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
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
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.

Technological Barriers

Technological Barriers	Possible Solutions
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
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	Designate a contact person to implement