Interviewing People with Disabilities

- When talking to people with disabilities, talk directly to them not their companion or sign language interpreter.

- When you are introduced to someone offer to shake hands. Using the left hand is acceptable.

- When meeting an individual with a visual impairment, always identify yourself and others who may be with you. Always remember to use the name of the person to whom you are speaking.

- Do not lean or hang onto a person’s wheelchair.

- Treat adults as adults.

- Listen attentively when you are talking with a person who has difficulty speaking. Be patient and encouraging and wait for the person to finish.

- When speaking to a person who uses a wheelchair or crutches, place yourself at the person’s eye level to facilitate conversation.

- To get the attention of a person who is deaf, tap the individual on the shoulder or wave your hand. Look directly at the person and speak clearly, slowly, and expressively to determine if the person can read your lips. If the person can lip-read, keep all obstruction away from your mouth (hands, food, drink, etc...)

- Relax. Don’t worry if you use a common expression such as "see you later" or "did you hear about that."

- Don't be afraid to ask questions.

- Do not treat the person as someone who is brave or to be pitied. They are simply ordinary people living ordinary lives.

- If you offer assistance, wait until the offer is accepted. Then listen for instructions.