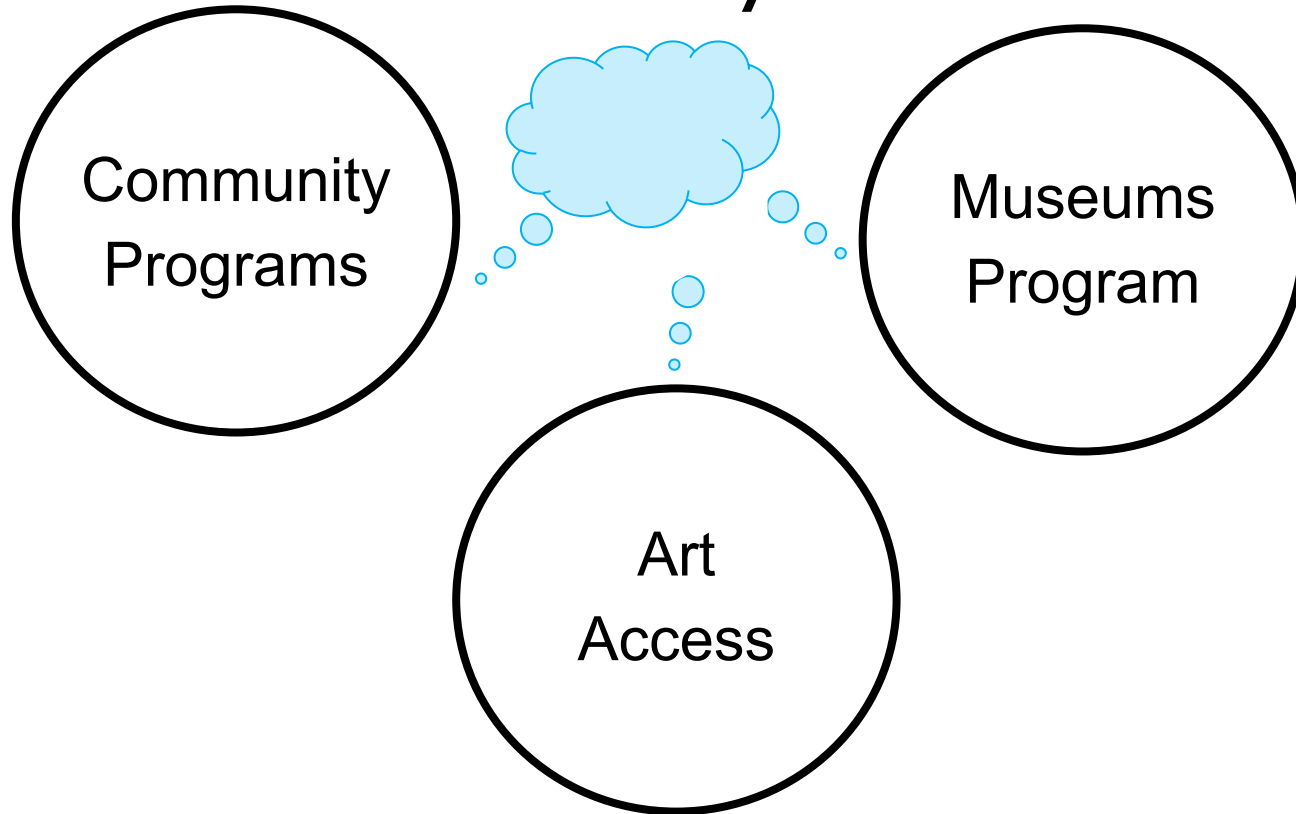
**Breaking
Barriers**

Think-Pair-Share

What is your concept of disability?

- What is a disability?
- Have you (or someone you know) experienced a disability?

The Players



What is Breaking Barriers?

3 Stages

1. EDUCATION

6 Training Sessions and Accessibility Plan

2. IMPLEMENTATION

Start Making Changes, Accessibility Plan, Check In with Art Access

3. ENGAGEMENT

Cultural Accessibility Community

Evidence Breaking Barriers Works!

Overall, participants showed an increase in understanding:

- Disability Language
- Intersectionality of disability
- Accessibility law in the U.S.
- Universal design
- Navigating mistakes

Breaking Barriers covers:

Disability Definitions & Models

Intersectionality

Disability History Snapshots

Microaggressions

Accessibility Laws

Disability Rights versus Disability Justice

Universal Design

Barriers and Accommodations

Best Practices

Mistakes

Accessibility Plan



Let's talk about disability!

**DISABLED
ISN'T A BAD WORD.**

DAMSELINADRESS.BLOG

challenged 
handicapped 
handi-capable 
differently abled 
divers-abled 
special needs 
disabled 

Person First

vs.

Identity First Language



Person-first language puts the person before the diagnosis.



Identity-first language places a person's disability as an identifier.

"Person with autism"

"Autistic person"

Argues that it is important to focus on what a person "is", not what a person "has".

Argues that disabilities like autism are a fundamental, lifelong, and all-pervasive aspect of one's identity.

What is a disability?

A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity



Visible and Invisible



Static, Progressive, or Intermittent



**A normal part of
the diversity of
human bodies
and neurodiversity.**



**An experience we will
all have.**

**Disability can be
permanent or
temporary.**



**A community with
a shared language
and culture**



**A community with
a shared history and
civil rights movement**



According to a 2018 study from the CDC, 25% of Americans have a disability.



Questions



Models of Disability



Charity Model

People with disabilities are objects of sympathy or pity and depend on the charity and help of non-disabled people.



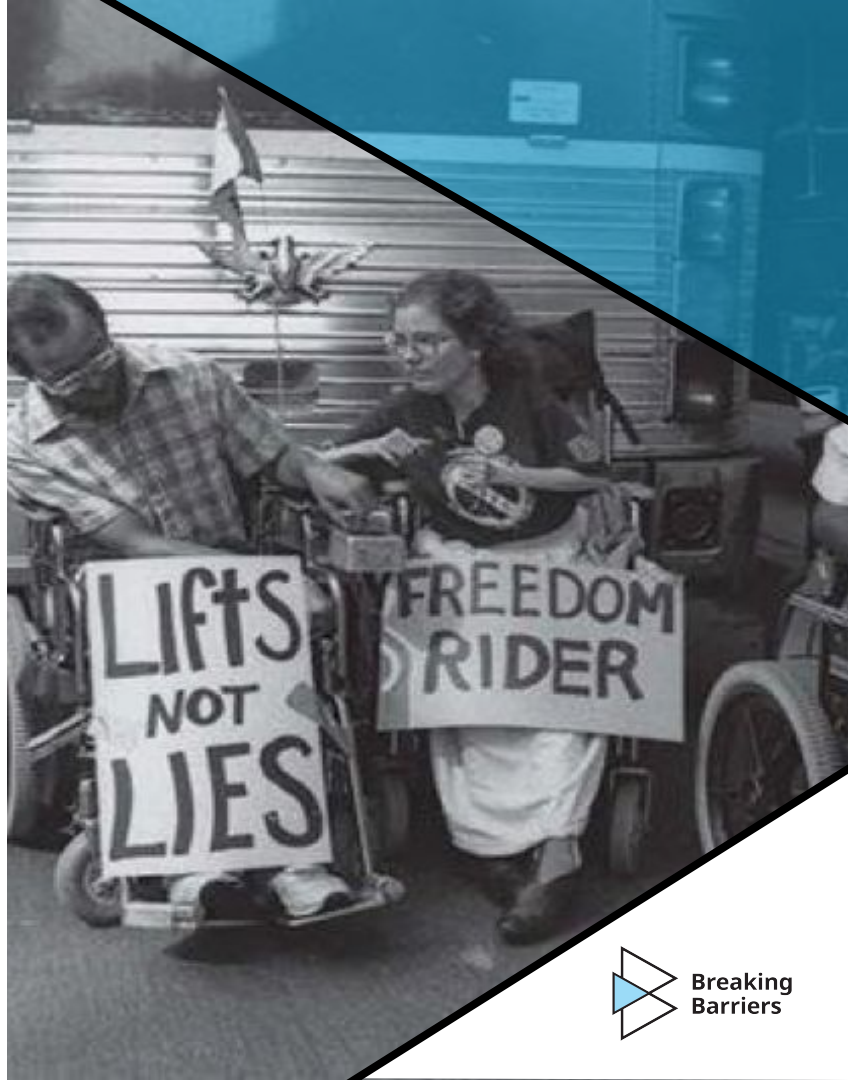
Medical Model

People with disabilities are sick or broken and need to be cured or fixed. Medical professionals are considered the experts and the goal is to eliminate disability.



Social Model

Disability is a normal variation of human bodies and minds—any individual condition or disability is not the problem—but rather the systems that are created to be accessible only for certain kinds of people and bodies.



Try this scenario...

A patron of your theater has requested an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter for one of your performances. While talking about the request in a staff meeting, one of your employees says that they studied ASL in college and would love to brush up on their skills and interpret the performance for free to save the theater money and to support the patron.



Try this scenario...

A patron who uses a wheelchair arrives at your museum but discovers that there are two small steps that go up to your entrance. A staff member comes outside to talk with the patron. They explain that there are steps at all the entrances, and they ask if the patron has a portable ramp in their car, the patron says no. They then ask if the person can walk up the stairs with assistance and offers to then carry the wheelchair up the stairs for them.



Try this scenario...

A blind patron emails your film festival and asks what films will have audio description (AD). You have never heard of AD before. You do a quick google search and read a couple articles about it and then search for a sample audio description track. You respond to the patron and say that you don't know the answer to that, but that you are going to find out and that if they do not have audio description available that you will work with your staff to explore AD for the future. You ask if there are any specific films they were inquiring about, and make sure you follow up with them by the end of the week.



Break



UNIVERSAL DESIGN



Making design accessible to everyone in society

Ronald Mace



Architect, Advocate, Educator

”

Universal design is design that's usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

– Ron Mace, 1985



A

Process:

Universal design, when used in conversation as a **verb**, is a process of designing something to be as functional as possible for as many people as possible.



An

Outcome:

Universal design, when used in conversation as a **noun**, is an outcome of a design process, indicating that something is as functional as possible for as many people as possible.

The Seven Principles of Universal Design


1. Equitable Use
2. Flexibility in Use
3. Simple and Intuitive Use
4. Perceptible Information
5. Tolerance for Error
6. Low Physical Effort
7. Size and Space for Approach and Use



Tolerance for Error Perceptible Information Low Physical Strength



Equitable Use Simple & Intuitive Size & Space Flexibility in Use



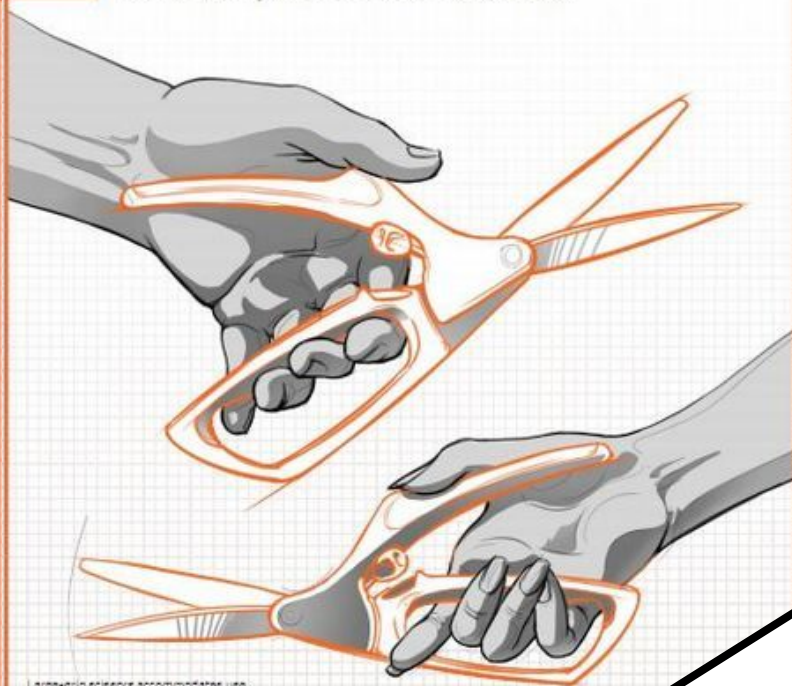
Powered door with sensors is convenient for all shoppers, especially if hands are full.

1 Equitable Use

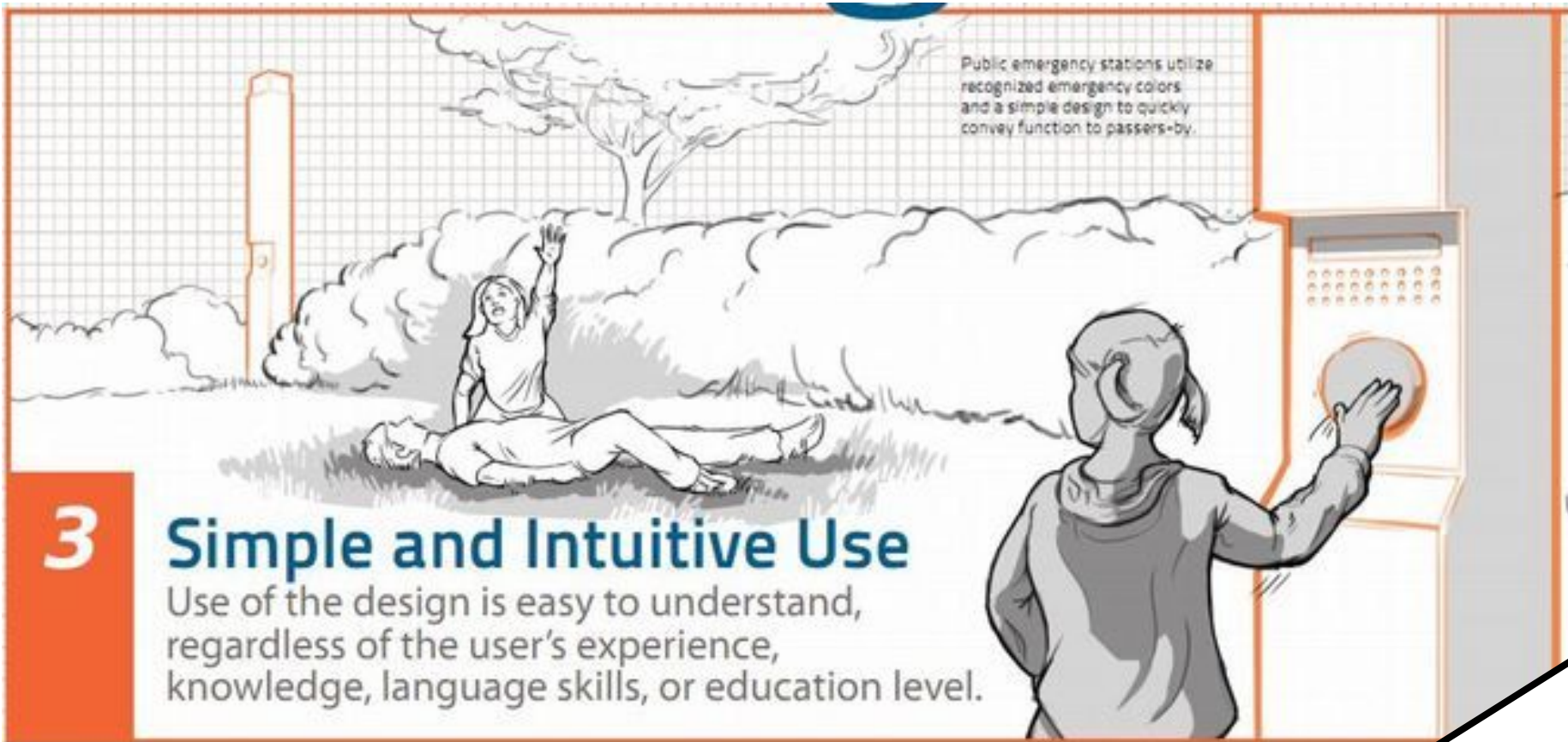
The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.

2 Flexibility in Use

The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.



Large-grip scissors accommodates use with either hand and allows alternation between the two in highly repetitive tasks.

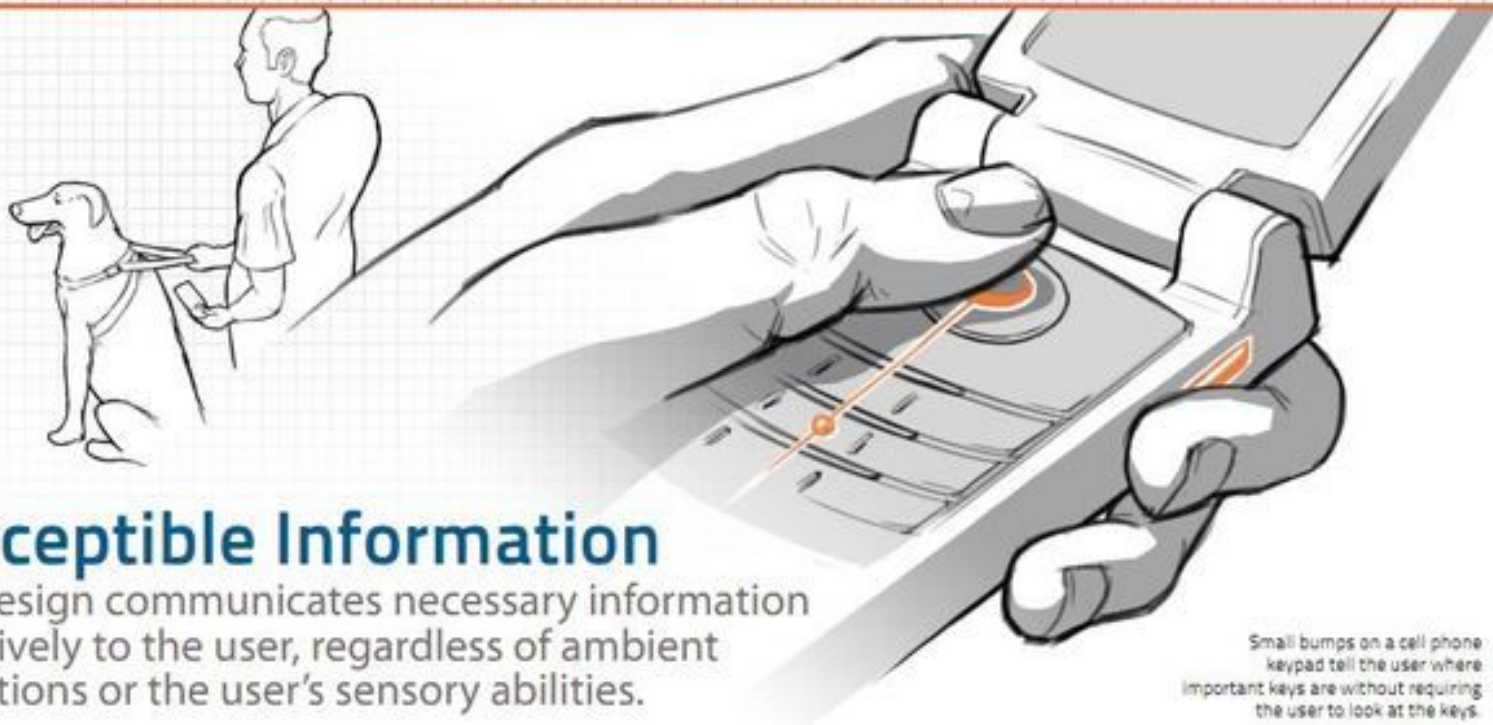


Public emergency stations utilize recognized emergency colors and a simple design to quickly convey function to passers-by.

3

Simple and Intuitive Use

Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or education level.

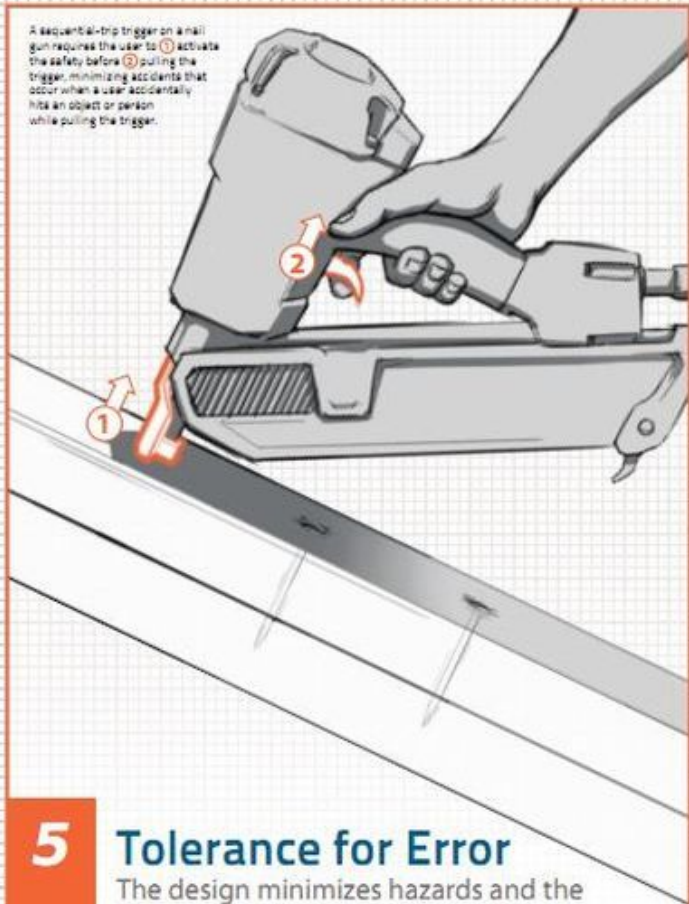


4 Perceptible Information

The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.

Small bumps on a cell phone keypad tell the user where important keys are without requiring the user to look at the keys.

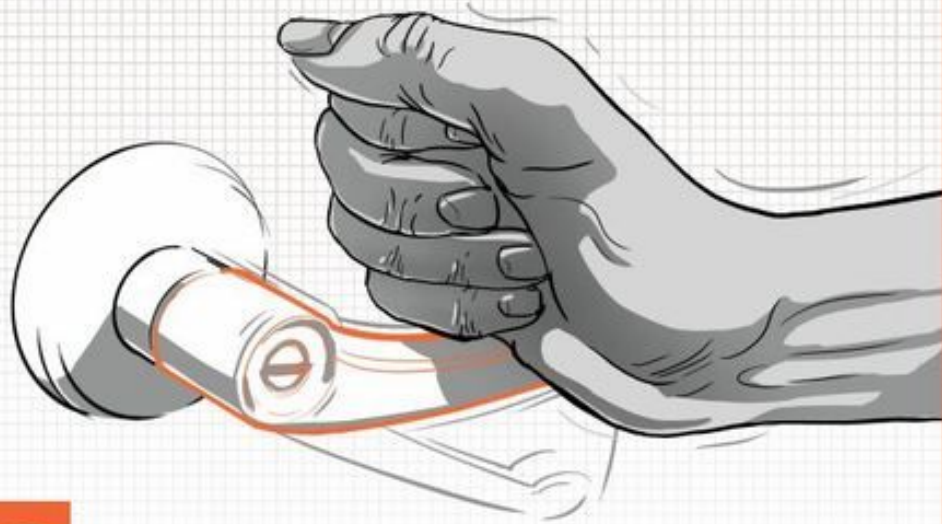
A sequential-trip trigger on a nail gun requires the user to ① activate the safety before ② pulling the trigger, minimizing accidents that occur when a user accidentally hits an object or person while pulling the trigger.



5 Tolerance for Error

The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

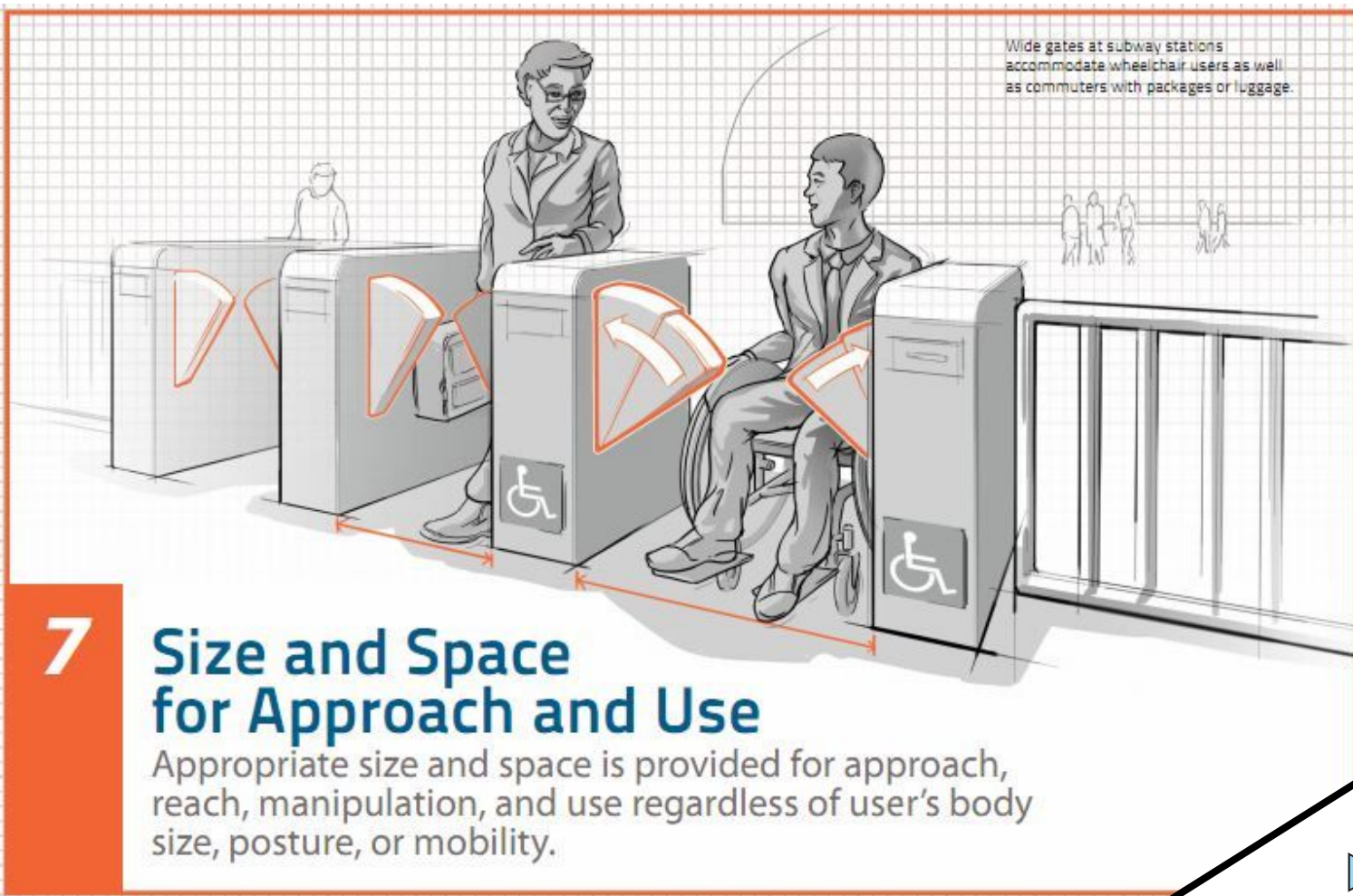
Door lever does not require grip strength to operate, and can even be operated by a closed fist or elbow.



6 Low Physical Effort

The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.

Wide gates at subway stations accommodate wheelchair users as well as commuters with packages or luggage.



7

Size and Space for Approach and Use

Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility.

How you can use Universal Design

1. Assessing accessibility of your spaces, services and programs
2. Creating new spaces or programs
3. Making accessibility changes
4. Making decisions about accommodations to offer

In Practice....

Field Trip



Organizational Best Practices

- Establish a point-person for accessibility & accommodations, include their contact info on web site
- Create a budget line-item for accessibility
- Make easy changes before any requests
- Staff and volunteers trained about accommodations
- Identify deficiencies
- Short and long term goals

Accessibility Coordinator

- Discuss who makes sense to take on these responsibilities
- Add Accessibility Coordinator to their position title
- Have title represented on their business card, email signature etc
- Write a position description for the responsibilities of the accessibility coordinator - and integrate into their current job description
- Provide additional compensation if being an accessibility coordinator is an added responsibility on top of another job
- Provide funding for ongoing training and professional development in disability and accessibility
- Include the accessibility coordinator in relevant budgeting

How to Offer Accommodations

- Have accommodations request form on website
- List pre-scheduled accommodations on event publicity
- On registration, make a clear space to request accommodations

Accommodations Process

Best Practices

- When a request is made, first do your research
- Reach out to the requester to say “yes.” Let them know exactly what you have done, and ask if there is anything else they need
- Prepare the day before the event: test devices, call any outside agencies to confirm, etc.
- At or after event, follow up with patron to make sure they had full access
- Accept feedback gracefully, and make changes

Accommodations Process

Best Practices

Discussion

- Someone walks or rolls into your space and hasn't seen your accessibility web page beforehand...what do you do?

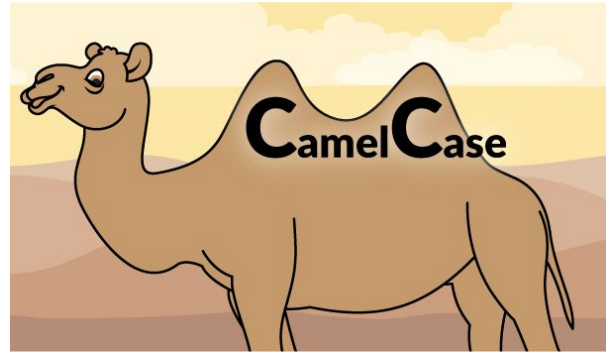
Blind and Low Vision



Accommodations

Accomodations

- Large print materials
- Audio description
- Screen reader compatibility
- Camel casing hashtags
- HTML web page headings
- Alt text on photos
- Descriptive links for hyperlinks



Deaf
Hard-of-Hearing
Deaf-Blind



Accommodations



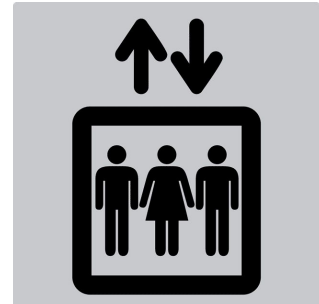
Accommodations

- American Sign Language interpreters
- Certified Deaf interpreters
- Assistive listening devices
- Captions



Accommodations

- Sensory kits
- Sensory guides
- Sensory friendly performances and spaces
- Visual signage
- Plain language materials



Physical, Medical, and Chronic Illness

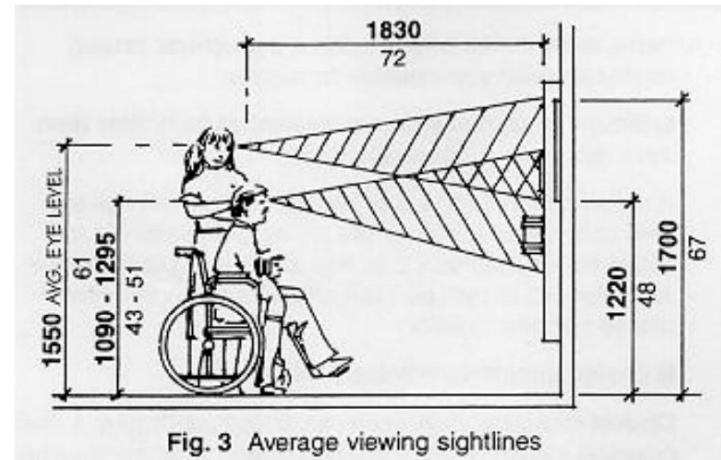


Accommodations



Accommodations

- Accessible hanging and display heights
- Accessible counter heights
- Seating available in all rooms
- Accessible seating for all bodies
- Clear pathways



Questions



Let's Talk About Mistakes

When Things Go Wrong

How should we respond when our event or program was not accessible?

1. In the moment
2. Afterwards

In The Moment

- Listen empathetically
- Apologize and accept responsibility
- Don't make excuses
- State commitment to make change
- Offer a refund or tickets for another day or some other token of recognition for harm

Afterwards

- Do your research on how to address problem and problem solve with necessary parties
- Advocate for change
- Create new policy or procedure when applicable
- Address problem with your team and provide necessary follow-up training and/or instruction
- Follow up with person who had an inaccessible experience - apologize and state solution

Scenario

What do you do if...

You receive a call from a community member who has a teen who is very interested in attending some of your performances. Their teenager has Autism and would need sensory accommodations. You have never offered this before.

1. What do you say to the community member?
2. What are some sensory accommodations you can make?

Accessibility Plans



Plan Components

1. Organization and Accessibility Information
2. Organizational Deficiencies
3. Goals and Projects



Organization and Accessibility Information

- Accessibility Coordinator
- Links to accessibility information
- Links to request forms
- Accessibility Statement
- Accommodations Available – in house and by request
- Accommodations Request Policy
- Process for addressing accessibility errors
- Process for Feedback and Evaluation of Accessibility
- Outreach Plan

Accessibility Statement

What's important about your Accessibility Statement:

- It can be simple and direct.
- Remember to use the language that includes current best practices.
- It should be something that your entire organization understands and supports.
- Don't let this stop you from doing other parts of the plan. It can grow with you as you develop your full Accessibility Plan.



Resources

- Staff
- Supporters
- Funding
- Partner organizations
- Suppliers



Organizational Deficiencies Worksheet





Deficiencies Worksheet

Work Time

Goals and Projects

- Immediate Fixes
- Short Term Projects (1-2 yrs)
- Long Term Projects (2-5 yrs)



The background features several stylized illustrations of people with various disabilities. In the top row, from left to right: a man with a prosthetic right leg, a man with a hearing aid, a man in a wheelchair, a man in a wheelchair holding a basketball, and a man with a hearing aid. In the bottom row, from left to right: a man with a prosthetic right leg, a man with a hearing aid, a man with a hearing aid, a woman with glasses and a cane, a man with a hearing aid, a man in a wheelchair with glasses, and a man with a hearing aid.

Accessibility Plan Work Time



So much of my challenges were not because of a [genetic] mutation but caused by lack of creative thinking by those in power.

Sinead Burke

Thanks!

