TECHNIQUES FOR ACCOMMODATING IMPAIRMENTS IN THE CLASSROOM
TECHNIQUES FOR ACCOMMODATING IMPAIRMENTS IN THE CLASSROOM

DELIVERY

- Distribute handouts in advance of the presentation
- Make instructor notes available upon request
- Use effective public speaking techniques (clear pronunciation, appropriate volume, inflection and speed)
- Avoid slang, innuendoes, puns, acronyms, and other words that may cause confusion
- Do not ask participants to take notes when the room is darkened
- When multimedia is used, provide a script, as well as a description of the visuals
- Permit participants to record your presentation
- Never select someone from the participant audience to read aloud
- In no way communicate that learners will do better if they just “work harder”

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

- Announce that participants should see you privately to work out testing arrangements
- Provide an atmosphere that is free of distraction and adequately lighted
- Offer oral and written test formats
- Ask participants to demonstrate and explain, rather than take a written exam
- Allow participants to use calculators, when needed
- Allow participants as much time as needed to complete the assessment
- Use pass/fail method, whenever possible
- Review the participant’s completed test with him/her
## TECHNIQUES FOR SPECIFIC TYPES OF IMPAIRMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical [or] Medical Impairments</th>
<th>Suggested Techniques</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Visual Impairments                | • Provide large-print version of handouts  
• Orient the person who is visually impaired to the environment (e.g., classroom and hotel)  
• Ask the participant where he/she prefers to sit  
• Position the participant near an electrical outlet, if he/she uses a laptop to take notes  
• Do not stand in front of a glass window or mirror  
• When talking about a picture, describe its content  
• Talk with the participant about how he/she will answer test questions (e.g., by taping or keyboarding responses) |
| Hearing Impairments               | • Consult with the participant about the need for an interpreter and/or a note-taker  
• Ask the participant and interpreter where he/she prefers to sit  
• Minimize lecture  
• Provide a copy of the instructor’s notes and all other relevant materials, in advance, to the interpreter  
• Spell out technical terms to the interpreter  
• Concentrate on not speaking too fast or too loudly; speak at a normal speed and volume  
• Repeat questions and answers from participants  
• Inform participants when you are moving to a new topic  
• Pause every 15 minutes to prevent interpreter fatigue  
• Talk with the participant about how he/she will answer test questions (e.g., use interpreter, require more time) |
| Mobility Impairments              | • Find out whether the participant requires adaptive equipment on the job that should also be provided in a training environment  
• Host will ensure that the training venue can accommodate the special needs of the participant  
• Ask the participant whether it would be helpful to have a note-taker  
• Offer to provide a copy of the instructor’s notes and all other relevant materials (in lieu of note-taking)  
• Talk with the participant about how he/she will answer test questions (e.g., respond orally, require more time) |
| Medical Impairments (life-threatening or chronic diseases) | • Be flexible about participant attendance; provide an opportunity to make up any missed training so that participant will be eligible for CEUs if he/she passes the class with a 70%  
• Alleviate concerns of other trainees who may be uncomfortable in a training environment with someone who is ill  
• Ensure that the training venue is comfortable  
• Host should be aware of the accommodations required by participants and that they may need a place to lie down during breaks  
• Talk with the participant about how he/she will answer test questions |
Additional Resources

| Section 508                                      | • http://www.access-board.gov/5088.htm  
|                                                | • http://section508.gov/                  |
| Designing and Delivering Training to Disabled Persons | • ASTD Info-line entitled, “The Americans with Disabilities Act: Impact on Training” (Issue 9203)  
|                                                | • ASTD Info-line entitled, “The Americans with Disabilities Act: Techniques for Accommodation” (Issue 9204) |
| Training Style Adjustments                        | Some of the best practices for accommodating disabilities are also best practices for training in general. |
| Visual Aids                                       | Make your visual aids and handouts large, clear, and readable. |
| Vision Impaired Participants                      | • Face your audience; for some hearing impaired people, it will be useful to be able to see your face while you are speaking.  
|                                                | • You are not responsible for having Braille versions of your materials or a sign-language interpreter. If a participant needs this type of aid, they are generally responsible for arranging it themselves. |

You may not know that you have a participant with a disability until they show up, but be prepared to make adjustments if necessary, and be flexible. Don’t be afraid to ask them what else they might need.