

Including People with Disabilities



David Hoff

Institute for Community Inclusion
University of Massachusetts, Boston

The Basics

- Use a **universal** approach
- Invite, include, and support
- Clear **expectations and responsibilities**
- One person with a disability does not represent ***every*** person with a disability

Universal Approach: Anticipate, Then Accommodate



- Language: **Clear and simple** as possible
- Use **multiple ways of conveying information:** words, visuals, etc.
- Provide **multiple ways to provide input**
- **Proactively** offer assistance/support/accommodations

Written Materials



- Short as possible
- Summaries for long and complex documents
- Clear layout
- Use graphics, charts, illustrations
- Provide materials ahead of time

Meetings

- Continuous **feedback** loop
- **Solicit input** from all members
- Provide **guiding questions** for members
- Follow **good general meeting protocols**: clear agenda, time limits, etc.



Suggested Strategies



- Actively recruit
- Develop material and meeting guidelines
- Provide mentors for support
- Develop accommodation policy
 - *Include guidelines for support staff*

“It is very clear to me now, that the manner in which we interface with people with apparent disabilities is far more reflective of our own personal capacities, than those of the person we interface with.”

• Kay Drais, Parent

