EDUCATING ALL LEARNERS

5 Tips To Make Your Events, Meetings, and Webinars Accessible for Attendees with Disabilities

1. Plan ahead!
Always ask attendees what accommodations they will need in your event registration form. Ensure that you allocate enough time in the planning process for your event, meeting, or webinar to coordinate all necessary logistics regarding requested accommodations. A great resource for this checklist is here.

2. Create an inclusive environment
- Share the accessibility features available verbally at the beginning of your event and name the in-event contact person for attendees to contact if they run into any accessibility issues during your event..
- Cut down on barriers for individuals who use screen readers when setting up a event by limiting the steps to join (e.g., remove use of password, have all attendees on mute, or unmute depending on your circumstance, enable video or have the video set to off for all participants, etc.,).
- Provide a list of key shortcuts in order to minimize the need to use a mouse for individuals with screen readers.
- Set a standard for the chat feature, either do not use it, or provide a voice-over of all public chats to ensure all attendees are able to engage in the discussions.
- Record your event, meeting, or webinar so attendees have post-event access where they can follow along at their own pace. Always disclose to attendees that you will be recording the meeting.

3. Always have live or post-event transcription or closed captioning available
If you are using Zoom, implement the live transcription feature that attendees can turn on during the meeting or hire a live captioner. If you are utilizing any other platform, hire a captioner or implement Otter.ai. Otter.ai will allow you to record the conversation, and capture notes as well as view captions in real-time, and save a transcript for future reference.

It is built into Google Chrome as an extension and can be used across Google Meet, WebEx, Microsoft Teams, and Zoom. We have put together a guide on how to utilize live transcription in Zoom and Otter.ai here.

Note: Live, real-time access is always the better option.

4. If you are using a slideshow, or any other presentation materials, make sure they are visually accessible
- Use high-contrast colors and do not rely on color as the sole distinguishing feature of key points.
- Limit the amount of text on individual slides
- Limit the use of GIFs unless there is no alternative way to present your message. If you choose to utilize GIFs, ensure that they are set to stop after 5 seconds, have alternative text, and do not contain blinking/flashing.

  - Videos should not be included in a slideshow unless they are already captioned. Live transcription add-ons, such as Zoom's live transcription feature, or Otter.ai are not always capable of transcribing a video in real-time.
  - Describe your content verbally, including providing a voice-over description of any images used, without relying on attendees to simply read your slides during the presentation
  - Send out your presentation materials in advance or after the event
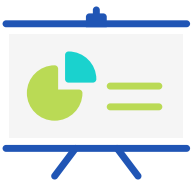
5. Be open to feedback
Send out a post-event survey and include a question about the event's accessibility. Incorporate time to review feedback from past events and incorporate necessary changes into your event planning process.

Questions? Reach out to Wendy Brehm at the Center for Learner Equity.

Thank you to The Center for Learner Equity for their contribution to this resource.