

Easy Read summary of » Talking about disability » Guide



**EQUALLY
OURS**



A partnership of Deaf and Disabled People's Organisations (DDPOs) plus Equally Ours worked together on a project called 'Talking about disability'. It was funded by City Bridge Foundation Cornerstone Fund.

The DDPOs included:

- Inclusion London
- Inclusion Barnet
- Camden Disability Action
- Merton Centre for Independent Living
- Choice in Hackney
- Action for Disability
- Real
- Ruils Independent Living



The project looked at how people think and talk about disability and how we can change the way we talk about disability so more people support what we do.



As part of the project we asked over 3,000 Londoners their views about disability and found out a lot of things.



We also tried out new ways of talking about disability which helped people think about disability in a better way.

The most important things we learnt are in this guide.

What's the problem with how DDPOs think & talk about disability?



The way DDPOs talk about disability isn't working as well as we would like it to.



We found that most Londoners think disability is a medical issue (having something wrong with you) and being a Disabled person is a bad or sad thing. This is called the medical model of disability.



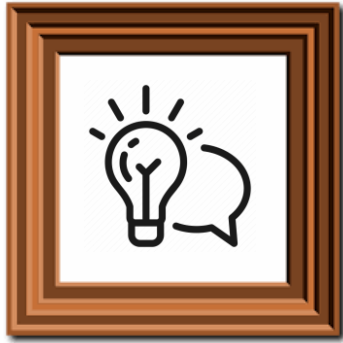
Not many people understood that often the hardest thing about being a Disabled person is how we are badly treated and viewed in society. This is called the social model of disability.



We found out that lots of Londoners:

- do not understand disability and the barriers that Disabled people face
- think the problems Disabled people face are because of their condition not the way society is run
- think things are much better for Disabled people now than they used to be
- think there is not enough money to make society better for Disabled people without taking money away from other things and other people.

How can we change how people think and talk about disability?



How we think and talk about things is sometimes called framing – a bit like how we see a picture and what is and is not in the picture



Thinking about how we frame disability is important because we can put other things in the picture that changes how people think about disability.

Our 5 top tips for better communication



1. Talk about the good values we all share. Values are the things that are important to us in how we live our lives like freedom, making our own decisions, being independent, caring for one another, and equality and fairness.

Example:

‘We all want a world where we can choose how to live our lives, in a community that includes us, and a society that values us’



2. Tell people the truth about something rather than correct something that's wrong.



Example:

Do say: 'Disabled people run organisations and businesses.'

Don't say: 'It's not true that Disabled people can't run organisations and businesses.'

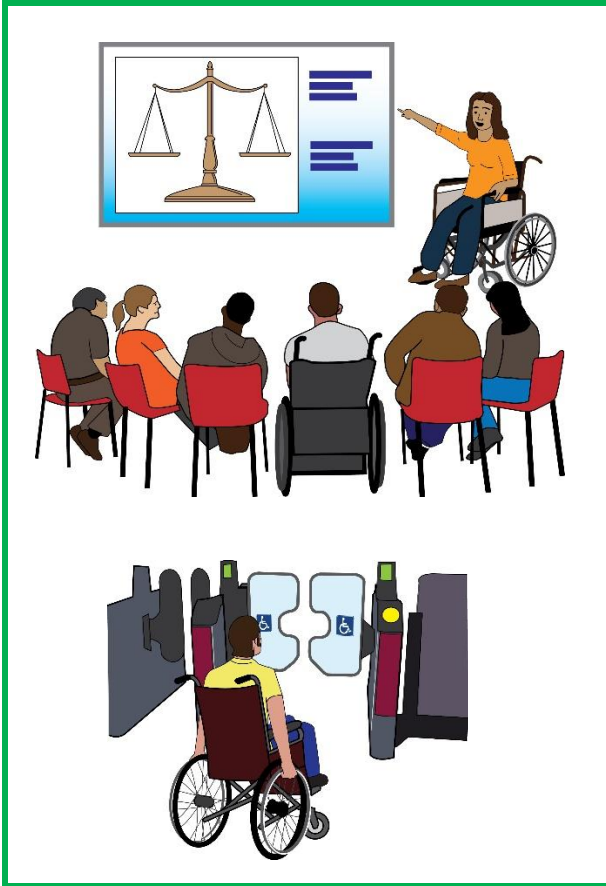


3. Talk about how things could be better and how to make them better rather than just saying how bad things are.

Example:

'We know that jobs can be much more accessible and that employers can make this happen. For example, remote working used to be rare, but in some jobs it's now a fact of life'

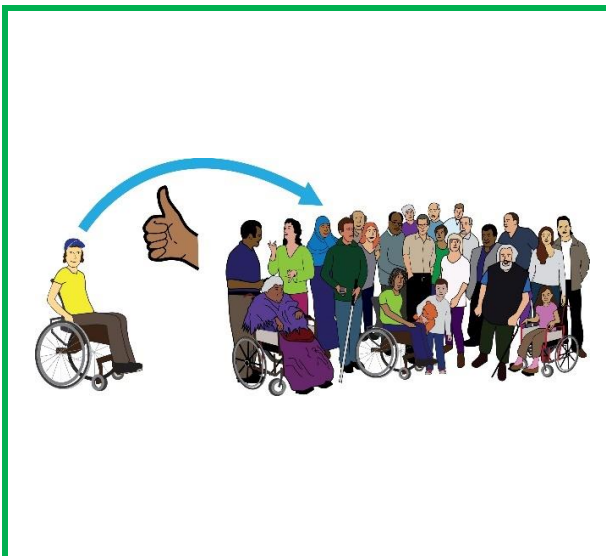




4. When you talk about things in your life, make it clear that things are harder because of how society is designed and run.

Example:

‘To go places like everyone else, I need buses and trains and buildings and shops that I can use in my wheelchair’.



5. Show how the things that matter to us should matter to everybody.

Example:

‘An inclusive and equal society is good for everyone’.

Better ways of talking about disability. The rest of this guide gives examples about how to talk about 6 important disability issues in a better way.

Choice and control



- Everyone wants to have as much control as we can over our lives.
- To make decisions and have a say in the things that matter to us is basic human right which most of us take for granted. But for Disabled people, decisions are often taken out of our hands.
- Disabled people can and do have friends, work, and live a full life.
- We understand better than anyone else what we need.
- Most of us can make choices and decisions about our lives.

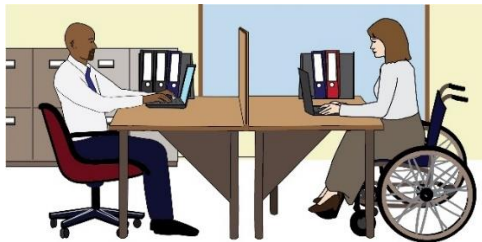


- It's right that Disabled people should have as much control as possible over decisions that affect our lives.

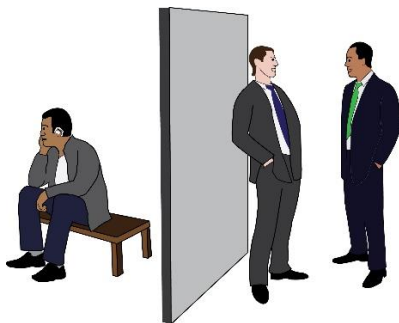
Work

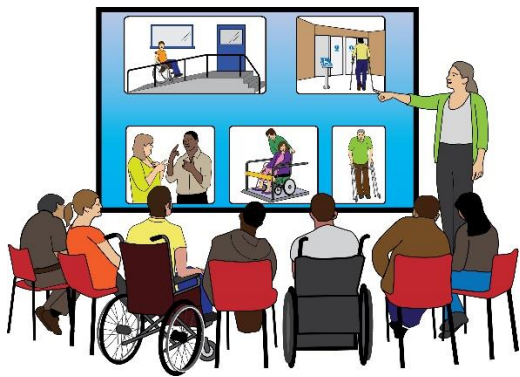


- There are Disabled people in every type of workplace, even if we don't know it. There are disabled lawyers, teachers, shop assistants, politicians, and baristas.



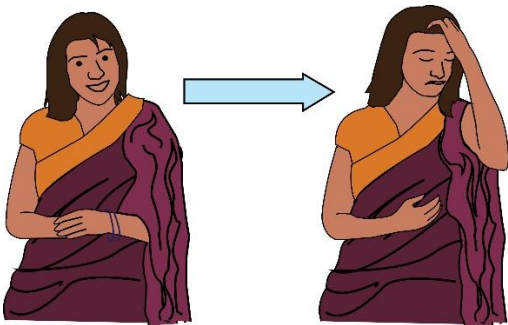
- Disabled people run organisations and businesses.
- But lots of Disabled people, fear of being treated badly stops them from being open about who they are at work. Many are worried about people's reactions if they tell people they are disabled.





- The more that bosses understand conditions /impairment are part of life and work, the more possible for Disabled people to say what they need, which means better workplaces for everyone.

Part of life



- Disabled people are part of life and society.
- Many of us have conditions/ impairment. You often won't know if someone is disabled or not.



- 25% of people live with someone who is disabled, and any one of us could become disabled at some point in our lives.



- Disabled people are everywhere. We are in cafés, workplaces, in football stadiums and in every park.
- Disabled people are us.

We are all equal



- Most people want to live in a community that includes us and be part of a society that values us. Disabled people want that too – we are also parents, have jobs and friends. But society often treats us badly and our skills and the good things we do are ignored.



- Laws in the UK have helped make things a bit better but there's still a huge gap between what we all want and what real life is like for Disabled people.



This means that everyday things like shopping, working, and going out that other people take for granted can be very difficult and stressful for Disabled people.



- We know how to include everyone – we just need to make it happen. For example, access to public spaces with guide dogs, playgrounds that Disabled children can use, flexible working hours, and building lifetime homes that you can stay in when you get older.

Social Model of Disability



- Disabled people's lives are not the same.
- For some Disabled people their impairment/condition can be tough, for others not so much.



- But for all Disabled people, how we are treated, what other people think about us, and how things are run can be the biggest problems in our lives.
- We can change this and make things better so that Disabled people can be fully included in society.

Change



- We all want an equal chance to have a good life.
- For Disabled people, what people think about us and how the country is run, often stops us from having equal chances.



- We know things can be made better. Think about road safety. The law to make people wear a seatbelt and pass a driving test has made everyone safer.
- It's the same for making changes to improve Disabled people's lives. Government and people who run services have the power and can make laws and choices to make life more open and accessible to us all.

Top 3 things to remember when communicating



Top 3 things to remember when communicating:

1. Start what you are going to say with a good value we all share and show why the issue matters to everyone.
2. Then say what the problem in society is and how it stops us living how we'd like to live
3. End by sharing your picture of how things could be better and say how you think we could all get there.



More information and more example messages are in the full Talking About Disability guide which you can get by clicking on this **link**

What do you think about this guide?

How can we make it better?

Let us know by emailing info@inclusionlondon.org.uk



Easy Read produced by People First (Self Advocacy)

