X-Ray Vision:
Creating an Inspiring Workplace for Library Staff with Hidden Disabilities

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Abstract
Current trends of our workforce indicate a significant portion will need access to in house disability services. We must break the myths and stereotypes and answer a few questions. Are we prepared to face the truth about visible and hidden disabilities? Why should we commit to establish a work environment where every library staff can develop their professional potential without fear? Best practices on retention of library staff with hidden disabilities will be discussed.
X-Ray Vision: Creating an Inspiring Workplace for Library Staff with Hidden Disabilities

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Objectives

1. Define what hidden disabilities are
2. Explore myths surrounding issues of hidden disabilities
3. Share research completed on hidden disabilities in academic research libraries
4. Recommend/Discuss best practices for creating a disability friendly organizational culture and climate
Questions to be answered

- What challenges library employees with hidden disabilities are facing daily in the workplace?
- How can we create an inviting place to work for people with hidden disabilities?
- What policies, procedures and resources are available in our selected institutional members of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and National Library of Medicine (NIH)?
What is a Disability?

“Disability is a limitation in performing socially defined roles and tasks expected of an individual within a sociocultural and physical environment.”

The “person” and the “environment”

What is a **Hidden Disability**?

1. Impairment in functioning
2. Decrease in quality of life
3. Restricted lifestyle
4. Focus on pain
5. Feeling defensive
6. Stigma
7. Chronicity
8. Feeling misunderstood

Examples

Chemical sensitivity • Arthritis • Migraines • Colitis • Asthma • Lupus • Chronic fatigue syndrome • Chronic pain • Diabetes • Multiple sclerosis • Cancer • Repetitive stress injuries • ADD/ADHD • Depression • Fibromyalgia • Epilepsy • Hypertension • Emotional disabilities • HIV/AIDS • Brain injury • Learning disability
What Libraries have done?

- Improved physical facilities
- Policies for serving patrons with visible disabilities
Demographics

National level

U.S. Census 2002
- Without disability: 82%
- With disabilities (51.2 million people): 18%

Library professional level

ALA Office for Research and Statistics 2006
- Without work disability (4,516 credentialed librarians): 96%
- With work disability: 4%
Demographics cont.

Local level, Washington DC area (three institutions)

ARL institutions
- Without disabilities
- With disabilities

Age distribution of 117 respondents

- % respondents
- 20-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, 61+
History of U.S. Legislation

- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Telecommunications Act
- Fair Housing Act
- Air Carrier Access Act
- Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act
- National Voter Registration Act
- Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
- Rehabilitation Act
- Section 508
- Architectural Barriers Act
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- Prohibits discrimination based on disability.
- Disability defined as limiting “major life activities.”
- Signed into law by President George Bush, Sr.

“Together, we must remove the physical barriers we have created and the social barriers that we have accepted.”
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) cont.

Prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in:

- ADA Title I: Employment
- ADA Title II: State and Local Government Activities
- ADA Title II: Public Transportation
- ADA Title III: Public Accommodations
- ADA Title IV: Telecommunications Relay Services
Telecommunications Act

- Original Communications Act 1934
- Amended 1996
- Ensures telecommunications equipment and services are accessible to people with disabilities.
Amended 1988

Prohibits housing discrimination on the basis of:
- Race
- Color
- Religion
- Sex
- Disability
- Familial status
- National origin

Includes private, federally assisted, state and local government housing
Prohibits discrimination in air transportation by domestic and foreign air carriers against individuals with physical or mental impairments
Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act

- 1984
- Requires polling places to be accessible to people with disabilities for federal elections.
- Requires states to make accessible registration and voting aids for the disabled and/or elderly.
1993

Known as “Motor Voter Act”

Requires offices of state-funded programs to:

◦ Provide voter registration forms
◦ Assist in completing forms
◦ Transmit completed forms to appropriate state official.
Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act (CRIPA)

- 1997
- Authorizes U.S. Attorney General to investigate conditions of confinement at state and local government institutions including:
  - Prisons
  - Jails
  - Detention centers
  - Juvenile correctional facilities
  - Publicly operated nursing homes
  - Institutions for people with psychiatric or developmental disabilities.
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

- Formerly the Education for all Handicapped Children Act of 1975.
- Requires public schools to make available to all children with disabilities free appropriate education in the least restrictive environment appropriate.
Rehabilitation Act

- 1973
  - Prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in:
    - Programs conducted by federal agencies
    - Programs receiving federal assistance
    - Federal employment
    - Employment practices of federal contractors.

- Section 508
  - Requires federal electronic and information technology to be accessible by people with disabilities including employees and the general public.
The Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998
- Expanded and strengthened IT accessibility.
- When Federal agencies develop, procure, maintain or use EIT:
  - Individuals with disabilities who are Federal employees have access to and use of information and data.
  - The general public with disabilities have access to and use of information and data.
- Requires compliance by Federal agencies, contractors and subcontractors.
1968
Requires buildings and facilities compliant with federal standards for physical accessibility that are:
- Designed
- Constructed or
- Altered with federal funds or
- Leased by a federal agency.
A hidden disability may not be considered by some to be a “true” disability.

“Sometimes I wish I looked disabled. Then people could see how much I’m hurting inside.”

Joan who has Chronic Fatigue Syndrome
Myths and Realities

- **Myth 1**: The cost
- **Myth 2**: The wrong assumption
- **Myth 3**: The employee from the older workforce
- **Myth 4**: The stress
- **Myth 5**: The Depression

At the workplace | As a medical condition
Our Research

- Pilot our survey instrument to collect data on hidden disabilities.
- Our goal is to share the data so that others can develop strategies that will support library staff with hidden disabilities.
- Understand the difficult issue of self-disclosure.
- Understand interaction of co-workers and customers.
- Identify supporting policies, procedures and resources.
## Our Research: Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With disabilities</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With hidden disabilities compared to physical (8.3%) and both (45.8%)</td>
<td>45.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disclosed their disabilities</td>
<td>59.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asked for reasonable accommodations</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had extended absences due to disability</td>
<td>31.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have received supervisor’s understanding and support</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced discrimination/alienation from co–workers compared to</td>
<td>31.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supervisors (18.2%) and library users (9.5%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had excellent work relationships with supervisors compared to co–</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>workers (27.3%) and library users (35.0%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not know which office provided disability accommodations</td>
<td>57.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were not aware of library policy statement on disabilities compared to</td>
<td>48.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>those who were aware (12.2%) and those who had some degree of knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not know if job descriptions were inclusive to persons with disabilities</td>
<td>54.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Our Research: Findings

1. Supervisors don’t know policies and procedures
2. Staff don’t know if Libraries have a policy
3. Relationship of supervisor and staff determine disclosure
4. Environment not welcoming
5. Personal beliefs about one’s disability
6. Concern about accommodations
7. Lack of education on hidden disabilities
Self-disclosure: What determines it???

- Fears of staff/co-workers and their attitudes
- Relationship of worker and supervisor
- Relationship of staff with co-workers

Myth of the body perfection
Policies and Procedures

- ADA prohibits discrimination in all employment practices.
- Employment discrimination is prohibited against qualified individuals with disabilities.
- Protects individuals with a record of disability.
- Protects individuals with a substantially limiting impairment.
- Modifying work environment to enable a qualified employee with a “known” disability to perform essential job functions is “reasonable accommodation.”
Best Practices

- **University of California**
  - Davis, Division of Human Resources
    - [http://www.hr.ucdavis.edu/Health_Services/Disability_Management/Disability%20Forms](http://www.hr.ucdavis.edu/Health_Services/Disability_Management/Disability%20Forms)
  - Office of the President
    - [http://www.ucop.edu/ucophome/coordrev/ucpolicies/aos/toc140.html](http://www.ucop.edu/ucophome/coordrev/ucpolicies/aos/toc140.html)

- **Southern University of Connecticut**, Office of Diversity and Equity Programs, Policy statement
  - [http://www.southernct.edu/diversityequity/policyregardingpersonswithdisabilities/](http://www.southernct.edu/diversityequity/policyregardingpersonswithdisabilities/)

- **University of Connecticut**, Office of Diversity and Equity, Policy statement
  - [http://web.uconn.edu/wwwode/POLICYST.html](http://web.uconn.edu/wwwode/POLICYST.html)

- **Cornell University**
  - Policy statement
    - [www.policy.cornell.edu/PDF_613_Disability_Accommodation.cfm](http://www.policy.cornell.edu/PDF_613_Disability_Accommodation.cfm)
  - Disability accommodation process
    - [http://www.policy.cornell.edu/vol6_13.cfm](http://www.policy.cornell.edu/vol6_13.cfm)
Examples of Reasonable Accommodations

- Alerting device
  - Flashing fire alarm
  - Vibrating device
- Qualified interpreters and note takers
- Assistive listening devices
  - Hearing aid–compatible digital wireless phones
- Closed captioning
- Low Vision Aids
  - Hand held magnifiers
  - Video Magnifiers
  - Reading machines with voice output
- Ergonomic furniture and devices
- Alternative work schedules
Ergonomic two handed keyboard

Ergonomic chair

Portable Closed Circuit TV

Alternative Pointing Devices and Switches
Creating a Disability Friendly Organizational Culture

Six Essential Elements

1. Develop a philosophy of disability

“The Center on Disabilities is an integral part of the university mission of teaching, scholarship and active learning, furthering the vision of an inclusive society which supports the attainment of academic, professional and personal goals for **persons of all abilities**. The Center fulfills this mission through programs of student service, education, and research.”

California State University at Northridge
http://www.csun.edu/cod/aboutus.htm
Creating a Disability Friendly Organizational Culture (cont.)

1. Develop a philosophy of disability
2. Ensure strong top management support
3. Write job descriptions that are disability friendly
4. Recruit and hire persons with disabilities
5. Educate staff to the issues of disabilities
6. Use top–down and bottom–up change initiatives. Be open to advocacy
Disabilities

Disabilities make it harder to take part in normal daily activities. They may limit what you can do physically or mentally, or they can affect your senses. Disability doesn't mean unable, and it isn't a sickness. Most people with disabilities can - and do - work, play, learn, and enjoy full healthy lives. Mobility aids and assistive devices can make all the difference.

About one in every five people in the United States has a disability. Some people are born with a disability. Some get sick or have an accident that results in a disability. Some people develop disabilities as they age. Almost all of us will have a disability at some point.
Health Topics

- Assistive Devices
- Developmental Disabilities
- Learning Disorders
- Mobility Aids
- Hearing Disorders and Deafness
- Rehabilitation
- Vision Impairment and Blindness
- Diabetic Eye Problems
- Speech and Communication Disorders
- Surgery and Rehabilitation
- Social/Family Issues
- Wellness and Lifestyles
- Ergonomics
- Mental Health
- Occupational Health
- Safety Issues
Welcome to Go Local, a service for finding local resources for health-related issues. Select an area from the map below to search for health services and topics.
Services for Assistive Devices

for Howard County

Resources in Howard County
- Audiologists (4)
- Health Care Equipment/Supplies (1)
- Home Health Care Services (6)
- Occupational Therapists (1)
- Physical Medicine/Rehabilitation Specialists (2)
- Physical Therapists (6)

Regional resources also serving Howard County
- Home Health Care Services (3)
- Physical Medicine/Rehabilitation Specialists (1)

Resources serving all of Maryland
- Audiologists (1)
- Disability Programs (1)
- Health Care Equipment/Supplies (1)
- Home Health Care Services (2)
- Physical Therapists (3)
- Referral Services (1)

Resources in Howard County

Audiologists

Advanced Hearing Centers
5999 Harpers Farm Road, Suite E250
Columbia, MD 21044
(877) 255-3277
Map and directions
Welcome to the informational web site for the CMS "Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 (TWWIIA)." This landmark legislation modernizes the employment services system for people with disabilities and makes it possible for millions of Americans with disabilities to no longer have to choose between taking a job and having health care. CMS will be providing information to states, beneficiaries and advocacy groups on an ongoing basis concerning implementation of this important legislation. For more information on TWWIIA you can also reference the Social Security Administration (Please see link below "Social Security Administration Work Programs")

The four sections of the Act that provide health care support for people with disabilities who work are:

- **Medicaid Buy-In.** Section 201 of TWWIIA governs the provision of health care services to workers with severe disabilities by establishing a Medicaid state plan buy-in optional eligibility groups. As of 2007 over 80,000 individuals in 32 states were covered under this new eligibility group.

- **Extended Medicare Coverage.** Section 202 extends the period of premium free Medicare Part A coverage and requires consumer protection for some individuals with Medigap coverage. Individuals receiving Social Security Disability Insurance who elect to work above threshold levels (substantial gainful activity) can maintain their Medicare coverage for eight and a half years after they return to work.

- **Medicaid Infrastructure Grants.** Section 203 provides grants to states to develop state infrastructures to support working individuals with disabilities. As of 2007 there are over 41 participating states including the District of Columbia.

- **Demonstration to Maintain Independence and employment.** Section 204 provides for a demonstration to provide health care coverage to individuals with potentially disabling conditions who work testing the hypothesis that the provision of health care and related supports will prolong independence and employment and reduce dependency on disability income support programs.
http://www.ada.gov/cguide.htm

A Guide to Disability Rights Laws

September 2005
Working While Disabled—How We Can Help

SSA Publication No. 05-10006, January 2008, ICN 468825 [View pdf] (En Español)

Contacting Social Security

Our website is a valuable resource for information about all of Social Security’s programs. There are a number of things you can do online.

In addition to using our website, you can call us toll-free at 1-800-772-1213. We can answer specific questions from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday. We can provide information by automated phone service 24 hours a day. (You can use our automated response system to tell us a new address or request a replacement Medicare card.) If you are deaf or hard of hearing, you may call our TTY number, 1-800-325-0778.

We treat all calls confidentially. We also want to make sure you receive accurate and courteous service. That is why we have a second Social Security representative monitor some telephone calls.

Contents

Getting disability benefits? We can help you get to work!
Social Security work incentives at a glance
How your earnings affect your Social Security benefits
If you lose your job
Special rules for workers who are blind
SSI work incentives at a glance
How your earnings affect your SSI payments
How long your Medicaid will continue
Work Incentives Planning and Assistance program

Getting disability benefits? We can help you get to work!
American women today play many roles—mother, wife, friend, boss, employee, grandmother—and they are busy juggling families, friends, and careers. Did you know that about one in five of these women has a disability? Disabilities are physical or mental limitations that make it harder to perform normal daily activities. A disability can range from severe to mild depending on how much it limits your ability to perform normal daily activities.

Some people are born with...
People with Disabilities

Learn about renting, buying and making your home accessible, and about your Fair Housing rights.

Help
- Find a housing counselor near you - free or low-cost counseling services for buying, renting, defaults, foreclosures, credit issues and reverse mortgages.

Renting
- Renting - tips and programs
- Get rental help in your state - find subsidized apartments, public housing agencies and other state and local resources

Buying
- Buying a home - what everyone needs to know about buying a home
- Let FHA loans help you
- Homeownership where you live - find local resources and programs that can help you buy and maintain a home

Home Repair Programs
- FHA's 203k loan - this loan for fixer-uppers can also be used to make improvements for accessibility
- Property improvement loan (Title I)
- More about home improvement and grant programs
- Local home repair programs

Fair Housing
- Disability rights and resources
- The Fair Housing Act
- Housing discrimination complaints
- Accessibility housing design
Tax Benefits for Businesses Accommodating Persons with Disabilities

NOTE: This headline is current through the publication date. Since changes may have occurred, no guarantees are made concerning the technical accuracy after the publication date.

Headliner Volume 217
October 31, 2007

October is National Disability Awareness month and the perfect time for the IRS to remind businesses there are tax benefits in the form of credits and deductions for businesses that accommodate individuals with disabilities.

The Disabled Access Credit provides a non-refundable credit for small businesses that incur expenditures for the purpose of providing access to persons with disabilities. An eligible small business is one that earned $1 million or less or had no more than 30 full time employees in the previous year; they may take the credit each and every year they incur access expenditures. Refer to Form 8826, Disabled Access Credit (PDF), for information about eligible expenditures.

The Architectural Barrier Removal Tax Deduction encourages businesses of any size to remove architectural and transportation barriers to the mobility of persons with disabilities and the elderly. Businesses may claim a deduction of up to $15,000 a year for qualified expenses for items that normally must be capitalized. Businesses claim the deduction by listing it as a separate expense on their income tax return. Also, businesses may use the Disabled Tax Credit and the architectural/transportation tax deduction together in the same tax year, if the expenses meet the requirements of both sections. To use both, the deduction is equal to the difference between the total expenditures and the amount of the credit claimed.

The Work Opportunity Credit provides eligible employers with a tax credit up to 40 percent of the first $6,000 of first-year wages of a new employee if the employee is part of a "targeted group." An employee with a disability is one of the targeted groups for the Work Opportunity Credit, provided the appropriate government agencies have certified the employee as disabled. The credit is available to the employer once the employee has worked for at least 120 hours or 90 days. Employers claim the credit on Form 5884, Work Opportunity Credit (PDF).
Hidden Disabilities

Travelers with Disabilities and Medical Conditions

- Pacemakers, Defibrillators, Other Implanted Medical Devices, & Metal Implants
- Medical Oxygen and Respiratory-Related Equipment
- Diabetes
- Medications

Persons with a hidden disability can, if they choose, advise Security Officers that they have a hidden disability and may need some assistance, or need to move a bit slower than others.

Family members or traveling companions can advise Security Officers when they are traveling with someone who has a hidden disability, which may cause that person to move a little slower, become agitated easily and/or need additional assistance.

Family members or traveling companions can offer suggestions to Security Officers on the best way to approach and deal with the person with a hidden disability, especially when it is necessary to touch the person during a pat-down inspection.
Need for Strategic Planning
Include retention and recruitment into organizational strategic plan.
Know the Law.
Plan reasonable accommodations.
Budget for reasonable accommodations.
Include reasonable accommodations in disaster preparedness plan.
Provide staff training.
Goal 4. A Strong and Diverse Workforce for Biomedical Informatics, Research, Systems Development and Innovative Service Delivery

Recommendation 4.1. Develop an expanded and diverse workforce through enhanced visibility of biomedical informatics and library science for K–12 and college students.

2007 – 2008 Associate Fellows
Create a Disability Friendly Workplace
Thank you

Time for Q & A.
Contact Us

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