

TAKE-5 FOR INCLUSION & DIVERSITY

DISABILITY AWARENESS: HOW TO BE MORE INCLUSIVE (BY MICAH HOESLY)

Introduction

How do you react to a teammate who uses a cane to walk in the production area or a wheelchair in an office space? Maybe you feel intimidated by their disability, think they can't perform their jobs like other teammates, or that perhaps they are receiving special treatment. Should you offer assistance?

These are visible disabilities we see, but what about the invisible disabilities?

What about a team member with Diabetes that takes a break twice a day to check their blood sugar levels and takes an insulin shot. How do you react to a co-worker with High Blood Pressure (HBP) who has diet restrictions, or to a crew mate who is visually impaired with some form of color blindness? Are people more or less valuable if they are born or acquire disabilities during their lives?

Why is it important for us to discuss disabilities in the workplace?

It's estimated that 1 out of 4 people have some form of disability (visible or invisible). When asked about disabilities, those that are visible quickly come to mind, but millions of Americans suffer from hidden disabilities or health conditions that can affect their workplace routines. Some disabilities include epilepsy, heart disease, arthritis, chronic joint pain, attention deficit disorder, PTSD, and asthma.

How do WE create an accepting environment?

The key to creating an accepting and inclusive work environment is to treat each employee with respect.

- Focus on what people can do, not on what they can't do.
- We all add value, regardless of how we're differently abled.
- Don't refer to or talk about a person's disability unless it is crucial to the conversation.
- Don't assume a differently abled person cannot function on his or her own.
- Challenge derogatory language or jokes. Speak out if you hear others talk negatively.
- Use "people first" language. Say, "a person who uses a wheelchair", or "person with a disability" (instead of 'disabled person'). This puts the focus on the individual, not the particular functional capability.

Diverse **Abilities** and backgrounds broaden our viewpoints. Recognize the value each employee brings to the team.



Disability Awareness

56.7 million
People living in the U.S. has some sort of disability

Estimated that 1 out of 4 people has a disability

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
The nation's largest minority group, as well as the only group that any of us can become a member of at any time

See the **Person**
Not the **Disability**

Not All Disabilities Can Be Seen

Diverse **Abilities** and backgrounds broaden our viewpoints. Recognize the value each employee brings to the team.