**Types of Accessibility Barriers and Solutions**

**Attitudinal barriers** may result in people with disabilities being treated differently than people without disabilities.

| **Attitudinal Barriers** | **Possible Solutions** |
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| Thinking that people with intellectual disabilities are not able to make decisions. | Do not assume what employees or clients with disabilities can or cannot do. Ask them. |
| Assuming a person who has a speech impairment cannot understand you. | Train staff to interact and communicate with people with different types of disabilities. |
| Believing a person who has a mental health disability or someone who uses a wheelchair would not be a good employee. | Learn about ways you can accommodate employees with disabilities. |
| Assuming that a person with vision loss cannot enjoy movies, TV or concerts. | Learn about the different ways and available technologies that help people with vision loss enjoy movies, TV and concerts. |
| Avoiding a person with a disability for fear of saying the wrong word or offending them. | Train staff to interact and communicate with people with different types of disabilities. |
| Thinking that every person with a disability will need costly accommodation. | Learn about the types of accommodations for people with disabilities. Many are low cost. |

**Informational and communication barriers** arise when a person with a disability cannot easily receive and/or understand information that is available to others.

| **Information and Communication Barriers** | **Possible Solutions** |
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| Print that is too small to be read by a person with impaired vision. | Make everyday documents, such as signs and menus, easy to read by making sure the print is legible for most people. |
| A PowerPoint or slide deck used in a presentation is not accessible to employees with low vision or who have hearing loss. | Develop a template for slide decks using large fonts, high contrast colours and clean layout.Provide a visual description of the slides when making a presentation. |
| Videos to promote a program or service are not accessible to employees with low vision or who have hearing loss. | Include captions when producing videos. When this is not possible, provide a text transcription of the video. |
| Brochures, guides and advertisements that are not clear or easily understood. | Use plain language in written materials. Use symbols and pictures to help get your message across. Use sans serif fonts and avoid italics. |
| Complicated, busy or confusing signs. | Keep signs clean and clear. Make information available in another form, such as a chart or pictogram. |
| Seating arrangements making it difficult for people who have hearing loss to fully participate in meetings | Arrange seating at a round table to facilitate lip reading. Use assistive listening or amplification devices as appropriate. |
| Marketing and communications materials are not inclusive | Ensure marketing and communications, including photos and testimonials, reflect diverse people with a range of abilities and ages. |
| People with disabilities are not included in visuals, or considered as a potential target audience. | Ensure marketing materials, such as flyers, brochures, podcasts and YouTube videos are accessible. |

**Technological barriers** occur when technology, or the way it is used, does not meet the needs of people with disabilities.

| **Technological Barriers** | **Possible Solutions** |
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| Emails or other electronic communications not accessible to people who use screen readers. | Make sure every email is accessible to people who use screen readers and offer alternative methods of communications. |
| Website graphics and charts included without descriptions. | rovide descriptions using alt tags for graphics and charts for people with vision loss. |
| Having only one way for your customers to contact you (Example: by phone only). | Allow customers to contact you in a variety of ways, including phone or email. |
| Accepting only online job applications. | Welcome job applications in a number of formats. |
| Asking clients to use online forms to register for programs. | Offer clients alternative ways to register. (Example: telephone) |

**Systemic barriers** are policies, practices or procedures that result in some people receiving unequal access or being excluded.

| **Systemic Barriers** | **Possible Solutions** |
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| People with disabilities are excluded from events by not considering their needs at the event planning stage. | Make sure that accessibility is considered when making plans for events and invite attendees to tell you if they have specific accessibility needs, such as requiring on-line applications. Use accessibility checklists for events. |
| Not being aware of the different types of accommodations an employee might need when returning to work after an absence due to a disability. | Learn about the types of accommodations available. Inquire about specific employee needs. Talking to employees about their specific needs is a good first step. |
| No leadership or accountability to address issues related to people with disabilities. | Designate a contact person to implement accessibility policies and procedures. |
| Hiring policies not encouraging applications from people with disabilities. | Review current hiring processes to identify and remove barriers. |
| Procedures that may affect some employees, such as use of cleaning products that can cause allergic reactions. | Implement a fragrance–free policy. |

**Physical and architectural barriers** in the environment prevent physical access for people with disabilities.

| **Physical/Architectural Barriers** | **Possible Solutions** |
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| Aisles are blocked by displays or Merchandise, making them too narrow for a person using a wheelchair or walker | Consider the paths that your employees and customers take when creating displays or storing merchandise. |
| Inaccessible events or meeting spaces | When selecting a venue think about potential barriers. Consider washrooms, parking, lighting and signage. Not just a ramp. |
| Accessibility features, such as automatic doors, are broken and not fixed promptly. | Develop a maintenance plan. Ensure prompt response times when equipment is broken. |
| Poor snow clearance creates temporary barriers to building entrance or parking lot. | Maintain clear paths and parking  |