



SWITCHING LANES:

**EMBRACING INCLUSION AND
ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL WORKERS**

Adam and Regina Lane

The image features a white background with decorative elements. In the top-left corner, there are several thin, parallel teal lines radiating from a point, and a teal arc. In the bottom-right corner, there is a teal arc and several thin, parallel teal lines radiating from a point. The text is centered and consists of three lines: the first line is red, the second is blue, and the third is orange.

**"YOU ARE OKAY AND
YOU WILL CONTINUE
TO BE OKAY."**



**It started
on Hinge and
ended at
Freezing
Cow**





UNDERSTANDING DISABILITY IN THE WORKPLACE

A BRIEF TIMELINE...

1973

Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability

1986

Jim Thatcher created the first screen reader.

1990

Capital Crawl - activists shed their mobility aids and proceeded to crawl and pull their bodies up all 100 of the Capitol's front steps.

1990

President George H.W. Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) into law.

1992

The annual observance of the International Day of Disabled Persons was proclaimed in 1992,

2004

The United States first Disability Pride Parade was held in Chicago in 2004.



CHALLENGES FACED BY DISABLED WORKERS



What are some of the biggest challenges faced by disabled workers?



SUPPORTING DISABLED WORKERS

PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY

Difficulty in accessing buildings, workspaces, or using standard office equipment.

TECHNOLOGY BARRIERS

Inaccessible software or hardware.

DISCRIMINATION AND BIAS

Prejudice from employers or colleagues.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Employers failing to make reasonable adjustments to the work environment.

INADEQUATE SUPPORT

Lack of support systems or resources to assist disabled workers.

EMPLOYMENT GAPS

Difficulty in finding employment or being underemployed.

SOCIAL ISOLATION

Feeling isolated or excluded in the workplace.

LACK OF AWARENESS

General lack of awareness or understanding of disabilities among colleagues.

LEGAL CHALLENGES

Difficulty in navigating or enforcing disability laws and rights.

MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA

Stigmatization of mental health conditions.

PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY

Make sure that accessibility is apart of your plan from the beginning and throughout.

TECHNOLOGY TOOLS

Making sure website and screens are accessible by using modern tools

INCLUSION FOR ALL

Be aware of your own biases and work to disrupt them

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Most accommodations are very affordable and easy to install.

ADEQUATE SUPPORT

Most benefit packages include services for disabled. HR is your friend.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Disabled workers are loyal, hard-working and excellent problem solvers.

MAKE NEW FRIENDS

Invite a coworker to lunch or coffee to learn more about each other.

AWARENESS

Do your own research and learn more about their disability.

LEGAL PROTECTIONS


Don't be afraid to use your voice. You have rights in the workplace.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Normalize talking about mental health.

Share strategies
they've seen or
used to support
disabled
colleagues.





ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS FOR INCLUSION



ACCESSIBILITY

Ensure that physical spaces, digital platforms, and communication methods are accessible to everyone, regardless of their abilities.



Wheelchair
ramps



Accessible
websites





OPEN DIALOGUE AND COMMUNICATION

Create a safe space where all employees feel comfortable sharing their experiences, challenges, and suggestions without fear of retribution.

Establish an
ERG

Create a town
hall series





ACCOMMODATION AND FLEXIBILITY

Provide reasonable accommodations and flexible work arrangements to meet the unique needs of each employee.

Offer remote work options

Specialized equipment





EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Educate employees and management about diversity, equity, and inclusion, including the specific needs and challenges faced by disabled workers.

Unconscious bias training

Google is your friend





QUESTIONS?

Really, it's okay to ask.

HOW TO FIND US



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THANK YOU



Download key
takeaways from
today's
presentation.

Now, go be great!