

Accessibility Tips for Presenters

PROVIDING ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS WITH DISABILITIES

Introduction

This guide provides how-to information for effectively including diverse audiences when presenting. These tips will enhance the effectiveness and quality of your presentation for people both **with** and **without** disabilities.

Basic Tips for Presenters

Accommodation Requests – be sure to include in announcements and publications a call for accommodations: *“If you require a disability related reasonable accommodation, please contact Jane.Smith@anywhere.com.”*

Check site or room for access – prior to the event, check for access for mobility device users. Move or rearrange furniture if needed to improve access.

Speak clearly and avoid speaking too fast, so participants and sign language interpreters, translators, and real-time caption providers can understand you and keep up.

Use simple language:

- Avoid or explain jargon, acronyms, and idioms. For example, idiomatic expressions such as, “raising the bar,” can be interpreted literally by some people with cognitive disabilities.
- Give people time to process information.
- Pause between topics. When you ask if anyone has questions, some people with cognitive disabilities will need extra time to form their thoughts into words.

Describe all visuals for people who are blind, who cannot understand them well or who are seated a good distance from the speaker. Media and visual aids include use of slides, charts, models, gestures, computers, content of chalk and white boards, easel paper, posters, etc. This presentation technique is also helpful for attendees without vision loss.

State what you are showing, for example, “This arrangement of sticky notes shows ...,” “This map shows...,” “These results indicate ...”

Sound Amplification

Use microphones - Always use the amplification system provided. This assures that participants will hear you more clearly and that any assistive listening equipment in use will work properly. (Not all people with hearing loss “speak” American Sign Language and/or use sign language interpreters. Many rely instead on captioning and assistive listening equipment.)

Even in a small room, **some people might need the audio electronically**, including people using assistive listening systems and computer-assisted real-time translation.

When microphones are not available to the audience, **always repeat all comments and questions** into the microphone before answering them.

Be visible - Position yourself be in good light so participants can see your face when you talk, which helps some people hear and understand better.

Do not speak while facing and writing on a board or easel paper. One way to avoid this is to have an assistant or co-presenter do the writing for you.

Working with Interpreters

When working with sign language interpreters and translators, and real-time captioners, always ensure that:

- The area is well lit and the interpreter can still be seen if the lights are dimmed. Adjustable spotlights may be needed.
- You do not walk in front of interpreters while they are signing.
- You slow your speaking rate if you tend to be a rapid speaker and slow your pace when reading printed material.
- The interpreters/captioners know you are willing to be stopped during your presentation if the interpreters need clarification.
- You speak directly to the person using the interpreter, not the interpreter.
- You spell unusual terms, names and foreign words.
- When possible, offer the interpreters/captioners advance copies of your slides, notes and handouts so they become familiar with any unique terms, acronyms, terms, names, etc. that you will be using. Handouts

Provided information in formats that are usable:

- Participants might need hard copies of material in alternative formats such as large print, audio, braille, or an electronic file format (such as PDF or Word); however, if they get the material in advance electronically, they might not need it in hard copy at all. For more information on how to make electronic documents accessible, visit OOD.Ohio.gov
- People with low vision may be able to read the text version of handouts if they are provided in a larger print, at least 20pt font.
- Keep to your presentation handouts as much as possible. If you vary from the material, mention that fact so the audience does not get lost.
- Spiral bound or bound materials that can lie flat when opened are easier for all people to use. Tabs are also helpful.

PowerPoint Presentations and Slide Decks

- Describe the content of graphic slides orally during your presentation
- Limit the information on each screen/slide so it is easily read from the back of the room
- Have sufficient text descriptions (alt text) of graphs and tables for presentations posted online or sent digitally.
- Use of multimedia video should be captioned.
- Use the PowerPoint default font of 44-point bold font for headings.
- Use 32-point font or higher for short, simple bullets.
- Include no more than six lines of text on each slide.