

Self Assessment of Organizational Accessibility

In order to effectively prepare your organization for accommodating people with disabilities, you must first assess your capacity to serve these individuals. This questionnaire will allow you to gauge the accessibility of your programs, services, and facilities. The goal is for you to become cognizant of where you stand in the area of organizational accessibility.

The following questionnaire asks you to rate the accessibility of components within your organization.

The rating scale is as follows;

1 = inaccessible

2 = somewhat accessible

3 = accessible

Choose "Unsure" when you are unclear of the question, do not have a prediction about the accessibility level, or if the question does not apply. There is a brief introduction to each category that explains some options, issues and possible alternatives. Please feel free to refer to this before, and while, answering the questionnaire.

Physical Access

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that all businesses, including yours, "remove physical barriers that are readily achievable, which means easily accomplishable without extreme difficulty or expense. The ADA recognizes that economic conditions fluctuate. As a result, when a business has resources to remove barriers, it is expected to do so; but when profits are down, barrier removal may be reduced or delayed. Barrier removal is an ongoing obligation – you are expected to remove barriers in the future as resources become available."

Restroom accessibility

1 2 3 Unsure

Doorway accessibility (including door size, doorknobs, and handles)

1 2 3 Unsure

Available parking

1 2 3 Unsure

Path of travel accessibility

1 2 3 Unsure

Accessibility of training space

1 2 3 Unsure

Client use computer stations

1 2 3 Unsure

Curriculum Access

Your organization can make small accommodations in order for your curriculum to be more accessible to people with disabilities. For example, by making your curriculum available on tape, in large font and in Braille, you are able to effectively reach people who are visually impaired. Additionally, by offering your curriculum on the Internet, you open the door for many people with mobility disabilities. These measures will help make your organization more inclusive.

Curriculum accessibility (including different versions such as Braille, or large font)

1 2 3 Unsure

Online curriculum

1 2 3 Unsure N/A

Technological Access

In the digital age it is imperative that people with disabilities have the same access to technology as everyone else. By ensuring your website is accessible, you not only allow a person with a disability to obtain information about your organization, but also send a strong message that you are serious about serving entrepreneurs with disabilities and the agencies that support their goals. Many times, just offering rollover photos, text, and graphics goes a long way in making the site more accessible. Typically, updating your site does not mean a tremendous overhaul but rather a few simple modifications that a web developer can implement. In addition, if computers are used during your training, then the systems should be equipped with software that is user friendly for people with disabilities. Various other technological devices are also available in order to foster accessibility, such as: height adjustable desks, page turners for people who cannot manipulate paper; writing aids for people who cannot grip a writing tool; alternative keyboards and; trackballs (as an alternative to the mouse).

Website accessibility

1 2 3 Unsure

Software accessibility

1 2 3 Unsure

Accessibility of additional technological devices

1 2 3 Unsure

Day-to-Day Access

On a daily basis, many people with disabilities encounter challenges that those without disabilities rarely even consider. Eliminating these barriers in your organization results in an accessible environment, where people with disabilities feel comfortable and are afforded the same opportunity as everyone else. In order to lessen the day-to-day plight of people with

disabilities your organization can make personal assistants available or offer flexible scheduling. Both of these measures will contribute to the accessibility of your organization and at the same time display your attitude of inclusiveness.

Please answer Yes or No:

Does your organization offer personal assistants?

Yes No

Does your organization have access to sign language interpreters?

Yes No

Does your organization offer a flexible training schedule?

Yes No

Your organization should strive to make *everything*, from door handles to curriculum, accessible to people with disabilities. Please keep in mind that the suggestions outlined here are only a sample of the ways in which your organization can reach accessibility. Some of these measures are costly, and not all of them will be financially feasible for you at this time. As an organization, however, you should strive to make accommodations readily available for clients with disabilities. Remember that the mindset and attitude of your organization are the most important steps toward accessibility and will ultimately determine your level of inclusiveness.

If your organization is not accessible you are eliminating the largest minority population in America, which consists of nearly 50 million people...people with disabilities.