

## **Staff attitudes and approach to working with people with disabilities**

Friendly and welcoming attitudes of staff and volunteer teams makes an excellent first impression and creates good atmosphere.

When assisting a person with a disability, staff should:

- Communicate at a comfortable distance  
Ask if the person if they need assistance, if they appear to be having difficulties
- Be aware of your own tone of voice
- Be honest and realistic in your response
- Don't feel guilty about refusing unrealistic requests, however explain why something may not be possible
- Be prepared to negotiate
- Treat people with disabilities like any other member of the community

Staff and volunteer teams may benefit from Disability Awareness training by a reputable organization to develop a greater understanding and awareness of specific disabilities and should also include the importance of:

- Attentive listening
- Making eye contact
- Using clear and natural speech
- Waiting for a response to a question
- Seeing the person, not the disability