

TEACHING PACK

for teachers/trainers

**Effective communication
and customer service tailored
to individuals with special needs**



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The teaching pack is the culmination of a collaborative effort involving three organizations: Zespół Szkół Turystyczno - Gastronomicznych in Mińsk Mazowiecki, POLPROM Foundation and Intercultural Association Mobility Friends, as part of a project implemented with funding from the European Union.

It encompasses essential topics such as effective communication and customer service tailored to individuals with special needs, focusing specifically on the tourism sector.

Adapting services to meet the unique requirements of guests has become an imperative in modern tourism, aligning with the expectations of employers within this industry. Recent years have witnessed a heightened emphasis on specific workplace conduct, particularly following Poland's ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. A cursory search on popular browsers reveals an abundance of instructions, guides, and standards directed at hotels, covering aspects like accessibility features, elevator specifications, reception counter heights, and room amenities to cater to disabled individuals. Regrettably, resources detailing the integration of soft skills training, including effective communication with individuals with disabilities, into vocational education programs are scarce.

In response to this gap, we have embarked on the development of a teaching pack designed to facilitate the training of prospective employees, emphasizing principles of communication, especially in interactions with individuals with disabilities.

Zespół Szkół Turystyczno - Gastronomicznych in Mińsk Mazowiecki - is a Polish secondary school specializing in vocational education related to the tourism, catering and hotel sector.

POLPROM Foundation - endeavors to establish a connection between the education system and the labor market, fostering the professional engagement of individuals in their later careers. By promoting entrepreneurship and facilitating cross-sectoral collaboration, it aims to cultivate a sustainable employment ecosystem.

Intercultural Association Mobility Friends - comprises a team of international individuals. Their primary aim is to deliver optimal outcomes for the European projects in which the organization is involved, collaborating effectively with all partners involved.



Funded by
the European Union



DESCRIPTION OF THE TEACHING PACK CONTAINING LESSON PLANS

Prepare yourself for a set of six, 45-minute lesson plans, each designed to equip your students with valuable skills. During these classes you will deliver concise lectures, followed by exercises aimed at refining your students' ability to understand complex situations, develop effective solutions, and practice key behaviors.

While the primary focus of these sessions is on preparing your students to interact with clients and customers who have disabilities, the skills they acquire will prove useful across a wide range of industries. To ensure the best possible experience, it's important to possess a strong understanding of the course topics and the ability to guide the students through the exercises with care. Ideally, teachers should have prior experience communicating with individuals with disabilities, making them well-suited to delivering this teaching pack.

The course material is versatile and can be incorporated into various lessons and extracurricular activities.

Lesson plans:

1. Stereotypes.
2. Matrix with magical thoughts.
3. Rule cards.
4. Small town.
5. Customer with special needs.
6. In a world full of surprises.

LESSON PLAN 1

STEREOTYPES



Objectives:

- highlighting stereotypes about people with disabilities
- providing tips for better communication with people with disabilities
- breaking down barriers when communicating with people with disabilities



Time: 45 minutes



Materials:

- A4 paper sheet
- table of stereotypes



Working methods:

- pair work
- role-play
- informative lecture

Lesson planning framework:

1. Introduction

Introduce the students with the following definitions or jog their memory if they are already familiar with them:

- myth - a widely held but false belief or idea
- stereotype - oversimplified image of a particular type of person or thing that is held in common by members of a group and represents an oversimplified opinion, prejudiced attitude, or uncritical judgment
- disability - disability is any condition of the body or mind (impairment) that makes it more difficult for the person with the condition to do certain activities (activity limitation) and interact with the world around them.

2. Activity: “Encountering stereotypes”

Objective: avoiding stereotypical thinking when communicating with people with disabilities

Time: 25 minutes

Materials: cards with stereotypes

Working methods: pair work, discussion

Procedures:

Have students work in pairs. Invite each pair to pick one card with a stereotype of people with disabilities. Ask each pair to sit at a separate table.

Instructions for students:

You have drawn a card with a stereotype of people with disabilities. Your task is to role play a scenario addressing this stereotype. It can be a workplace role-play scenario – when a person with a disability is your client or it can be a real life situation – when you are observing a person with a disability and you want to react by helping this person. You have 2 minutes to run the scenario. After all the pairs are done try to think through what the most common stereotypes you encounter are and how to challenge them.

Instructions for the teacher:

Allow students to be as independent as they want during the role-play. If negative elements appear in the scenarios, for example mocking people with disabilities, explain that stereotypes can lead to discrimination - it is intentional but sometimes people do not realize they are doing it.

Examples of stereotypes:

- People with disabilities are like children – they always need help.
- People with disabilities are always mentally challenged.
- Talking louder will help a person with hearing loss to understand.
- All people with hearing disabilities can read lips.
- People with disabilities always need their personal assistants.
- People with disabilities are ashamed of their disability.
- People with disabilities live sad lives – they don't have fun, they are miserable
- People with disabilities can't take care of themselves and their surroundings.
- People with disabilities spend most of their time at home.
- Visually impaired people need to have all obstacles removed on their way.

3. Conclusion

Recap that:

- People with disabilities are outright members of our society, they have lives that include education, work, vacations – stereotypes build up prejudices which lead us to discriminate negatively against these people.
- Due to the lack of information on opportunities and barriers experienced by people with disabilities – we do not always behave in a way we are supposed to.
- We should not stereotype and make assumptions linked to disability only because we think that we know something.

Finally, encourage students to share their insights, to reflect on their learning by asking them questions – if they gained new knowledge, what was useful and engaging, what was surprising?

Internet sources:

www.sjp.pl– available 01.09.2023

www.unic.un.org.pl – available 01.09.2023

LESSON PLAN 2

MATRIX WITH MAGICAL THOUGHTS



Objectives:

- recognising emotions and feelings when interacting with people with disabilities
- realising how negative emotions and feelings affect interactions with people with disabilities
- breaking down barriers when interacting with people with disabilities



Time: 45 minutes



Materials:

- cards with images
- modeling paste, large sheets of paper (flip chart)
- marker pens



Working methods:

- pair work
- role-play
- informative lecture

Lesson planning framework:

1. Introduction

Introduce the students with the objectives of the lesson. People with disabilities go to school, work, get married, pay taxes, use public places – they are customers in restaurants, hotels etc. Point out that it is important to be empathetic towards customers with disabilities and understand their emotions, feelings, intentions. Words can influence and reinforce perceptions of people with disabilities. They can either create or break down barriers when dealing with customers with disabilities.

2. Activity: “Magical thoughts”

Objective: avoiding stereotypical thinking when communicating with people with disabilities

Time: 25 minutes

Materials: cards with stereotypes

Working methods: pair work, discussion

Procedures:

Now, it's time to put our minds to work with an activity called "Magical thoughts." Our goal here is to avoid stereotypical thinking when communicating with people with disabilities. Splitting into three groups, the students will get a set of flip chart papers, marker pens, and modeling paste. On a separate desk, they'll have cards with images that they'll be working with.

Instructions for the students:

Each group will have a specific role:

- office clerk
- shopping assistant
- hotel employee

Pick an image and write down as many emotions as you can think of while looking at the image in reference to the role you had been given. Do this for another image, and when you run out of images, pass your flip chart sheet of paper to the group on your left. Keep brainstorming and writing your responses on the sheet in reference to your role.

Share our ideas with the class. Display the associations to each image prominently in your classroom and give each group the opportunity to share their brainstormed ideas with the class. Break down those stereotypes and let them become empathetic communicators.

3. Conclusion

Recap that:

- Career and life role is very important when interacting with people with disabilities.
- There is a range of communication methods when interacting with people with disabilities – it is important to choose the most effective ones responding to their needs. Ask them how they prefer to communicate.
- It is important to treat each person with disability as an individual.
- It is important to focus on people first, their abilities, not disabilities.

Finally, encourage students to share their insights, to reflect on their learning by asking them questions – if they gained new knowledge, what was useful and engaging, what was surprising?

Internet sources:

pixbay – available 01.09.2023

canva.com













LESSON PLAN 3

RULE CARDS



Objectives:

- mastering the art of disability etiquette
- exploring creative ways to offer superb service to customers with disabilities
- fostering friendly and welcoming interactions with people with disabilities



Time: 45 minutes



Materials:

- rule cards
- marker pens



Working methods:

- discussion
- individual/group work
- lecture

Lesson planning framework:

1. Introduction

Let's kick things off by introducing students to the objectives of the lesson, highlighting the importance of disability awareness, and serving up some handy tips for communicating with people with disabilities. There's extra info waiting for you at the end of this lesson plan.

2. Activity: "Rule cards"

Objective: providing practical tips for communication with people with disabilities

Time: 25 minutes

Materials: rule cards (5 pieces)

Working methods: individual/group work, discussion

Procedures:

Hand out a set of five cards to each student. These cards contain three different scenarios and students' task is to choose the most appropriate behaviour. After the activity pair them up and let them check their answers with each other, making sure we've got all the lesson material down pat.

3. Conclusion

Recap the main points:

- It's important to identify disabled customer needs and expectations - this may mean providing the service by a different method.
- It's important to raise awareness around people with disabilities and increase understanding of their needs.

Finally, encourage students to share their insights, to reflect on their learning by asking them questions – if they gained new knowledge, what was useful and engaging, what was surprising?

Internet sources:

<https://www.power.gov.pl/media/13600/praktyczny-poradnik-savoir-vivre-wobec-ON.pdf> - available 01.09.2013

Appendix:

Rule cards – pick a card. Choose the best response for each of these three tricky situations:

CARD NUMBER 1

In a hotel you are working at there is a glass double door leading to the restaurant. It is not automatic so you need to grab a handle to open the door (1.70 cm above the floor). You can see a customer in a wheelchair approaching the door. What do you do?

- Take charge! Approach the customer, open the door, and politely offer to push the wheelchair.
- **Be polite! Approach the customer and ask how you can help.**
- Do nothing! Leave the customer to fend for themselves.

CARD NUMBER 2

A group of people, including a person wearing dark glasses and holding a white cane, have just arrived at the hotel. What do you do?

- Take immediate action! Grab the person with the white cane and lead them to the entrance.
- **Be polite! Greet everyone and then approach the person with the white cane, greeting them again and waiting for their response.**
- Ignore the person with the white cane and focus on the rest of the group.

CARD NUMBER 3

A young man with a movement disorder and his personal assistant approach the reception desk asking for spa towels. What do you do?

- Ignore the young man and ask the assistant how many towels they need.
- **Hand over the towels they need.**
- Suggest an alternative activity, such as visiting a shallow pool.

CARD NUMBER 4

A hotel guest with hearing impairment wants to attend a movie night with no subtitles. What do you do?


- Inform the guest there are no subtitles and suggest they skip the event.
- **Inform the guest there are no subtitles but give them the ticket and wish them to enjoy the movie.**
- Suggest an alternative activity, like going bowling.

CARD NUMBER 5

A hotel guest asks to dim the lights and turn down the music in the restaurant. What do you do?


- Tell the guest it's against hotel rules and can't be changed.
- **Check with your manager before the next meal.**
- Suggest dining in another room with a more suitable ambiance.

The correct answers are highlighted in green.




In a hotel you are working at there is a glass double door leading to the restaurant. It is not automatic so you need to grab a handle to open the door (1.70 cm above the floor). You can see a customer in a wheelchair approaching the door. What do you do?

- A. Take charge! Approach the customer, open the door, and politely offer to push the wheelchair.
- B. Be polite! Approach the customer and ask how you can help.
- C. Do nothing! Leave the customer to fend for themselves.




A group of people, including a person wearing dark glasses and holding a white cane, have just arrived at the hotel. What do you do?

- A. Take immediate action! Grab the person with the white cane and lead them to the entrance.
- B. Be polite! Greet everyone and then approach the person with the white cane greeting them again and waiting for their response.
- C. Ignore the person with the white cane and focus on the rest of the group.




A young man with a movement disorder and his personal assistant approach the reception desk asking for spa towels. What do you do?

- A. Ignore the young man and ask the assistant how many towels they need.
- B. Hand over the towels they need.
- C. Suggest an alternative activity, such as visiting a shallow pool.



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- A. Inform the guest there are no subtitles and suggest they skip the event.
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- C. Suggest an alternative activity, like going bowling.



A hotel guest asks to dim the lights and turn down the music in the restaurant. What do you do?

- A. Tell the guest it's against hotel rules and can't be changed.
- B. Check with your manager before the next meal.
- C. Suggest dining in another room with a more suitable ambiance.

LESSON PLAN 4

SMALL TOWN



Objectives:

- changing perception of individuals with disabilities
- raising awareness of the barriers the disabled individuals encounter
- shaping openness towards the individuals with disabilities



Time: 45 minutes



Materials:

- photos or graphics of various people (source: pixabay, webpages)



Working methods:

- discussion
- group work
- lecture

Lesson planning framework:

1. Introduction

Introduce students to the topic of perception by giving a short definition, e.g.: perception is seeing someone and assessing them in a specific way, becoming aware of the impression caused by the action of an external stimulus on the senses; noticing. Perception is the way in which a person creates an image of himself and other people and then draws conclusions from this internal image. This perception is strongly influenced by both external factors (e.g. culture) and internal factors (e.g. way of thinking). The combination of both gives the final image of yourself or another person.

2. Activity: “Let’s talk about perception...”

Objective: reflecting upon perception

Time: 25 minutes

Materials: photos of people representing different races around the world

Procedures:

First, present the photos of people of different races and encourage discussion by asking some questions, e.g.: Do you know the races around the world? How do you distinguish races? Do you have any beliefs about different races?

3. Activity: “Small town”

Objective: reflecting upon perception

Time: 15 minutes

Materials: photos of people representing different races around the world

Methods: group work, discussion

Group the students (the number of people in the group depends on the teacher's decision). Each group receives a set of photos or graphics with various characters (e.g. four from the attached list). Introduce the students to the topic of the activity:

Imagine that you live in a small town. While walking the streets every day, you meet different people - you know them by sight, by name, they are your school mates, colleagues or neighbours. What can you say about these people? Sometimes you talk to them in passing, sometimes you just pass by and greet them politely. You live in a small town and over time you learn more and more about the people you meet. And when a new resident moves into your town - how do you perceive them, what do you pay attention to, how do you want to welcome them?

Each group writes down two sentences or questions that should be expressed during such a greeting. The teacher collects them without reading aloud. Then the teacher gives instructions to the students.

Instructions for students: Place the photos on the table. Then stick one of them on a flip chart and add pieces of paper with two sentences/questions that you would like to use when welcoming a given person to your town. Hang the sheet in a visible place and present it to the whole class. Following groups read their questions.

Extra tip for the teacher: In this activity it is not essential that students recognise the people in the photos. The aim of the task is to draw attention to the perception of disabled people. Are these questions similar to the ones they write down during the first part of the activity? How are they different?

3. Conclusion

Present the most important conclusions from the lesson:

- Disabilities are either visible (like races) or invisible (unnoticed) even when you meet the person every day.
- The perception of race is relatively simple, the perception of people with disabilities often requires giving up stereotypical thinking.
- Treat people with disabilities like any other person - empathy is a skill that we should demonstrate towards every person, regardless of who they are.
- Treat a person with a disability as a new resident of a small town - be open, say hello, ask questions to get to know this person better, show the "map" of the small town.
- The small town introduced in the activity is a metaphor for the place where you work and meet new clients, including those with disabilities.

At the end of the lesson encourage students to reflect on the topic of the lesson and try to elicit the knowledge acquired during the lesson, ask what was practical, surprising, new or interesting.

Internet sources:

www.zpe.pl – access 01.09.2023

www.sjp.pwn.pl – access 01.09.2023

www.pixabay – access 01.09.2023

www.mobilex.pl/blog/slynni-niepelnosprawni/ - access 01.09.2023

www.katowice.eu/edukacja - access 01.09.2023

Appendix:

- Races in the world
- Famous people with disabilities

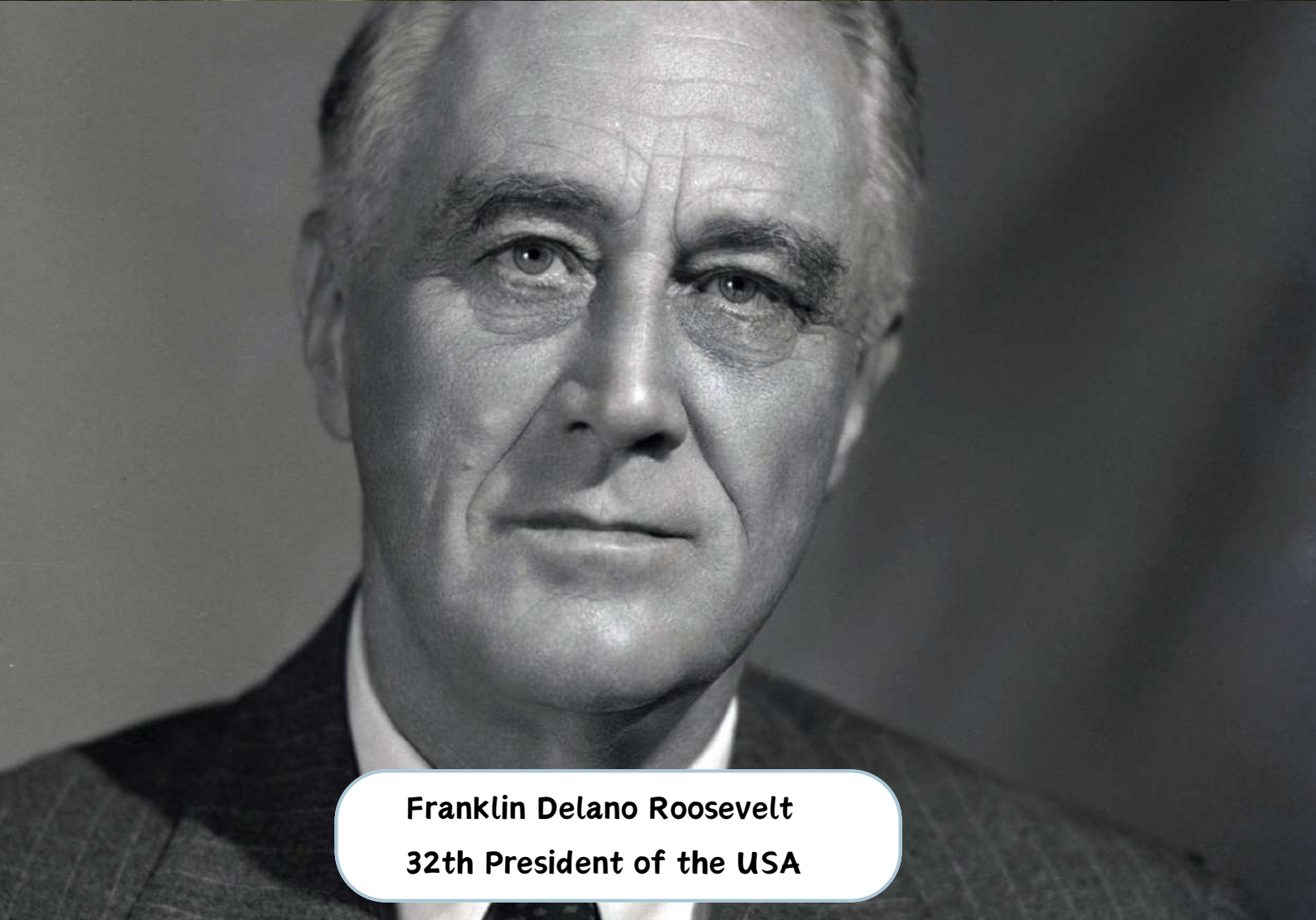
Internet sources:

- [Canva.com](https://www.canva.com)

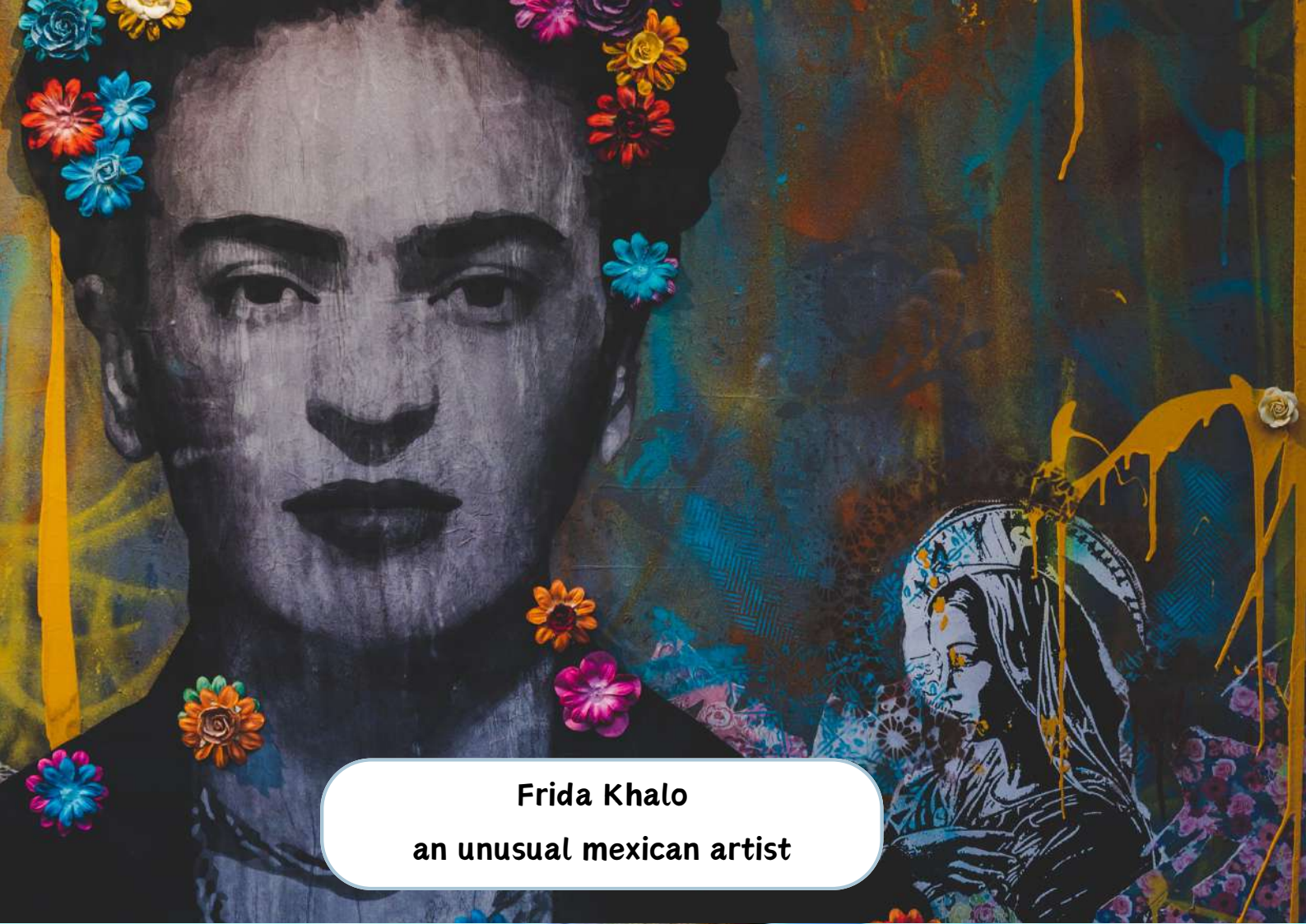




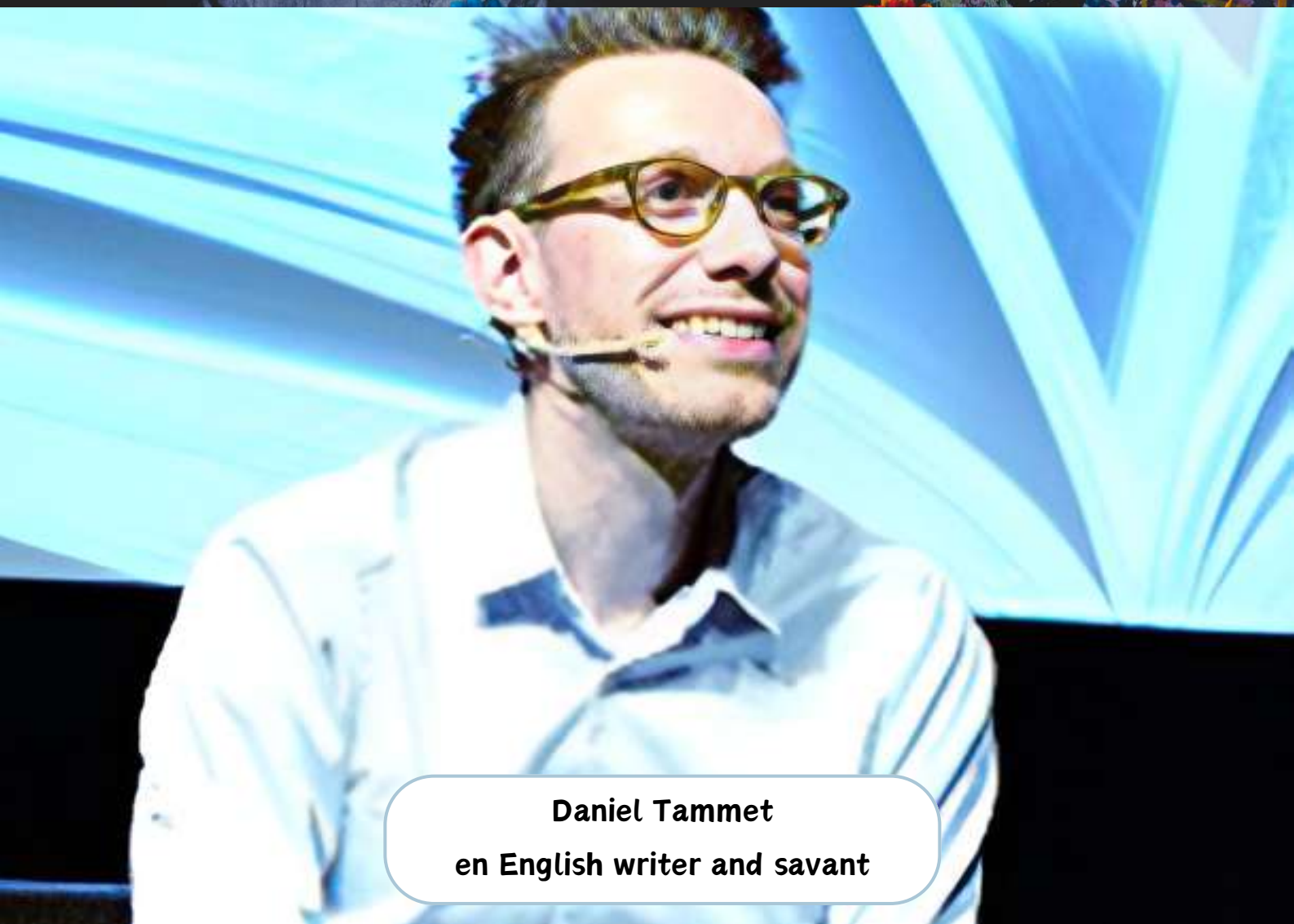
Stephen Hawking - one of the most recognisable scientists



**Franklin Delano Roosevelt
32th President of the USA**



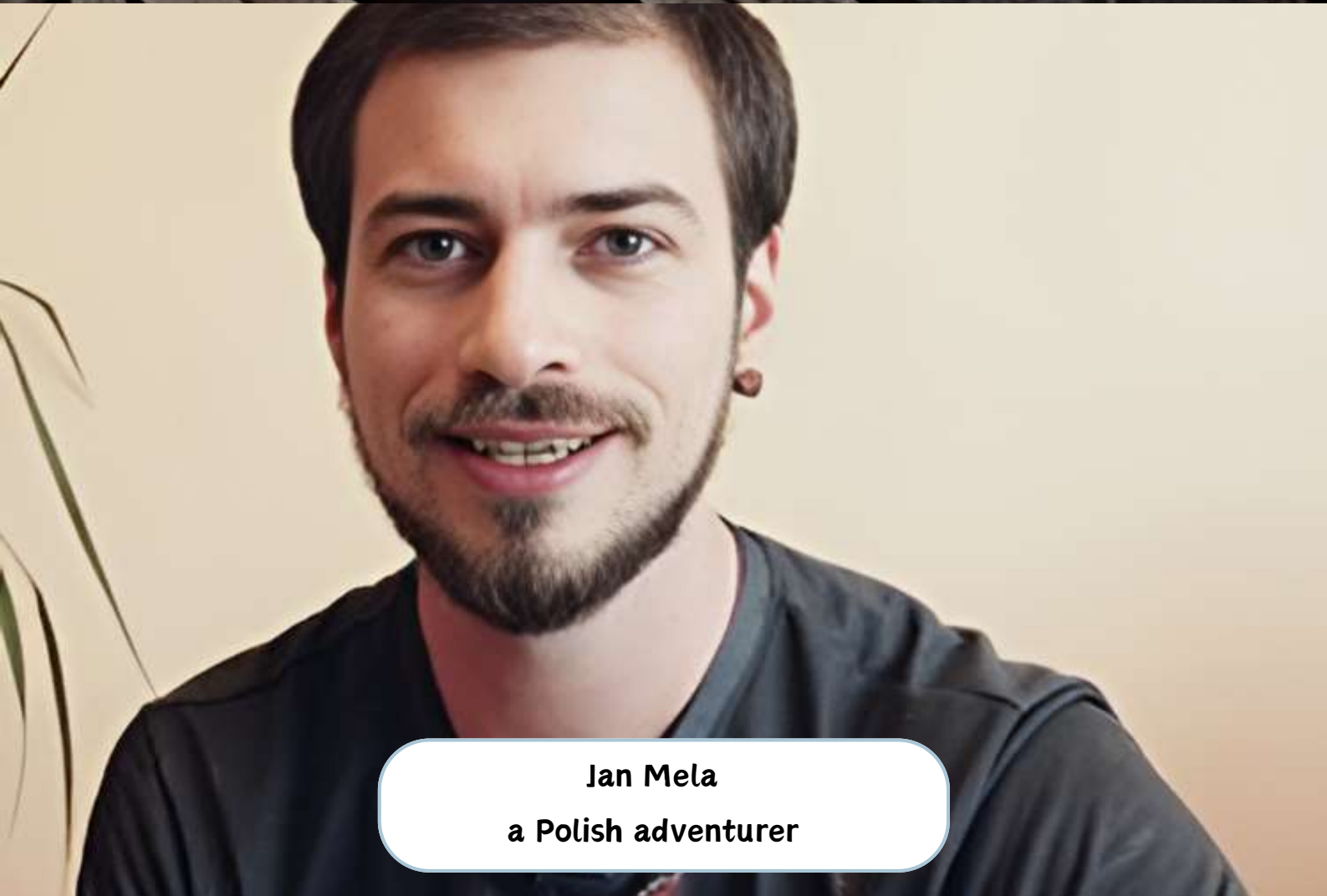
Frida Kahlo
an unusual mexican artist



Daniel Tammet
en English writer and savant



Jean Dominique-Bauby
a French Journalist



Jan Mela
a Polish adventurer



Janina Ochojska
a Polish humanitarian, social activist



Ludwig van Beethoven
a German composer



Ray Charles
an American singer, pianist, composer



Nick Vujicic
an Australian-American motivational speaker

LESSON PLAN 5

A CUSTOMER WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



Objectives:

- learning about the needs of the disabled
- overcoming communication barriers



Time: 45 minutes



Materials:

- A4 sheets of paper
- pens



Working methods:

- discussion
- group work
- lecture
- individual work

Lesson planning framework:

1. Introduction

Begin the lesson with a short lecture on the problems of a "difficult" client/customer. Should such a term exist in the employee's or employer's dictionary? If you were a school student, would you tell your friends or colleagues - people with disabilities - that they are difficult students or difficult friends? Isn't it true that what is different from what we consider the norm, different from the standard image of the situation in which we function - is a difficulty for us, a challenge to overcome? People with disabilities may communicate and function differently than non-disabled people. That is why they can put us in situations we haven't been involved in before. And every new thing brings fear with it. But if you know yourself well, you are certainly able to imagine your potential behaviour in a new, surprising situation. During the first meeting with a disabled person, each of us begins building a relationship with a new client by using our own competence to establish contact. The more experience you have, the fewer "difficult customers" you meet on your way.

2. Activity: "How would you react when meeting a customer with special needs?"

Objective: analysis/observation of behaviour, attitude and communication with a customer with a disability

Time: 25 minutes

Materials: A4 sheets of paper, pens

Procedures:

Distribute sheets of A4 paper and pens. Ask each student to work individually.

Instructions for students:

Imagine this: you are starting a new customer service job. You've been at work for two days now, serving customers without any problems. On the third day, in the morning, a person arrives with a guide dog/with a hearing aid/using a wheelchair/making strange noises, like shouting or cursing/ etc. On a piece of paper write down all the thoughts coming to your mind at this moment. What do you feel, what do you want to say, what do you want to do, what will your reaction be? Then, rank these thoughts in the following order: first those that are the most difficult/important, and then those that are less difficult/important.

Once everyone has written down their thoughts, each student stands up and looks for another student or students in their class who have the same thoughts in their rankings and a similar distribution of content in the rankings. Sit down and discuss how these thoughts affect the quality and method of serving disabled people. Then, try to create a ranking of common reactions throughout the entire class. Once you have completed the task, discuss the results of your work. State the consequences of your behaviour and think about how the client/customer might feel.

Extra tip for the teacher:

Various topics may appear in the rankings. However, when there is a lack of ideas, the teacher may suggest a few phrases, e.g.: I am embarrassed, I am afraid of this person's behaviour, I feel angry, I want to hide somewhere, I want to cry over the fate of this person, I want to lend a hand, I want this person to calm down, etc. or the reaction of a customer with a disability to the behaviour of a student/employee: e.g.: nervousness, reluctance, frustration, feeling misunderstood, feeling of lack of acceptance, powerlessness, etc.

3. Conclusion

Present the most important conclusions from the lesson:

- The difficulty in serving people with disabilities is the lack of knowledge about the dysfunction, barriers and needs of this client/customer.
- You must demonstrate high interpersonal skills to respond flexibly to new situations.

At the end of the lesson encourage students to reflect on the topic of the lesson and tries to elicit the knowledge acquired during the lesson, asks what was practical, surprising, new or interesting.

Internet sources:

www.poradnikpracownika.pl – 01.09.2023

LESSON PLAN 6

IN A WORLD FULL OF SURPRISES



Objectives:

- learning about the needs of people with disabilities
- raising willingness to overcome communication barriers with disabled people



Time: 45 minutes



Materials:

- chairs
- cards with questions about various aspects of disabilities



Working methods:

- discussion
- group work

Lesson planning framework:

1. Introduction

First, introduce the topic, but don't start the lecture, it'd be better to suggest the students a knowledge test. All students will take part in a quiz on disability issues.

2. Activity: "Quiz: Are you an omnibus or a layman?"

Objective: extending knowledge about disabilities

Time: 25 minutes

Materials: : chairs, cards with questions, wide sash, string, A4 sheets of paper

Working methods: group work, discussion

Procedures:

Divide the class into two groups. Groups sit opposite each other - if possible, each group in one row, one chair apart. A sash is stretched along the chairs or sheets of paper are placed in such a way as to separate the groups from each other. The sash and sheets of paper are not moved throughout the quiz. Only the participants can change the place.

Instruction for students:

The first group draws one question and answers it. If the answer is correct, the entire group stays in the same place, the arrangement of chairs and the distance from the other group do not change. If the answer is wrong, the entire group stands up and moves the chairs back, about half a metre away. Then the second group draws a question and answers it. The same rule applies - a good answer does not change the position of the group, a wrong answer moves the group back. The groups take turns drawing questions and answering them.

Extra tip for the teacher:

No points are awarded in this game. There are also no winners or losers. The lack of correct answers to questions causes students to move away from each other, which symbolises contacts with people with disabilities. The less you know about disabilities, the more distant you are, the more difficult it is for you to serve people with disabilities, work and learn together with them.

3. Conclusion

Present the most important conclusions from the lesson:

- knowledge is always valuable
- awareness of various aspects of disability makes it easier to provide services to people with disabilities
- developing relationships is based on the information flow.

At the end of the lesson encourage students to reflect on the topic of the lesson and try to elicit the knowledge acquired during the lesson, asks what was practical, surprising, new or interesting.

Internet sources:

www.zus.pl – 01.09.2023

www.portal.gov.pl – 01.09.2023

Appendix

Rule cards – pick a card. Choose the correct answer:

CARD NUMBER 1

Albeism means:

- a) The belief that disability is something negative and must be treated; reluctance and discrimination against people with disabilities.
- b) The belief that people with disabilities should study and work in separate, specialized places
- c) The belief that nothing and no one can help people with disabilities

CARD NUMBER 2

What words should be used to describe people living with disabilities?

- a) A person with a disability or disabilities
- b) Disabled person
- c) Invalid

CARD NUMBER 3

Can disabled people work?

- a) Yes
- b) Only in certain jobs
- c) No

CARD NUMBER 4

How many degrees of disability are there?

- a) 2
- b) 3
- c) 4

CARD NUMBER 5

Is it appropriate to say "See you" to a blind person?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) You should always say: „Speak soon”

CARD NUMBER 6

Is it appropriate to say "come to me" to a person in a wheelchair?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) You need to approach this person yourself, not ask to approach him/her

CARD NUMBER 7

How to deal with a blind person who wants to get from point A to point B?

- a) Take her hand and lead him/her
- b) Let him/her grab your arm
- c) Lead ahead

The correct answers are highlighted in green.



Albeism means:

- a) The belief that disability is something negative and must be treated; reluctance and discrimination against people with disabilities.
- b) The belief that people with disabilities should study and work in separate, specialized places
- c) The belief that nothing and no one can help people with disabilities




What words should be used to describe people living with disabilities?

- a) A person with disability or disabilities
- b) Disabled person
- c) Invalid



Can people with disabilities work?

- a) Yes
- b) Only in certain jobs
- c) No




How many degrees of disability are there?

- a) 2
- b) 3
- c) 4




Is it appropriate to say "See you" to a blind person?

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- b) No
- c) You should always say: "Speak soon"



Is it appropriate to say "come to me" to a person in a wheelchair?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) You need to approach this person yourself, not ask to approach him/her



How to deal with a blind person who wants to get from point A to point B?

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- b) Let him/her grab your arm
- c) Lead ahead

WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO CONSIDER WHEN COMMUNICATING WITH PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES?

We communicate with others on a daily basis: at work as well as in a private environment. Having communication skills aids in all aspects of life - from professional life to personal life. They are essential especially in careers that require interacting with customers. Effective communication is important in hospitality industry as it involves a high degree of customer contact. It's important in this industry to promote inclusion, understanding and clarity to customers and use a tailored approach accordingly for each individual.

People with disabilities are now more active as customers in hotels, restaurants, cafes and other facilities linked to hospitality industry. Lack of basic knowledge about how to behave may result in misunderstanding and awkward situations between workers and their customers.

Given resources are designed to develop soft communicative competences (mainly when interacting with people with disabilities). They can be used during various classes including career counselling, form period or vocational lessons and they can be used to complement your school curriculum. Available materials can be selected (relevant to learners needs and context) and can motivate teachers/trainers to develop their own lesson plans.

Lesson plans:

1. People with disabilities in hotels, restaurants, cafés (visible disabilities).
2. People with disabilities in hotels, restaurants, cafés (invisible disabilities).
3. In a different role.

LESSON PLAN 1

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN HOTELS, RESTAURANTS, CAFÉS (VISIBLE DISABILITIES)

Objectives:



- disability awareness
- figuring out practical solutions that allow to communicate with customers who have visible disabilities in restaurants, cafés and hotels



Time: 20 minutes



Materials:

- paper sheets with descriptions of various situations



Working methods:

- group work
- discussion
- lecture

Lesson planning framework:

1. Introduction

Introduce students with the objectives of the lesson: disability awareness, figuring out practical solutions that allow to communicate with customers who have invisible disabilities in restaurants, cafés and hotels.

2. Activity: People with disabilities/special needs visiting hotels, restaurants and cafés

Objectives: disability awareness, figuring out practical solutions that allow to communicate with customers who have disabilities in restaurants, cafes and hotels

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: paper sheets with descriptions of various situations

Working methods: group work, discussion, lecture (in conclusion)

Procedures:

(1) Divide students into groups.

(2) Each group receives a description of a situation, for example:

- A customer with a cane assisted by a companion approached the reception desk. He asked about his reservation and formalities he was supposed to complete. The receptionist felt uncomfortable. He was speaking to the personal assistant instead of speaking directly to the disabled customer. What is more, he was speaking more loudly and slowly than normal.
- There is an ongoing three-day training in one of the conference rooms in a hotel. There are visually impaired people among the visitors who are participating in this training. On the second day, before the training started, it turned out that there had been a technical failure and the training had to be postponed to another conference room. A hotel employee hung up a note on the door informing about this situation.
- A man walks into a restaurant. A hostess approaches the man and shows him to his table. After a minute a waitress approaches and tells the customer what the daily specials are. She takes his beverage order and gives him a few minutes to think about his main course. She leaves him with the menu card. It takes the man a lot of time to look at the menu. He has the difficulty of reading small letters. He does not know what to order besides the daily specials.
- A wheelchair user enters a restaurant. A waiter shows him to his table in the back. The table is adjusted to wheelchair height. The wheelchair user asks to change the table for the one by the window. The waiter does not know what to do - whether to change tables or try to convince his customer to stick with the table adjusted to wheelchair users.
- A man walks into a restaurant. A waitress approaches him to take his order. The man begins to talk: "Gggood mmorningg, li'dd lllikkke ccc..." "Coffee"? - says the waitress. She wanted to help. "Cccoofffeeee bbblllaackkk" - continues the customer. "Maybe you'd like some dessert? - asks the waitress. "Yeess, aa ppieeccee off cccaaa...". "Cake?" - suggests the waitress. "Aaapplleeee pieeee" - finishes the customer.

(3) Students' task is to identify problems people with disabilities face and to propose solutions. Ask questions like: What were the problems? What would have helped? What would have made things better?

- It is important for the teacher to point out that sometimes we may not be able to provide a disabled customer with exactly the same service. This may mean providing service which requires to show more courtesy, empathy and some awareness of challenges people with disabilities face (for instance, in reference to the situation):
- Speak to them directly. Do not make the mistake of staring, avoiding eye contact or only speaking to the person who may be accompanying them. People who are blind or have sight problems cannot interpret visual cues, so we should be more descriptive.
- Any changes should be announced to customers who are blind in person.
- It would be reasonable to bring a menu card with a bigger font once we realize that the customer struggles with reading or explain what is written on the menu card.
- A customer who uses a wheelchair should be allowed to make their own decision about where they want to be seated.
- Do not attempt to speak or finish a sentence for the person you are speaking to. Sometimes they may need a little more time than usual to express themselves.

3. Conclusion

Recap that customers with disabilities are simply: customers. See the person first, not the disability. Servicing customers with disabilities may require some awareness of challenges they face every day.

LESSON PLAN 2

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN HOTELS, RESTAURANTS, CAFÉS (INVISIBLE DISABILITIES)



Objectives:

- disability awareness
- figuring out practical solutions that allow to communicate with customers who have invisible disabilities in restaurants, cafés and hotels



Time: 20 minutes



Materials:

- paper sheets with descriptions of various situations



Working methods:

- group work,
- discussion
- lecture

Lesson planning framework:

1. Introduction

Introduce students with the objectives of the lesson: disability awareness, figuring out practical solutions that allow to communicate with customers who have invisible disabilities in restaurants, cafés and hotels.

2. Activity: People with disabilities/special needs visiting hotels, restaurants and cafés

Objectives: disability awareness, figuring out practical solutions that allow to communicate with customers who have invisible disabilities in restaurants, cafés and hotels

Time: 10-15 minutes

Materials: paper sheets with descriptions of various situations

Methods: group work, discussion, lecture (in conclusion)

Procedures:

(1) Have students work in groups.

(2) Each group receives a description of a situation, for example:

- A young woman approached the reception desk. During the conversation she repeatedly asked the receptionist to speak more slowly and repeat themselves. She was speaking loudly and maintaining eye contact with her interlocutor. She wanted to check in and ask about special offers and services. The receptionist started speaking louder and louder. There was a ringing phone in the background which was interrupting the conversation. The receptionist was trying to patiently answer all the questions.
- A woman walks into a cafe. She talks gibberish. She approached the table with an unsteady step. Her hands were shaking while pulling away a chair. One of the staff members informed the owner that the woman was under the influence of alcohol. The owner of the cafe approached the woman but he did not smell alcohol. It turned out that the woman suffers diabetes.
- A young man parked his car in a parking space designated for people with disabilities. A hotel employee saw him and started to wonder: "Should I draw his attention and point out that he parked his car in a disabled space?"
- A customer approaches a waiter in a restaurant. He asks where the toilet is. Then he asks if it is possible to dry his hands with a toilet paper or if he needs to use the hand dryer. The waiter is confused. He answers that there is only a hair dryer available in the toilet. He has a feeling that the customer would prefer to hear a different answer.

(3) Students task is to identify problems people with disabilities face and to propose solutions (what they would change or suggest useful tips for communicating with people with disabilities). Depending on how big the groups are one situation can be done by one or two groups.

(4) In conclusion the teacher points out that not every disability is visible. This sometimes means that their disability is not taken seriously. You may also do things a little bit differently when interacting with customers with disabilities, for instance:

- When communicating with someone with hearing impairment it's important to be patient and polite. Making eye contact when speaking with someone allows them to focus on you and concentrate on what you want to communicate. Reduce background noise - relatively quiet listening conditions are recommended because this provides the best-possible voice reception and allows the listener to use any visual cues they may need to assist speech understanding. Speak at a normal or slightly slower pace, and keep your volume up but natural.
- Hyperglycemia make people appear as intoxicated. As a side effect of this condition, people with diabetes may appear intoxicated and slur their speech, get confused or have trouble walking. It can lead to misunderstandings.
- Disabled people can park their cars in designated parking spaces. On roads and in car parks, parking places reserved for disabled people are marked with a wheelchair symbol. To use these spaces, they must have a disabled persons parking card. If a person is parked in an accessible parking spot with valid tag or license, they may have chronic pain, multiple sclerosis, an illness, or injury that we cannot see. Do not assume they are parking illegally.
- Hypersensitivity is a condition common among adults with ADHD. It is also not unusual for individuals with ADHD to feel physically hypersensitive to sensitive to sound (hair dryers).

3. Conclusion

Recap that many disabilities are not visibly apparent and this can be challenging to recognize and understand. Servicing people with invisible disabilities should be based on creating more awareness and compassion. The more we learn about a wide spectrum of hidden disabilities, the better we can understand what individuals with invisible disabilities go through on a daily basis.

LESSON PLAN 3

IN A DIFFERENT ROLE



Objectives:

- understanding challenges that people with disabilities face every day
- offering a glimpse into the world of living with visual impairment



Time: 20 minutes



Materials:

- scarfs or blindfolds



Working methods:

- group work
- discussion
- lecture

Lesson planning framework:

1. Introduction

Introduce students with the objectives of the lesson: understanding challenges that people with disabilities face every day and offering a glimpse into the world of living with a visual impairment.

2. Activity: “The train”

Objectives: offering a glimpse into the world of living with visual impairment. After the lesson students will be able to appreciate and understand how people with visual impairments use their other senses to perceive the world around them.

Time: 10-15 minutes

Materials: scarfs or blindfolds

Working methods: group work, discussion

Procedures:

(1) Break students into groups of three.

(2) Ask each group to create a human train formation. Pair up, with the initial two participants donning a scarf or blindfold.

The third member assumes the role of conductor, ensuring a safe journey while avoiding collisions with other trains.

Choose your preferred communication style: engage in conversation or opt for non-verbal cues.

(3) After the activity reconvene as a class and ask some questions:

- How difficult is it to communicate without sight or words?
- What challenges did you face?
- What eases the struggle?
- How does it feel to navigate blindfolded (as a pedestrian) or helm a group (as a leader)?

3. Practical situations within dining establishments and hotels

The class dives into everyday scenarios at eateries and hotels. The task? Imagine the challenges different disabilities could face when ordering food, reserving a spot, or giving directions. Then, engage in a brainstorming session to devise strategies for staff members to adeptly assist and enhance the overall experience. What exceptional skills are essential for these roles?

4. Conclusion

Put an important emphasis on having empathy, encourage students to put themselves into a disabled person's life to have more of an overall understanding of the subject and of challenges people with visual impairments face each day.

SERVING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

Serving individuals with disabilities within the tourism sector is a critical consideration. This segment delves into the fundamental principles of accommodating individuals with disabilities, highlighting the barriers that hinder their seamless integration into the tourism offerings compared to other customers.

The subsequent lesson plans have been meticulously crafted for both classroom and extracurricular settings, each spanning a 45-minute duration. Educators have the flexibility to adjust the content presentation to suit their specific requirements.

This segment underscores the consolidation of knowledge through practical exercises aimed at enhancing students' competencies. Various prevalent forms of disabilities are meticulously addressed.

Students engaging in the structured series of classes based on these lesson plans will gain insights into the complexities associated with catering to individuals with disabilities.

They will also acquire a comprehensive understanding of the legal framework underpinning such services and develop essential skills to effectively meet the unique requirements of these customers.

Lesson plans:

1. The world without barriers.
2. Effective communication is essential.
3. Serving customers with disabilities that affect mobility.
 4. Serving blind and visually impaired customers.
 5. Serving customers with hearing impairments.
 6. Serving customers with intellectual disabilities.

The presented exercises are to encourage students to develop their ability to communicate with people with disabilities and to perform work duties in uncommon situations.

The activities can be used during lessons in: vocational classes, career counselling, social studies, ethics, form periods and during different extracurricular activities.

LESSON PLAN 1

THE WORLD WITHOUT BARRIERS



Objectives:

- learning about disabilities, social and legal conditions for ensuring accessibility
- raising awareness of stereotypes related to disabilities
- understanding the essence of the modern approach to ensuring equal opportunities



Time: 45 minutes



Materials:

- paper sheets with descriptions of various situations



Working methods:

- small post-it-notes
- a flip chart sheet presenting a human figure
- markers
- information materials for the teacher/trainer no. 1 and no. 2

Lesson planning framework:

1. Introduction

The teacher/trainer gives a short lecture on the concept of disability based on the materials for the teacher/trainer no. 1.

2. Activity: “A disabled person is...”

Objectives: reflecting on stereotypes related to disabilities

Time: 15 minutes

Materials: small post-it-notes, a flip chart sheet with a male figure, markers

Methods: group work, discussion

Procedures:

Divide the class into groups. There should be no more than four people in each group. The number of groups depends on the number of students in the class. Each group receives 10 small cards on which they write their associations related to people with disabilities. The teacher/trainer places a poster depicting a human figure on the flipchart

Instruction for students:

Talk for a while and write down (on your sticky notes) 10 associations about people with disabilities that reflect your feelings. Choose one person to represent the group. Group representatives approach the flip chart, read one association at a time and place it next to the drawn silhouette.

Positive associations, descriptions of strengths, etc. should be placed on the left side of the figure and the remaining ones on the right. If another group has a written association that is very similar to the one read, they put their card on first card. The whole group discusses the result of this exercise. How do we perceive people with disabilities and why? Where do we get knowledge about disability?

The teacher/trainer points out that the poster depicts a man who does not have any visible signs of disability. After all, there are many people with special needs that are not apparent.

3. Activity: “We can notice barriers”

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: a picture showing boys who can't watch a match on the pitch because of a tall fence (e.g. as below)

Methods: group discussion

Procedures:

First, describe the situation: three boys (tall, of medium height and short) want to watch a football match at the stadium, but due to the board fence only the tallest of them has a chance to observe the events on the pitch.

The group discusses how to remove the barrier. The leader points out the pros and cons of each proposal. The discussion continues until students understand that the easiest way is to replace the fence with a wire mesh. The teacher/trainer presents a drawing (included in the materials for the teacher/trainer no. 2) exemplifying the situation.

4. Conclusion

Present the most important conclusions from the lesson. To round it off the teacher/trainer asks students one of four questions:

- What did I learn?
- How can I use the knowledge?
- What did I discover?
- What was the most surprising thing?

APPENDIX:



Materials for the teacher/trainer no. 1

According to data from the Central Statistical Office, in Poland in 2021 there were 2.3 million people receiving pension and disability benefits and/or insured by the Social Insurance Institution (ZUS), who had a disability certificate issued by disability assessment teams or a certificate on the degree of incapacity for work issued by ZUS. It is worth noticing that if someone suffers from limited ability to perform basic activities for their age but does not have the appropriate certificate, they are not included in the Central Statistical Office Information.

Nevertheless, both groups of disabled people (with and without the certificate) have special needs and, as clients of the tourism industry, they should be served with special attention to their needs. This is perfectly reflected in the provisions of the "UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities", ratified by Poland in 2012. This document formulates the so-called social definition of disability, which states that persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

This definition is the basis for providing service to this group of customers according to global trends that focus on barriers. In this sense, eliminating barriers means eliminating disabilities.

Here is an example of a typical situation:

Agnieszka uses a wheelchair. She wants her everyday menu to include fresh fruit and vegetables. If she lived in a place with wide doors, elevators, no additional stairs or driveways, and the surrounding streets were designed without curbs at pedestrian crossings, Agnieszka's disability wouldn't matter, because every day fresh greens would be personally selected by her at the stall and could appear at her house. But there are barriers, e.g. leaving the building requires climbing several stairs, crossing the street means overcoming high curbs so Agnieszka is helpless. Her family, neighbours or social welfare workers may organise shifts and do shopping for her in advance. But it is worth thinking about modern support that means removing barriers so that she can independently implement her plans, just like any able-bodied person.

Perhaps the above example allowed us to understand the essence of proper support for people with disabilities. However, striving to do something "for someone else" is so common (and often considered a sign of politeness) that it is worth spending more time to understand that people with disabilities can be independent in many cases, but you need to recognise the barriers they encounter and help remove them.

According to statistics 2.3 million people in Poland have a disability certificate. However, while serving a client we can't ask: Excuse me, do you have a certificate confirming your degree of disability?

The Polish society is ageing. The efficiency of the organs of movement, vision, hearing and the ability to understand decreases with age. There are more and more elderly people among us, including the clients of the tourism industry. They can be found in shops, restaurants, hotels, museums, trains, planes and many other places. It is also worth noticing that Poland is an attractive holiday destination for seniors from other countries.

Materials for the teacher/trainer no. 2

We all know the saying "prevention is better than cure." Let's now try to apply it in a discussion about how to serve people with disabilities. We will see that the best way to ensure effective communication is to eliminate the barriers that... we have created.

Agnieszka's example shows that building a ramp or removing curbs can eliminate all obstacles that make it difficult for a person in a wheelchair to shop independently. But there are other benefits of removing such barriers. First of all, Agnieszka will be able to meet her neighbours, get involved in the life of the local community, go to work, etc. Without barriers, she will have fruits and... a completely new life like all other able-bodied neighbours. And it's also beneficial for the neighbours, because each of them may one day have difficulty carrying a heavy package up the stairs, inviting guests with a small child or moving after breaking a leg. Barrier-free solutions are friendly to everyone and make their life easier.

Let's imagine a situation when a fence blocks the view of the pitch for three boys. How can you help them so they can enjoy watching the match? You can prepare boxes and give one of them to each of the boys. This solution will be perfect for the tallest of them. Unfortunately, the remaining two will still only see the fence. Providing equal support is not a good solution in this case. This means that such support must be differentiated and adapted to individual needs. The tallest boy will get one box, the boy of medium height will get two boxes, and the shortest one will need three boxes. Now you can say: we did it! All three little heads stick out above the fence. But is this a perfect solution? It requires a lot of commitment - each boy must be measured and the right number of boxes must be selected. Additionally, it requires collecting a large number of boxes. Moreover, it doesn't solve anyone else's problem. If a fourth boy came, the entire procedure for determining the scope of support would have to start again. The best solution is to eliminate the fence and install a mesh fence. It will perform the same protective function, but it will not deprive anyone of the opportunity to see and you will never again have to figure out how to see what is happening behind the fence.

Example of the picture:



Each of us has a choice and can decide how to overcome a given customer service barrier, but the easiest way is to remove this barrier. It will not limit the ability to serve this particular person with a disability or any other customer in the future.

Conclusion:

When a barrier prevents or significantly hinders customer service, you can try to remove it once, but first it is better to make sure it does not exist.

It's worth knowing that low-floor buses were introduced into public transport to ensure its accessibility for people with disabilities, and they have made public transport more friendly also for older people, mothers travelling with children, cyclists and people carrying luggage. Removing the stairs on the bus means that disabled people can travel like all other passengers. At the same time, the replacement of a large part of the rolling stock made life easier for many people who otherwise would have problems with climbing high stairs.

LESSON PLAN 2

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION IS ESSENTIAL



Objectives:

- developing the ability to notice barriers and remove them effectively
- encouraging friendly communication with people with disabilities
- understanding the need to ensure the subjectivity of each interlocutor



Time: 45 minutes

Materials:



- checklists for the activity "Curb in a hotel"
- materials for the teacher/trainer no. 3
- materials for the teacher/trainer no. 4
- materials for the teacher/trainer no. 5



Working methods:

- group work
- discussion
- individual work
- short lecture

Lesson planning framework:

1. Introduction

Refer to the exercise from the previous lesson about finding the best way to ensure accessibility for all interested parties (the story of the boys who wanted to watch the match on the pitch). Then, inform students that they will have a chance to test in practice the ability to remove barriers and learn other universal principles of effective communication with people with disabilities.

2. Activity: "Curb in a hotel"

Objectives: identifying the barriers and finding the ways to eliminate (or reduce) them

Time: 15 minutes

Materials: checklist, materials for the teacher/trainer no. 3

Working methods: group work, discussion

Procedures:

Divide the class into groups of four. Each group will receive a checklist and should answer the questions within 5 minutes. Then the groups will take turns reading the answers to one question. In case of discrepancies in the answers, the class will discuss the common view.

3. Activity: "Don't assume, let's ask"

Objective: understanding the need to customise service

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: materials for the teacher/trainer no. 4

Methods: individual work, discussion

Procedures:

The teacher/trainer informs that the topic of the exercise concerns the natural tendency of many people to state what is good for others. He invites students to do the exercise: "Find five important details that make these stories different." Then he gives each student a piece of paper with the description of two stories and the story answer sheet (attached). The exercise ends with a summary - the class chooses and discusses the correct answers.

Additional information for teachers/trainers:

In the summary of the exercise, the teacher/trainer informs that if the students marked at least four correct significant differences, it means that they understand the need to refrain from their own diagnosis of the client's needs. A person with a disability will express what support they need, and if they do not, they should be asked about it.

The first scene shows the inappropriate behaviour of a hotel employee who independently decides what support the customer needs and what kind of service should be provided.

The second scene shows the correct course of the same situation, when the customer indicates what support is needed and the hotel employee tries to respond to these expectations as well as possible.

4. The secrets of effective communication

Objective: learning the principles of effective communication, understanding the need to ensure the importance of each interlocutor

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: materials for the teacher/trainer no. 5

Working methods: short lecture

Procedures:

Present the principles of effective communication (e.g., based on the material for the teacher/trainer no. 5) and in the summary underline the need to ensure the importance of each interlocutor.

5. Conclusion

To sum up the teacher/trainer asks students one of four questions:

- What did I learn?
- How can I use the knowledge?
- What did I discover?
- What was the most surprising thing?

Appendix
Checklist:

	Yes	No	I don't know	Comments
Is there enough space on the way from the building entrance door to where you are at the moment to move a wheelchair without climbing stairs or curbs?				
Are there any objects on the way from the entrance door to where you are that a person with a visual impairment could hit or stumble over?				
Is there a space where you can park a wheelchair nearby?				
Can a blind or visually impaired person easily hear the information you pass on from the place you are at?				
Can a deaf or hearing-impaired person see the information provided from the place you are at?				
Is there enough space nearby for a guide dog or to leave a white cane and personal belongings safely?				

Appendix

Materials for the teacher/trainer no. 4

Story 1

Tom, a hotel employee, noticed a woman moving in a strange way near the reception desk. She got very close to the service area where the receptionist was talking to one of the customers. The woman collected the information leaflets and put them almost to her face. It looked like she was reading from a very close distance. When she finally stood at the place for customers waiting in line, she kept asking other people in a line about information displayed on the information board. Tom understood that the woman had no bad intentions, did not pose a threat to safety, and her way of searching for information was due to her visual impairment. When the customer approached the service point, Tom was already waiting for her with the appropriate forms printed in a much larger font. He was convinced that in a moment he would hear words of thanks and appreciation for the quality of service. He thought that since the client read closely and with obvious difficulty, enlarged print was the perfect solution. Unfortunately, when the client tried to read the information, her face became serious and she put the sheet of paper down on the counter with discouragement.

Story 2

Kate, a hotel employee, noticed a woman moving in a strange way near the reception desk. She got very close to the service area where the receptionist was talking to one of the customers. The woman collected the information leaflets and put them almost to her face. It looked like she was reading from a very close distance. When she finally stood at the place for customers waiting in a line, she kept asking other people waiting about information displayed on the information board. Kate understood that the woman had no bad intentions, did not pose a threat to safety, and her way of searching for information was due to her visual impairment. When the customer approached the service desk, Kate asked how she could present the form that should be completed during check-in. In response, she was told that the best solution would be to send the form to the client's e-mail in a file that could be read by a computer program. The client wanted to read the content, fill in the required fields and sign the printed document at the reception desk with a special frame marking the signature field. The woman also added that she was impressed by the professional service, because very often a visually impaired person is offered support in the form of information prepared in enlarged print, which in her case makes reading more difficult. Kate underwent a special training on serving people with disabilities. As result she is aware that the needs of each person may be different and only that person knows the easiest way to overcome existing barriers. That's why it's worth asking!

Activity answer sheet:

Differences	Story 1	Story 2	Comments
The name of the hotel employee			
The age of the customer			
The colour of the dress			
The hotel employee decides on the method of service			
The hotel employee asks a customer about the best way to serve them			
The method of service allows the client to overcome barriers resulting from disability			
The customer is satisfied with the service			
A hotel employee took part in training on serving people with disabilities			

Correctly completed answer sheet:

Differences	Story 1	Story 2	Comments
The name of the hotel employee	Tom	Kate	The difference is non-significant for the method of service
The age of the customer	Over 30 years old	Over 20 years old	The difference is non-significant for the method of service
The colour of the dress	Green	Yellow	The difference is non-significant for the method of service
The hotel employee decides on the method of service	Yes	No	Significant difference
The hotel employee asks a customer about the best way to serve them	No	Yes	Significant difference
The method of service allows the client to overcome barriers resulting from disability	No	Yes	Significant difference
The customer is satisfied with the service	No	Yes	Significant difference
A hotel employee took part in training on serving people with disabilities	No	Yes	Significant difference

Appendix

Materials for the teacher/trainer no. 5

During the classes, students learned two basic principles of effective communication with people with disabilities. One of them is to eliminate as many barriers as possible (architectural, organizational, etc.), and the other is to ensure individualization of support preceded by learning about the customer's needs and expectations. Now it's time to summarise the topic of effective communication and discuss three other equally important principles.

The principles of effective communication with people with disabilities:

1. Address the customer directly

This rule is particularly important. It concerns the dignity of another human beings. While clumsy support in eliminating barriers will decrease customers' trust and deter them from returning to our hotel or restaurant, failure to follow this rule may have much more serious consequences – it will undermine their self-esteem.

Numerous publications have been prepared on the subjectivity of people with disabilities. We are talking here about people with disabilities who are not incapacitated. The group of the legally incapacitated (for various reasons) in Poland numbers approximately 100,000 people and their needs are not discussed in this material.

It is very important to realise that people with disabilities do not want to be perceived through the lens of their disability, but want to be treated like any other persons with their own rights and can decide about their life choices. More and more people with disabilities have a university degree, travel around the world, practice sports professionally, have a career in art or politics, start families and raise children. All of these refers to people with various types of disabilities.

Even in the language there are changes that reflect the above mentioned. People used to say: "cripple", "invalid", "disabled". Now such phrases are considered incorrect because they only point to dysfunctions. That's why the term "disabled person" appeared some time ago. It indicates that we are dealing with a person, not only with dysfunctions. However, this term began to be criticised over time since it describes the person as someone who is not functional and therefore less valuable, such as a faulty car or TV. That is why nowadays we most often say "person with a disability", because this term includes information that a given person has many other features, is just like any other person, and only one of the features is a dysfunction.

Meanwhile, there has long been a tendency to link disability to problems with logical thinking, the right to make decisions, etc. This is completely unjustified reasoning. We do not assume that the bald man lost the ability to make decisions independently along with his hair. So why does it so often happen when we see a client using a wheelchair or with a white cane, so we talk to an accompanying person?

This action is unacceptable. Clients with disabilities (e.g. one who stutters, speaks very indistinctly, is blind or deaf) have their own subjectivity and dignity, we cannot treat them as absent or as a child, because it is easier for us to talk to someone else.

2. Make sure your communication is efficient - ask questions, ask for repetition, check whether you and the customer understand each other well

Effective communication requires a few well-developed skills and is not as common as it may seem. Not all of us can adjust the message to the recipient, listen carefully, understand words and expressions similarly, and interpret non-verbal signals appropriately. Sometimes we lack assertiveness. Therefore, it is worth remembering that disability may be one of many causes of misunderstanding between the sender of the message and the recipient. Both our background and age may determine the understanding of the same words, what messages we consider friendly and what is interesting to us. The above features affect us as interlocutors.

Disability may refer to various dysfunctions. Each of them requires adapting the method of communication to the individual needs of the client. As a sender of the message, check whether you understand each other well, ask for feedback. As a recipient, ask questions. You can ask two different questions about the same thing and compare the answers. In case of any doubts, ask for repetition or paraphrase the message in your own words. Communication difficulties may concern clients with intellectual disabilities, for whom the message should be made in simple terms. It is important to remember that such communication requires more time. But problems with proper communication may also have other causes, e.g. too much noise.

3. Customer should be welcome to use their strengths

If the client cannot see, they may be able to listen to the information recorded in an audio file or have a computer/phone equipped with the so-called reading program. The client should inform us about the preferable way of providing information and then we should consistently use this customer-friendly method of communication.

Each of us probably has some strengths. Some people prefer written tests, others prefer oral answers. During PE lessons, part of the class wants to play team games, while another group prefers individual competition. We are diverse and disabilities do not change that.

Let's imagine a restaurant where all customers are served "singing" - the waiter sings and the customer responds by singing. Would everyone be happy to take advantage of such an offer? Probably not though. Those who cannot sing would rather stay hungry... This is how customers with disabilities may feel when they visit a restaurant whose employees do not focus on the strengths of the people served.

Customer service in gastronomy traditionally includes, among others:

- eye contact
- listening and understanding
- expressing expectations and making choices
- reading the menu

Imagine that the above list also includes singing your decision. This element may deter some people from trying the taste of the prepared dishes. The same applies to a person with a disability who cannot meet one of the mentioned conditions (e.g. cannot make eye contact, cannot hear, cannot drive a wheelchair to a table, does not understand instructions).

Adapting the service method to the guest's strengths is called working on the customer's resources. While serving a blind person we focus on the fact that we have to convey all the information in such a way that they can hear it or learn it by touch. However, when serving a deaf person, we adapt all our communication to the message that the customer can see. This approach will make the customer appreciate friendly service. And if we let the client tell us how to provide the information, customer satisfaction is guaranteed.

LESSON PLAN 3

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH DISABILITIES THAT AFFECT MOBILITY



Objectives:

- learning about the special needs of people with physical disabilities
- development of skills in serving people in wheelchairs



Time: 45 minutes

Materials:



- materials for the teacher/trainer no. 6
- materials for the teacher/trainer no. 7
- quiz cards



Working methods:

- group work
- discussion
- individual work
- mini-lecture

Lesson planning framework:

1. Introduction Point out that although musculoskeletal disability is the most common type of disability, the principles of customer service are still not sufficiently known and there are many awkward (or even unacceptable) situations that affect the level of satisfaction with service. Additionally, the group of people with musculoskeletal disabilities is very diverse, as it includes both people in wheelchairs and, for example, people walking on crutches.

2. Activity: "Savoir vivre in contacts with a client with a locomotor disability"

Objectives: identifying the barriers and finding the ways to eliminate (or reduce) them Time: 15 minutes Materials: materials for the teacher/trainer no. 6 Working methods: group work, discussion

The teacher/trainer presents two basic rules for serving people in wheelchairs:

- a) the stroller is the customer's personal space - you must not put anything on it, you must not push it, etc.
- b) the assistance dog accompanies the client "on business", and its presence is defined by law and reminds the need to remove barriers, address the disabled person directly, etc. It also refers to the situation of people who rely on crutches or move independently but have limited mobility. He conducts a mini lecture, e.g. based on information material for teacher/trainer no. 6.

Additional information for teachers/trainers:

During the lecture, it is worth asking students to share their experiences of contacts with people who, for various reasons, have limited ability to move freely. It is worth formulating some rules based on such experiences and descriptions of observed situations.

3. Practical activities: "Service for people with disabilities of the musculoskeletal system in the tourism industry"

Objective: learning the practical aspects of servicing people with disabilities of the musculoskeletal system

Time: 25 minutes

Materials: information materials for teacher/trainer No. 7

Work methods: practical activities

Procedures:

Depending on the profile of the class he or she is working with, the teacher/trainer selects exercises regarding, for example, serving people with locomotor disabilities at the reception desk of a hotel, in a restaurant, while cleaning a room, etc. Examples of situations that may be the basis for planning practical exercises are described in information materials for teacher/trainer no. 7.

4. Activity: “Quiz: Servicing customers with mobility-affecting disabilities”

Engage in an interactive quiz session titled "Service for Individuals with Musculoskeletal Disabilities" to enhance your knowledge. Dedicate 10 minutes to answering questions on quiz cards either individually or collaboratively in a group setting. The objective is to gain proficiency in providing assistance to individuals with musculoskeletal disabilities.

5. Conclusion

The lesson ends with a recap. Ask the students the following questions:

- What have I learned?
- How can I use the acquired knowledge?
- What new things have I discovered?
- What surprised me the most?

Appendix

The quiz:

1. Should every hotel provide a wheelchair for customers with mobility impairments?

True b) False

2. How should a service employee assist a customer with paresis who needs to complete a form?

a) Offer assistance with writing b) Recommend that the client bring someone to help fill out the form at the reception.

3. When serving a customer in a wheelchair, what is the appropriate approach?

a) Lean over the customer for better communication b) Sit at a similar height to the customer for effective interaction.

4. Is it permissible for a person with mobility impairments to drive a car?

a) Yes, after obtaining a medical certificate confirming no health-related restrictions b) Only with a capable passenger present.

5. If a customer using crutches prefers to stand during service, should activities requiring the use of hands be simplified?

True b) False

Correct answers:

1 - b; 2 – a; 3 - b; 4 – a; 5 - a



Should every hotel provide a wheelchair for customers with mobility impairments?

- a) TRUE
- b) FALSE



How should a service employee assist a customer with paresis who needs to complete a form?

- a) Offer assistance with writing
- b) Recommend that the client bring someone to help fill out the form at the reception



When serving a customer in a wheelchair, what is the appropriate approach?

- a) Lean over the customer for better communication
- b) Sit at a similar height to the customer for effective interaction.



Is it permissible for a person with mobility impairments to drive a car?

- a) Yes, after obtaining a medical certificate confirming no health-related restrictions
- b) Only with a capable passenger present.



If a customer using crutches prefers to stand during service, should activities requiring the use of hands be simplified?

- a) True
- b) False

Appendix

Materials for the teacher/trainer no. 6

A Guide to serving individuals with motor disabilities

Serving people with motor disabilities Disability of the motor system is the most common type of dysfunction, which is primarily associated with special needs in moving or writing. In terms of communication, particular challenges concern people who have several types of dysfunctions, i.e. the so-called multiple disabilities.

Most often, we think that a person with a mobility disability is a person who uses a wheelchair. Meanwhile, as in the group of people with visual or hearing disabilities, the definition of physical disability refers to very different specific needs of clients. They also result from the fact that this group includes many people who have been leading their lives smoothly for many years, but, for example, traffic accidents or unfortunate jumps into the water have caused them to have problems with movement. Many people use a wheelchair, crutches or a cane and, due to their age, can no longer maintain their former mobility.

In this group of people with disabilities, we can meet people who move independently (but e.g. slower) or use various orthopedic equipment (canes, crutches, walkers, wheelchairs).

Such diverse needs of our clients mean that we have chosen six very important but universal principles. And, once again, we will appeal to common sense if it turns out that the client you are currently serving has very specific, individual needs.

1. Let's take care of the accessibility of the service area. In a situation where customers are served standing, the situation of a customer in a wheelchair requires special adjustments. It often happens that such a customer freely approaches, for example, the reception desk, but there is a wall in front of him and someone is saying something above his head, which is an unacceptable situation. It is not enough to leave the service point and stand next to the customer so that he can see the person serving him. It cannot be that one person is sitting and the other is standing over him and talking. Let's also take into account the fact that the client did not come to us to talk, but wants to settle a specific matter. He may have to read something, sign something, etc. His wheelchair cannot be used as a desk because it is part of his personal space. In such a case, the best solution is to invite the customer to a place where the service employee can sit on a chair (with his head at the customer's head level), and an additional desk or table will make it easier to handle the matter.

Similar difficulties may arise when serving a person who relies on two crutches and cannot be served while standing. If two hands are resting on crutches, how is the customer supposed to hand over documents or sign them? This situation has nothing to do with friendly service and - what is especially important - is very dangerous because it may lead to the fall of the person being served.

2. Let's be ready for non-standard actions If a person with a locomotor disability has special needs, e.g. resulting from hand disabilities, he or she will inform the service employee about his or her individual barriers that will need to be eliminated. However, if we need to take non-standard actions, we should not look for them ourselves, but always find out from the client how to react, because he is the one who has the greatest knowledge and experience in this area.

3. Remember that the trolley is an element of the customer's personal space. We have already talked about the fact that the trolley cannot function as a desk and cannot be used to place documents or other things on it. For the same reason, it should not be pushed or moved (unless the customer asks for it). Incorrect operation of the forklift may be dangerous for the employee and the customer and may have serious financial and other consequences. Modern strollers are very diverse. Some of them are very expensive and if damaged, they may require large expenses and may also make it impossible for the guest to move around. Therefore, any action that involves a wheelchair should be carefully consulted with the disabled person who uses it. And it can only be taken at her request.

4. Physical disabilities are not always visible. A wheelchair is a symbol of physical disabilities (it even appears on the pictogram for all people with disabilities). For this reason, we sometimes pay less attention to ensuring the accessibility of services for people who have difficulty moving or using their hands, but are not in a wheelchair. We mean, for example, people using crutches. We have already said that serving these customers while standing does not meet the conditions of friendly service and may be very dangerous to their health. However, it is worth emphasizing once again that these people have difficulty walking and - in a standing position - very limited ability to use their hands. That is why it is so important to reduce the distance when giving them documents, but also to provide help when they want to reach for some materials, open the door, etc. In the case of this group of people, sitting down may also be a problem. You have certainly encountered a situation where a disabled person did not use a free seat because they claimed that problems with sitting down and getting up were a big challenge for them. In such a situation, we cannot assume that we will serve this client while sitting, because he uses crutches. Determining the method of service with the customer is the starting point for planning further actions.

It is also worth remembering that clients may include people who have no visible signs of disability, but may have special mobility needs. This group may include, for example, people with circulatory or respiratory system diseases. They also have the right to report their special needs and expect service to be adjusted.

5. Customers with musculoskeletal disabilities may be accompanied by assistance dogs. Very often we see guide dogs accompanying blind people. There is another group of specially trained dogs - dogs that assist people in wheelchairs. Their presence in a hotel or restaurant is regulated by law, but you can still encounter various reactions from other customers. When it comes to the service employee, you must absolutely respect that the dog is at work - you must not distract it, pet it, etc.

6. When we don't know what to do - let's ask. Disability of the musculoskeletal system occurs in some cases together with other disabilities. If a person experiences the same limitations every day and in various situations, he or she knows best how to respond to them. In such unusual situations, the client will always inform us what kind of support he or she expects. And if he doesn't, we should ask. When serving the customer, we try to respond as best as possible to the needs indicated by him. If there is a need to make changes to our policies, let's be open to it.

Appendix

Materials for the teacher/trainer no. 7

Practical activities

Introduction

The practical exercises proposed in this set of scenarios were primarily developed based on the "Guide for the Hotel and Restaurant Sector Dedicated to Services Provided to Disabled Customers." This publication was created as part of the ACAD project, "Accommodation and Catering Accessibility to Disabilities," implemented by the Foundation "Cooperation Fund," the Regional Development Institute Foundation, Action for Blind People, and ANJAF. The publication can be accessed at: https://firr.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ACAD_podrecznik.pdf.

Activity 1: We take a seat at the table

Where? In a restaurant

A person in a wheelchair enters the room and has chosen a seat at a table next to the window overlooking the beach. The waiter comes and... Well, how should a waiter behave? Is he standing next to this customer? She sits next to his stroller? Changes the arrangement of chairs, which may make it difficult to get to the place the customer would like to occupy? Or maybe he insists that the customer take a seat close to the entrance because it does not require much work on the part of the staff? How does he prepare a place at the table? What does he check/change on the table?

Instructions for students: act out this scene in groups, formulate answers to the above questions and discuss them together. Have you noticed anything else that requires special action on the part of the staff? What will change in the service's behavior when the customer relies on crutches?

Activity 2: Time for a breakfast buffet

Where? In a restaurant

During a buffet breakfast served in the hotel restaurant, an elderly lady in a wheelchair entered the room. What should be the further correct description of this situation? How to enable this client to take the seat of her choice at the table? How can she get something on her plate that she would like to choose from the rich offer of the hotel cuisine? How do I get this plate to the table?

Instructions for students: act out this scene in groups, formulate answers to the above questions and discuss them together. Have you noticed anything else that requires special action on the part of the staff? What will change in the service's behavior if the client relies on crutches or has disabled hands?

Activity 3: An assistant

Where? A reception

A client who uses a wheelchair came to the hotel. He is accompanied by a dog - an assistant, as indicated by the inscriptions on the collar. Other hotel guests behave differently. Some people are impressed by the beautiful and very polite Labrador, they want to pet him and say nice words to him. In turn, another group of guests loudly discusses the fact that such a large dog should not be allowed in the hotel. How should hotel staff behave?

Instructions for students: act out this scene in groups, formulate answers to the above questions and discuss them together. Have you noticed anything else that requires special action on the part of the staff?

Activity 4: It's on fire! – evacuation of a person in a wheelchair

Where? A hotel

One quiet evening, a fire alarm sounded in the hotel. The guests left their rooms without panic and climbed the stairs (the elevators were no longer working) to leave the building. Only the guy from room 224 was sitting in the corridor in his wheelchair and didn't know what to do. Additionally, his wheelchair was hit by others and he was in danger of falling down the stairs. What happened in this accident? Who made the mistake and at what stage? What should the check-in procedure be like for a guest who, in the event of an emergency, will have special needs?

Instructions for students: act out this scene in groups, formulate answers to the above questions and discuss them together. Have you noticed anything else that requires special action on the part of the staff?

LESSON PLAN 4

SERVING BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED CUSTOMERS



Objectives:

- learning about the special needs of blind and visually impaired people
- developing skills in serving people with visual disabilities



Time: 45 minutes



Materials:

- teacher/trainer info no. 8
- teacher/trainer info no. 9
- quiz cards



Working methods:

- mini-lecture
- discussion
- individual work
- practical activities

Lesson planning framework:

1. Introduction

The teacher/trainer explains that visual impairment is a complex phenomenon that covers various degrees of sight loss. During this course, it is important to learn general principles of how to assist visually impaired customers. You may start like this: „Get ready to be a superhero in customer service! In just 45 minutes, you'll learn how to make the day of visually impaired customers by understanding their unique needs. Let's dive in!"

2. Etiquette for interacting with people who are blind or who have low vision

Objective: the students will learn about the unique needs of visually impaired individuals

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: Teacher/Trainer info no. 8

Methods: mini-lecture, discussion

Procedures:

Teacher/trainer presents the basic rules of assisting blind and visually impaired customers, including breaking down barriers. We should make an effort to ensure that information is accessible to people who cannot read. For those who need it, we should provide information in large print or with appropriate fonts and contrast. This also includes leaving things in their place, describing images, being a good guide, etc.

Additional info:

During a lecture, it's beneficial to encourage students to share their experiences regarding interacting with individuals who have limited visual ability. Some of the principles should be formulated based on such experiences and descriptions of observed situations.

3. Practical activity "Assisting blind and visually impaired individuals in the tourism industry"

Objective: students will learn practical aspects of assisting visually impaired individuals

Time: 25 minutes

Materials: Teacher/Trainer info no. 9

Methods: Practical activities

Procedures:

The teacher/trainer selects exercises based on the profile of the class they are working with. These exercises may include handling people with visual impairments in hotel reception, restaurants, cleaning rooms, and more. Sample situations that can serve as a basis for planning practical exercises are described in the information materials for the teacher/trainer no. 9.

4. Activity: Quiz „Serving blind and visually impaired customers”

Objective: to get a grip on how to serve people who are blind and visually impaired

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: quiz cards

Methods: individual work, discussion

Procedures:

„We'll be passing out question cards, and the fun begins when you pick an answer. Once someone hits the big 5, let's give them a round of applause!”

5. Conclusion

The lesson ends with a recap. Ask the students the following questions:

- What have I learned?
- How can I use the acquired knowledge?
- What new things have I discovered?
- What surprised me the most?

Appendix:

The quiz:

1. When we first approach a visually-impaired person, should we speak louder to get their attention?
 - a) True
 - b) False
2. If a visually-impaired person is accompanied by a guide dog, should we pet the dog when we meet them?
 - a) True
 - b) False
3. Should we avoid saying "see you later" in front of visually-impaired people?
 - a) True
 - b) False
4. Is black text on a green background the easiest for visually-impaired people to read?
 - a) True
 - b) False
5. Do we only need to tell a visually-impaired person to sign on the third line and initial the first two, or should we be more explicit?
 - a) Only the third line is necessary
 - b) More explicit instructions are needed

Correct answers:

Question 1 - b; 2 - b; 3 - b; 4 - b; 5 - b



When we first approach a visually-impaired person, should we speak louder to get their attention?

- a) TRUE
- b) FALSE



If a visually-impaired person is accompanied by a guide dog, should we pet the dog when we meet them?

- a) TRUE
- b) FALSE



Should we avoid saying "see you later" in front of visually-impaired people?

- a) TRUE
- b) FALSE



Is black text on a green background the easiest for visually-impaired people to read?

- a) TRUE
- b) FALSE



Do we only need to tell a visually-impaired person to sign on the third line and initial the first two, or should we be more explicit?

- a) Only the third line is necessary
- b) More explicit instructions are needed

Appendix

Materials for the teacher/trainer no. 8 A Guide to Serving the Visually Impaired

There are 45 million blind people and 269 million visually impaired people in the world. In Poland alone, there are around 1.8 million visually impaired people, of which 100,000 are completely blind. Serving blind people requires some know-how, but remember, each person's experience and needs are unique. For those who can't see, hearing and touch are essential for communication. But visually impaired people may also need special conditions to get visual information. So, good intentions aren't enough - every service employee needs some knowledge.

One big question is how to speak and what language to use. But here's the thing: visual impairment doesn't affect hearing or understanding. We talk to visually impaired people just like any other customer, and we can use phrases like "goodbye" or "let's see what happens." Just make sure to include visual elements that other customers can see. And don't forget to introduce yourself when starting a conversation with a blind person.

Here are the golden rules for serving people with visual disabilities:

1. Let's make sure our information is accessible to everyone, including those with visual impairments. We can provide audio or computer files that are compatible with special reading programs, allowing them to read it themselves. Let's also find a quiet place for them to listen without disturbing others, and ensure the information is suitable for public sharing. If needed, we can even invite them to a separate room.
2. We want to make sure the information we provide is easy to read for everyone, regardless of visual ability. We can use larger fonts and simple, sans-serif styles like Arial, Tahoma, or Verdana. Good lighting and proper color contrast also make a big difference. For the visually impaired, we recommend white letters on a black background for optimal readability.



ENJOY!

However, let us remember that the environment of visually impaired people is very diverse. The type of support we provide depends on the type of disability, e.g. for people with the so-called tunnel vision, you need to prepare the text differently than for nearsighted people.

3. Let's not touch things left by a blind customer. This is an extremely important aspect of friendly service for people with visual impairments. Therefore, let us remember that all the customer's belongings remain in the place where they placed them or put them. In particular, you should not move a white cane, gloves, documents, etc. at the hotel reception. If we need to change their position, it is best to ask the customer to do it themselves.

However, cleaning the room must absolutely involve compliance with this rule. Otherwise, our guest who returns to his room will not know where he has his pajamas, slippers, toothbrush, etc. It is also worth remembering this rule in a restaurant and not changing the position of e.g. glasses, cutlery, etc. during service.

4. Let's describe the images that other customers see. We are not talking about works of art, but about everything that a sighted customer observes during his stay in a hotel or restaurant. A client with a disability cannot see what we are doing and that is why we have to talk about every activity we do. When communicating with a sighted person, you don't have to say anything, e.g. I put two room cards on the counter in front of you. Most often, these things happen naturally and are obvious to both parties. Serving blind or visually impaired people must be supplemented with a verbal description of even minor activities.

The so-called "clock" terms. This concept has been most widely used in gastronomy. A waiter who serves a dish to a blind person informs him/her at the same time: the roast is at nine o'clock, the fries are at twelve o'clock, and the beetroots are at six o'clock. This information allows a blind person to know how food is arranged on his or her plate. Assistant support is also required for a blind customer to use the buffet.

We also have to make special efforts when paying cash to a blind person. First, the customer must be informed that we are handing over banknotes, and then that, for example, in the first pile on the left there are banknotes with a nominal value of EUR 5 and there are 6 of them, and on the right side there are banknotes with a nominal value of EUR 10 and there is only one. Such information will make it easier for a blind customer to hide the banknotes in his wallet, so that later in the store he will know which banknotes he or she uses to pay.

Organizing the cash withdrawn and carefully describing it will also be useful to a blind person when checking the amount they received as change. Banknotes are not perfectly flat and have ridges that can be felt with your fingertips. This includes, among others: the digital denomination value and a special marking for the blind, which is located in the lower left corner of the banknote.

The easiest way to see what a correct oral description of various situations looks like is by watching films available with the so-called audio description. This means that in addition to the normal dialogues that are prepared for all viewers, there is also an auditory description of the visual content.

5. Let's prepare a "signature". Having many people sign a form may prove to be a big problem. This applies to blind people, but also to people with low vision and to those customers who have problems holding a pen in their hand. We should propose to all of them the use of the so-called "signature card", i.e. a small cardboard box in which a frame is cut out with dimensions consistent with the dimensions of the space intended for the customer's signature. If the customer wishes, the service employee should also help in finding the frame with his or her hand. The signature submitted in this way is valid. It is also worth remembering that technological progress has given all of us, including people with disabilities, completely new possibilities for signing documents, including using a qualified electronic signature.

6. Let's be a good guide. A guide is a person permanently associated with tourist services. However, here we mean the very specific support provided by the guide.

If there is a need to direct a visually impaired customer to another place in the hotel (e.g. to the room, to the restaurant, to the spa area), it must be done in such a way that the description is a practical guide that can be reproduced by ear.

What does it mean? We do not say that you should turn right after the green table, because a blind or partially sighted customer will not be able to "replay" this direction in his head. We should explain the route with information that does not require visual orientation (e.g. go straight for about 3 meters, then turn right and after another 5 meters there will be three elevators on the right). If we have such an opportunity, and the route our client must follow is complicated or dangerous, it is worth acting as a guide yourself. Many people have a problem with this because they grab a disabled person by the arm and want to lead them to their destination. This action is incorrect. Help from a sighted person can only consist in offering the blind person the opportunity to hold our arm - the opposite is never done. However, even when we cover the planned route together, we must not forget to warn about threats (e.g. stairs, threshold, narrow door).

It also happens that a blind person comes to a hotel or restaurant with his or her private guide, which is a specially trained dog. Its presence in such places is regulated by special regulations. The guide dog is "at work" - it should not be distracted or petted.

Appendix

Info for the teacher/trainer no. 9

Practical activities

Get ready to roll up your sleeves because it's practical exercise time! Our mission? To make every guest feel welcome, especially those with disabilities. Our trusty guide is the "Guide for the hotel and restaurant sector dedicated to services provided to disabled customers", which was brought to life by the ACAD project "Accommodation and Catering Accessibility to Disabilities" implemented by the Cooperation Fund Foundation, the Institute of Regional Development Foundation, Action for blind people and ANJAF. The publication is available: https://firr.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ACAD_podrecznik.pdf.

Activity 1: Welcome to the premises!

Where? A restaurant

A person with a white cane enters the room. The waiter/waitress comes and... Well, how should a waiter/waitress behave? How do they welcome the guest? How do they guide them to the table? How do they introduce the menu? And most importantly, how do they make sure the customer feels comfortable and informed? We'll be acting this out in groups and brainstorming together.

Task for the students: act out this scene in groups, formulate answers to the above questions and discuss them together. Have you noticed anything else that requires special action on the part of the staff? What will change in the service behavior if the customer is visually impaired?

Activity 2: Delicious breakfast!

Where? A restaurant

During a hotel buffet breakfast, a blind guest enters the room. How can we help them choose from the buffet? How do we describe the food on the plate? And of course, how do we make sure they are seated comfortably? We'll be acting this out in groups and discussing any other special considerations for serving customers with visual impairments.

Task for the students: act out this scene in groups, formulate answers to the above questions and discuss them together. Have you noticed anything else that requires special action on the part of the staff? What will change in the service behavior if the customer is visually impaired?

Activity 3: It's time to put on your guiding shoes!

Where? A hotel reception

Imagine a blind customer has arrived at your hotel and needs your help. You must guide them to their room and explain all the equipment and devices in the room, such as the air conditioning and minibar. Make sure to carefully consider all the payment rules and inform the customer accordingly. In pairs, take turns guiding each other while the rest of the class watches. For more challenging scenarios, mix up the furniture arrangement and design of the corridors. Discuss any additional actions that might be needed from the staff.

Instructions for students: Get into pairs. Have one of you cover your eyes with a scarf. The second person will act as a guide. The other students watch the couple acting out the scene. For the next couple, it is worth changing the conventional arrangement of corridors and the arrangement of furniture in the room. Formulate answers to the above questions and discuss them together. Have you noticed anything else that requires special action on the part of the staff?

Activity 4: Let's clean up!

Where? A hotel room occupied by a blind guest

The hotel cleaning staff is on a mission to tidy up a blind guest's room while he's out enjoying the beautiful weather. First, they made the bed - the pajamas, thrown awkwardly on the pillow, were arranged into cubes and hidden under the covers. The phone charger lying on the bedside table fell to the ground while they were wiping the dust, but unfortunately no one noticed. In the bathroom, the toothbrush and toothpaste were placed in a glass cup. The soap was back in its rightful place on the right side of the tap, and the towels were hanging, arranged by size, on a rack near the door. Everything was tidy and clean. At the last moment, the TV remote control was placed right next to the water bottle. Now such a room can safely wait for a guest to arrive - thought the ladies from the staff and closed the door behind them. However, when the guest returned, he opened the door and went inside... after a short while he called the reception with a great complaint. Was he right? He didn't leave a note on the door saying he didn't want cleaning done.

Instructions for students: Act out this scene in groups. Consider what the error was. Who committed it and when? How should you have behaved? Formulate answers to the above questions and discuss them together. Have you noticed anything else that requires special action on the part of the cleaning staff?

Activity 5: It's on fire! – evacuation of a blind guest

Where? A hotel

Picture this: A peaceful evening in a hotel, until the piercing sound of a fire alarm echoes through the halls. Calmly, all the guests evacuate their rooms and take the stairs (since elevators are out of order) to safety. All except for the man in room 210, who is visually impaired and confused. Lost in the corridor with his trusty white cane, he's bumped into by other hurried guests and could easily fall down the stairs. What went wrong? Who's to blame? And how can we better prepare for emergencies involving guests with special needs?

Task for the students: Act out this scenario and come up with solutions to these questions. And if you spot any other areas where staff should take extra precautions, speak up!

LESSON PLAN 5

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENTS



Objectives:

- learning about the special needs of deaf and hearing-impaired persons
- developing skills in serving customers with hearing loss or hearing impairments



Time: 45 minutes



Materials:

- teacher/trainer info no. 10
- teacher/trainer info no. 11
- quiz cards



Working methods:

- mini-lecture
- discussion
- individual work
- practical activities

Lesson planning framework:

1. Introduction

The teacher/trainer emphasizes that hearing impairment pertains not only to deaf individuals but also a broader group of people with various types of disabilities related to the hearing organ. It is essential to understand the general rules of conduct and remain open to the individual needs of each client.

2. Etiquette for interacting with deaf and hearing-impaired customers

Objective: learning about the unique needs of deaf and hearing-impaired individuals

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: Teacher/Trainer info no. 10

Methods: mini-lecture, discussion

Procedures:

The teacher/trainer presents the basic principles of serving deaf and hearing-impaired individuals:

- a) First off all, we need to personalize communication rules for each individual. They might prefer an interpreter or a video translator service, or even just a phone translation. It's up to them to let us know what they need.
- b) Make sure that any forms or information are available in a printed format or audio files with translations into Sign Language. And we can't just hand over the materials, we need to make sure they understand everything by repeating and rephrasing if necessary.
- c) Make sure that the client understands the content provided to him. If it definitely does not confirm understanding, we repeat the same message only once. If there are still doubts, we must re-edit it and convey it in a different way.
- d) Communication with deaf and hard-of-hearing folks requires special conditions, like minimizing noise and ensuring good lighting. And during emergency situations, we need to have special procedures in place since they won't be able to hear alarms.

The teacher/trainer reminds about the need to address the disabled person directly, etc. It also refers to the situation of people who are hearing-impaired. The mini-lecture conducted by the teacher/trainer should be based on information material for teacher/trainer no. 10.

As teachers/ trainers, we can encourage students to share their experiences and offer tips for dealing with different scenarios. Point out It is important to address the individual directly and have an open discussion about their needs. It's all about making everyone feel welcome and heard!

3. Practical activity „Assisting deaf and hearing-impaired individuals in the tourism industry“

Objective: students will learn practical aspects of assisting deaf and hearing-impaired individuals

Time: 25 minutes

Materials: Teacher/Trainer info no. 11

Methods: individual work, discussion

Procedures:

4. Quiz „Serving customers with hearing impairments”

Objective: to get a grip on how to serve customers with hearing impairments

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: quiz cards

Methods: individual work, discussion

Procedures:

„Let's put our knowledge into action with a fun quiz about serving individuals with hearing impairments”

„We'll be passing out question cards, and the fun begins when you pick an answer. Once someone hits the big 5, let's give them a round of applause!”

5. Conclusion

The lesson ends with a recap. Ask the students the following questions:

- What have I learned?
- How can I use the acquired knowledge?
- What new things have I discovered?
- What surprised me the most?

Appendix:

The quiz:

- 1) Should we write down messages if we don't understand a customer who is deaf?
 - a) True
 - b) False
- 2) We can start talking to a deaf person once we make sure he or she is looking at us.
 - a) True
 - b) False
- 3) When talking to a customer who is deaf, should you address him/her or the interpreter standing next to him/her?
 - a) We address the customer directly
 - b) We address the interpreter
- 4) You should speak louder to a customer who is hard of hearing and uses a hearing aid, as this will make it easier for him or her to receive information.
 - a) True
 - b) False
- 5) The Sign Language Act made revolutionary changes in the approach to serving deaf people in public institutions.
 - a) True
 - b) False

Correct quiz answers:

1-a, 2-a, 3-a, 4-b, 5-a



Should we write down messages if we don't understand a customer who is deaf?

- a) TRUE
- b) FALSE



We can start talking to a deaf person once we make sure he or she is looking at us.

- a) TRUE
- b) FALSE



When talking to a customer who is deaf, should you address him/her or the interpreter standing next to him/her?

- a) TRUE
- b) FALSE



You should speak louder to a customer who is hard of hearing and uses a hearing aid, as this will make it easier for him or her to receive information.

- a) TRUE
- b) FALSE



You should speak louder to a customer who is hard of hearing and uses a hearing aid, as this will make it easier for him or her to receive information.?

- a) TRUE
- b) FALSE

Appendix

Materials for the teacher/trainer no. 10

Serving customers with hearing loss and hearing impairments

Communication with deaf individuals often requires the involvement of an interpreter to bridge the communication gap. Acquiring fluency in a new language involves grasping various aspects, such as vocabulary, pronunciation, intonation, and more. But for those who have been deaf since birth or lost their hearing at a young age, spoken language might not be their strong suit. Hence, providing information through visual means like reading from a screen or piece of paper may not be a viable solution.

In Poland, a significant shift in serving deaf individuals in public institutions came about through significant changes in the law. Up until 2011, the norm was for a deaf individual to bring a personal translator while addressing their concerns. The 2011 Act on Sign Language and Other Means of Communication changed this by establishing a framework for implementing the right of deaf individuals to equal access to information and participation in society, and defining the obligations of public institutions. Although the act doesn't apply to hotels and restaurants, prominent companies have started to follow it to improve customer service standards. It's worth familiarizing oneself with the act's fundamental provisions.

People with hearing disabilities communicate in various ways, depending on factors such as whether they've been deaf since birth, if they lost their hearing later in life, or if they have hearing impairments requiring technical amplification. Some people can read lips, enabling them to communicate relatively freely, while others use speech. As a result, determining the most effective communication method requires obtaining information from the individual with a hearing disability.

1. Individualization is the key

Individualization is crucial when serving clients with disabilities, particularly when an interpreter is required. Such clients may visit hotels or restaurants accompanied by interpreters who facilitate communication using Sign Language System (SJM). While such services are becoming increasingly popular and accessible, their availability may still be limited in some places.

Video interpreter services are an excellent alternative to physical interpreters, allowing non-signing personnel to direct statements to interpreters who translate them into sign language, which deaf persons can view on their phone or computer screens. The interpreter then relays the information back to the hearing person using verbal language. Many companies are partnering with video translator service providers, enabling deaf individuals to have telephone conversations with interpreters.

In cases where interpreters are unavailable, maintaining eye contact, speaking in simple terms, and using short sentences can aid in communication. It is also essential to ensure that the guest knows when they are being addressed. This can be achieved through various means, such as waving vertically, blinking the room lights, or gently touching the interlocutor's hand. Alternatively, one could send a message to the guest's phone or tap lightly on the table.

2. Available printed materials

All forms and declarations relevant to hotel matters should be transcribed into sign language to ensure that deaf individuals have access to the content without requiring third-party assistance. This also applies to individuals who may not know the language fluently. Additionally, using tables and illustrations may prove helpful.

3. Complete understanding

Customer service protocols in hotels entail providing accurate and concise information repeatedly. However, hearing-impaired clients may give feedback during conversations indicating that they do not understand a statement. In such cases, repeating the statement once is necessary. If the client still doesn't confirm understanding, it might be necessary to rephrase the statement entirely. Although this situation can be challenging, the relief and satisfaction of hearing-impaired customers are worth the effort.

The same repetition rule applies to individuals who lip-read. If the message isn't comprehensible after two attempts, use different words that may be easier to read.

It's possible that hotel employees may misunderstand what deaf individuals are saying to them. In such instances, they must clarify, request repetition or even write down the information on a piece of paper.

Appendix

Teacher/trainer no. 11

Practical activities

Introduction

The practical exercises proposed in this set of scenarios were primarily developed based on the "Guide for the Hotel and Restaurant Sector Dedicated to Services Provided to Disabled Customers." This publication was created as part of the ACAD project, "Accommodation and Catering Accessibility to Disabilities," implemented by the Foundation "Cooperation Fund," the Regional Development Institute Foundation, Action for Blind People, and ANJAF. The publication can be accessed at: https://firr.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ACAD_podrecznik.pdf.

Activity 1

Customer, service employee and "the third one"

Where? A hotel reception

Let's set the scene: a fresh-faced guest strolls into the hotel reception area. As they approach the desk, they whip out their phone and show a video of a woman on the screen, waving her hands and saying "good morning". Now it's time for our service employee to shine! Do they respond to the customer or the woman on the phone screen? What extra information should they provide? And what if the customer is hearing impaired?

Task for the students: Act this out in groups, brainstorm some answers, and see if we can spot any other special situations that might arise. After all, the best service is always one step ahead!

Activity 2

Let's try again!

Where? A hotel reception

Let's set the stage at a hotel reception. Mrs. White has been struggling with hearing issues, making it tough to understand conversations in noisy environments. She's been avoiding social events but didn't want to miss out on her vacation. She finally gathered the courage to head to the hotel, and things seemed to be going well until she lost track of the conversation with the attendant. The hotel employee politely repeated that dinners were charged additionally, but Mrs. White was already lost in her thoughts. She was afraid that if she didn't understand, the conversation would end in an unpleasant manner, just like it did during a Christmas meeting. Focusing her eyes on the attendant's face, she tried to understand, but it only made things more challenging. Now, there was an awkward silence, and Mrs. White wondered if she should nod and take a chance.

Task for the students: Act this out in groups and brainstorm some answers. So, what's the best way for hotel employees to behave in such situations? How should they handle customers with hearing issues? Students, let's discuss and come up with a solution. And, are there any other things that hotel staff should do to accommodate customers with hearing difficulties?

Activity 3

Let's talk!

Where? A restaurant

Let's set the stage: A guest takes a seat at a cozy restaurant, gazing out the window at the stunning view. A friendly waiter approaches, ready to spark a conversation, but the guest is in a trance and misses the greeting entirely. Oh no! How should our waiter proceed? How can he break the ice and start a chat? And what's the perfect way to present the menu?

Task for the students: It's showtime! Act out this restaurant scene in groups, brainstorm some clever ideas to tackle these questions, and chat it up together. Did anything else catch your eye that would require some special staff action?

Activity 4

How can we help?

Where? A hotel room occupied by a guest with hearing loss

Picture this: The sun was shining bright, and the hotel was empty as all the guests were out soaking up the rays. Suddenly, the cleaning staff opened the door to a room occupied by a deaf guest who was caught off guard in just his undies. The ladies were equally surprised as they had already knocked and waited for quite some time. One of the cleaners stepped out of the room, while the other bent down to pick up the trash can, asking the guest if he needed anything cleaned. But he didn't answer. When she looked up, she saw another guest sitting at a desk and scribbling something on paper. The cleaner apologized and left the room, only to be hit with a complaint later for not knocking, not changing the towels and not replacing the water bottle. Weird, right? Especially since they were all in the same room and no one ever bothered to write to the cleaning staff before! The cleaner was left bewildered and disagreed with the complaint.

Task for the students: Act out this scene and figure out who made the mistake and how it could have been avoided. And, hey, did you notice anything else that needs special attention from the hotel staff?

Activity 5

Take a look, please.

Where? A hotel reception

Let's set the scene. A savvy hotel added a special needs and wishes space to its reservation form, making its guests feel extra special. One day, the reception team received a heads up that a guest with hearing loss was on the way. They sprang into action, booking a quiet room close to the entrance, training staff on communication tips, and even preparing signs and instructions for the guest. But the hotel didn't stop there! They went the extra mile and trained their team to attract the attention of the guest by waving their hands or making eye contact. Finally, the manager made sure everything was in place to assist the guest in case of an emergency. The hotel team did everything they could to make their hearing-impaired guest feel welcomed and safe.

Task for the students: Act out this scene and share your experience. Did anything surprise you? Do you have other ideas for how a hotel can make special arrangements for guests with special needs?

Activity 6

It's on fire! – evacuation of a guest with hearing loss

Where? A hotel

Picture this: A tranquil night in the hotel, and then suddenly, the fire alarm blares! The other guests evacuate the building, taking the stairs since the elevators were out of order. But what about the chap in room 120? He remains unperturbed, dealing his cards while the chaos unfolds. Where did the mishap occur? Who's at fault? And how can we prepare for guests with special needs during emergencies?

Task for the students: Act out this scene and brainstorm some clever ideas to tackle these questions, and chat it up together. And, hey, did you notice anything else that needs special attention from the hotel staff?

LESSON PLAN 6

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES



Objectives:

- learning about the special needs of people with intellectual disabilities
- developing skills in serving customers who are intellectually disabled



Time: 45 minutes



Materials:

- teacher/trainer info no. 12
- teacher/trainer info no. 13
- quiz cards



Working methods:

- mini-lecture
- discussion
- individual work
- practical activities

Lesson planning framework:

1. Introduction

The teacher/trainer points out that intellectual disability is still a mystery to many of us, leading to some myths and misconceptions. That's why it's important to learn the dos and don'ts of interacting with clients with intellectual disabilities, while keeping an open mind to their unique needs.

2. Etiquette for interacting with intellectually disabled customers

Objective: learning about the unique needs of intellectually disabled individuals

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: Teacher/Trainer info no.12

Methods: mini-lecture, discussion

Here are some helpful tips on serving and supporting people with intellectual disabilities:

- Let's use simple and clear language while communicating with them. Short sentences, easy words, concise text, no abbreviations, and repeated use of the same terms will make it easier for them to understand.
- Let's ensure we're on the same page by asking open-ended questions and repeating back what we've heard them say.
- We should be aware that people with intellectual disabilities may behave „like children”, and it's our responsibility to maintain boundaries and treat them like adults.
- Above all, patience is key while serving people with intellectual disabilities. We should be ready to listen, discuss, and take our time without rushing them.

And, of course, let's always address them directly and respectfully. As teachers/trainers, we can ask students to share their experiences with people having intellectual disabilities, and based on that, come up with some rules to make sure we're all on the same page.

The mini lecture conducted by the teacher/trainer should be based on information material for teacher/trainer no. 12.

3. Practical activity „Serving customers with intellectual disabilities”

Objective: students will learn practical aspects of assisting intellectually disabled individuals

Time: 25 minutes

Materials: Teacher/Trainer info no.13

Methods: practical activity

How to put the plan into action? The teacher or trainer can tailor exercises based on the class's profile. For instance, they could focus on how to assist people with intellectual disabilities at a hotel reception desk, serving food at a restaurant, or tidying up a room. Looking for inspiration? Check out the practical exercise ideas in Teacher/Trainer Info No. 13.

4. Quiz „Serving customers with intellectual disabilities“

Objective: to get a grip on how to serve customers who are intellectually disabled

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: quiz cards

Methods: individual work, discussion

Procedures:

„We'll be passing out question cards, and the fun begins when you pick an answer. Once someone hits the big 5, let's give them a round of applause!“

5. Conclusion

The lesson ends with a recap. Ask the students the following questions:

- What have I learned?
- How can I use the acquired knowledge?
- What new things have I discovered?
- What surprised me the most?

Appendix:

The quiz:

- 1) People with intellectual disabilities need a guardian/assistant to book a hotel room:
 - a) True
 - b) False
- 2) A customer with an intellectual disability makes a request to be called by their first name. Is it proper for a hotel employee to address them as "Mr."?
 - a) True
 - b) False
- 3) A bank employee wants to make sure a customer with an intellectual disability understands the worth of a service. Is it appropriate to visually show the value by writing it down?
 - a) True
 - b) False
- 4) When writing content in "plain language," it is acceptable to use abbreviations like "etc." and "ETA."
 - a) True
 - b) False
- 5) A client with an intellectual disability needs more time to make a decision. Should the hotel employee rush through their explanation to keep things moving?
 - a) True
 - b) False



People with intellectual disabilities need a guardian/assistant to book a hotel room:

- a) TRUE
- b) FALSE



A customer with an intellectual disability makes a request to be called by their first name. Is it proper for a hotel employee to address them as "Mr."?

- a) TRUE
- b) FALSE



A bank employee wants to make sure a customer with an intellectual disability understands the worth of a service. Is it appropriate to visually show the value by writing it down?

- a) TRUE
- b) FALSE



When writing content in "plain language," it is acceptable to use abbreviations like "etc." and "ETA."

- a) TRUE
- b) FALSE



A client with an intellectual disability needs more time to make a decision. Should the hotel employee rush through their explanation to keep things moving?

- a) TRUE
- b) FALSE

Appendix

Materials for the teacher/trainer no. 12

Serving customers with intellectual disabilities

There are various reasons why customers may require additional patience and simplified information from service employees. For instance, they may have poor command of the language, dyslexia, or intellectual disabilities. Unfortunately, the last group is often invisible, and it may take a conversation with the employee to realize that communication is non-standard. However, it's challenging to identify people with intellectual disabilities, and the customers themselves may not voice their support needs. It's crucial to note that intellectual disabilities are not mental illnesses, but rather below-average general intellectual abilities that develop during the developmental period and are associated with adaptive behavior disorders. People with mild intellectual disabilities can develop social skills, but it takes more effort and time than it would for able-bodied individuals. However, they may have underdeveloped skills such as concentration, imagination, and memory. On the other hand, individuals with moderate intellectual disabilities have difficulty remembering and reproducing learned information, as well as focusing on one task. Additionally, this group often experiences hearing and vision disorders.

Although people with intellectual disabilities constitute a small percentage of the disabled community, an increasing number of young people are affected by this condition.

Below you can find the golden rules for serving people with intellectual disabilities:

1. Simple words and short sentences:

The fundamental concept of communication with people having intellectual disabilities involves the use of simple words and short sentences, be it written or spoken (including audio and video files).

The principles of preparing information in an easy-to-read language (ETR) have been detailed in "Information for everyone. European standards for developing text that is easy to read and understand". Such content is usually marked with a specific symbol.

The salient features of this type of communication are:

- Use of single sentences predominantly.
- Longer statements are broken down into smaller parts, with comprehension being checked after each one.
- Addressing the recipient directly in the message (e.g., instead of "breakfast is served from...", we say "you can come for breakfast from...").
- Using simple words, repeated several times to describe an object or action.
- Providing a thorough explanation of the meaning of difficult words.
- Avoiding metaphors (e.g., "the weather is bad," "I am winged").
- Using examples from everyday life.
- Avoiding abbreviations (e.g., etc.) or acronyms (e.g., ASAP, TV). In written communication, larger fonts, wider line spacing, and avoiding capital letters are preferred, and underlining is avoided.

2. Clear communication:

It's crucial to ensure that information is conveyed to the client slowly and clearly, while maintaining eye contact to help them concentrate on communication. When the client speaks unclearly, it's essential to clarify the message by repeating what has been understood or asking for the statement to be repeated.

3. Professional conduct:

When dealing with clients with intellectual disabilities, we must keep in mind that their behavior may appear "childish" and that it's necessary to maintain a professional demeanor. Refrain from touching the client or allowing them to touch you while remembering that their non-standard behavior is due to a disability.

4. Confirm arrangements:

After the conversation, it's important to confirm that both parties have understood the arrangements in the same way. The simplest approach is to ask a neutral question, followed by the same question in a different way after a short time.

5. Exercise patience:

Clients with intellectual disabilities may need more time to understand information and make decisions. Avoid rushing or imposing time limits.

In conclusion, while the above principles should characterize friendly service for every customer, they are especially relevant for clients with intellectual disabilities. By implementing these principles, we increase satisfaction with communication and enable quality customer service.

Appendix

Teacher/trainer no. 13

Practical activities

Introduction

The practical exercises proposed in this set of scenarios were primarily developed based on the "Guide for the Hotel and Restaurant Sector Dedicated to Services Provided to Disabled Customers." This publication was created as part of the ACAD project, "Accommodation and Catering Accessibility to Disabilities," implemented by the Foundation "Cooperation Fund," the Regional Development Institute Foundation, Action for Blind People, and ANJAF. The publication can be accessed at: https://firr.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ACAD_podrecznik.pdf.

Activity 1: Hey there! I'm Adam

A fresh guest walks into the hotel and heads to the reception desk. You greet him with a smile, and he responds, "Hey there! I've arrived at the seaside, and I'm Adam. Can you tell me which room is mine and when I can grab some food?" How should you respond?

Let's discuss in groups, come up with answers to the questions and any other special actions the staff might need to take.

Activity 2: We have time

Our next scene is set in a hotel reception. A young guy, Lukas, comes up to the desk and asks if there's a billiards table in the hotel and if he can play now. You respond, telling him that he can find the billiards room on the lower level, and it's open from 10am-2pm and 4pm-8pm, and he'll need to sign up at the Sports Center reception for cues and balls. But, Lukas still smiles and asks, "Can I play right now?"

You sense that you need to change your approach and say something else. What could you say to help him understand the situation better?

Let's act this out in groups, come up with different responses and any other special actions the staff might need to take.

Activity 3: It's a Blaze! - Saving a Guest with Special Needs

In a bustling hotel, the fire alarm suddenly blares and guests quickly evacuate the building. However, one curious chap in room 104 stands in the corridor, watching the commotion with amusement. Despite being asked to leave, he lingers, introducing himself to each passerby. What went wrong, and where? Was there a misstep in the check-in process for guests with special needs? Discuss this disaster scenario and brainstorm ways to improve emergency procedures for guests like him.

Activity 4: Serving Customers with Disabilities

A foundation for people with disabilities is planning a big conference in a picturesque town, but before booking, they inquire about the facility's accessibility. The reservation team assures them that the venue is not only architecturally adapted but also trained in serving guests with special needs. The client is thrilled and the event is set in motion. On the big day, guests arrive with a range of disabilities - from mobility issues to hearing and visual impairments. How will the hotel staff rise to the challenge of serving their needs? This is a great opportunity to discuss how businesses can better accommodate guests with disabilities and ensure they have the same quality of service as everyone else.

Time to roll up your sleeves and get into groups: Reception Squad, Restaurant Rascals, and Cleaning Crew. Here's the deal: we've got to make sure our hotel is 100% ready to welcome guests with disabilities. So, brainstorm ideas on how we can make their stay as comfortable and enjoyable as possible. Once you've got your ideas on your cards, pass them along to your colleagues and see if they've missed anything. Can you add anything to their list? Is there anything on there that's not important?

Then, check out the third page and add any observations you have. And finally, the group that finishes first gets to review and finalize the card's content.