

Engaging with Respect: making communications accessible

A Strengths Based Learning Approach

What is Strengths Based Learning?

Do you prefer to learn by watching, listening or reading? If you have a preference or like to work with different modes of learning, the choice is yours. This workbook works to your strengths and helps you navigate your learning. You can review the learning assets available, choose your preferred mode or modes of learning, engage with the learning and finally spend some time to note down your reflections.

What to Do

1. Explore the list of learning activities.
2. Select at least one or more modes of learning to meet the expected **learning outcomes** for each topic.
3. Complete your learning at your own pace, as long as all three topics are complete within 90 days of commencement.
4. Reflect while you learn, noting that you can use this workbook in the 'real world' too.

How Do I Begin

Move to the next slide to begin with a self-reflection exercise that will help you assess how best you can connect with the learning. Then, proceed to view the three topics covered in the Engaging with Respect learning module and complete them in sequential order.

If you feel stuck or need support, please raise a support ticket with Frontline Learning [here](#)

Welcome to Engaging with Respect at the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)

To enable every NDIA frontline staff member to consistently communicate with empathy, respect, inclusion and accessibility; creating safe, person-centred, and culturally responsive interactions with participants and peers that foster trust, understanding, and empowerment.

Learning Objectives

Success Criteria (I will be able to...)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Use respectful speaking, listening, and questioning skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check in with my mindset before conversations• Use plain English• Respond to verbal and non-verbal cues• Apply a trauma-informed approach |
| 2. Use guiding principles as a basis for conversations | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apply guiding principles consistently• Ask open-ended questions• Validate feelings with empathy• Follow through on commitments |
| 3. Adapt to unique differences and preferences in conversations | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask about communication and accessibility needs• Adapt communication for First Nations, CALD, LGBTIQASB+, and people with hidden disabilities• Use interpreters respectfully• Apply inclusive language and pronouns |
| 4. Use avenues to support yourself, peers, and participants | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seek support from peers, leaders, or the Accessibility Hub• Debrief and reflect with colleagues• Access interpreter and communication supports• Use guides and resources to reinforce learning |

Before You Begin

Complete a **Self reflection exercise** to evaluate what it is that makes you learn most effectively. Move to the next page to get started.

Self Reflection Exercise

Before you begin learning, spend a few minutes completing a reflection exercise. The exercise will help you reflect on your role or the people you support. We introduce you to some voices you may recognise, you don't need to remember them all, just notice which ones feel familiar.

Frontline Staff Personas: “Who do I most relate to?”

The Rule-Follower: *“I just want to get it right. Sometimes I stick to the policy because I’m scared of saying the wrong thing.”*

The Rushed Planner: *“I care, I really do. But the calendar’s packed and sometimes I just need to get through the day.”*

The Well-Meaning but Unsure: *“I want to do better, but I don’t always know what respectful or trauma-informed actually sounds like.”*

Reflection: “Which of these voices feels most like you right now? Has that changed over time?”

Participant Personas “Who might I be talking to?”

The Anxious Navigator: *“Everything keeps changing. I just want to be sure I’m doing the right thing. It’s stressful.”*

The Overwhelmed Communicator: *“I nod along, but half the time I don’t understand. I’m too embarrassed to ask again.”*

The Cultural Insider: *“This system feels like it wasn’t made for people like me. The language just doesn’t fit.”*

The Frustrated Veteran: *“I’ve been through this before. I’m tired of explaining myself. Just treat me like a person.”*

Reflection: “When you think about your next conversation, who might you be speaking with?”

Menu

The Engaging with Respect online module includes three key topics. Select a topic to begin learning.

You can expect to spend a total of 60 minutes to complete the online module; however, flexible learning allows you to absorb the information at your own pace, as long as all learning has been completed **within 90 days** of commencement.

The Guiding Principles

This topic takes you through the key principles that can guide the way for every conversation so it can be based on a solid, consistent foundation of respect, appreciation and acknowledgement that 'Everyone is Different'.

Respectful and Inclusive Communication

Here you explore the 'how' in relation to respectful communication and recognise the unique differences and perspectives across a diverse range of individuals and the critical nature of intersectionality, particularly in relation to respect.

Respect for Identity and Support Needs

Respect for all peoples across a range of backgrounds, including cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds and individuals in need of interpreter/translator services.

If you're interested exploring a different mode of learning to reinforce the messages being shared, don't hesitate to do so. You can always go back to your preferred mode of learning at any point in the journey.

Welcome to Topic 1: The Guiding Principles

During this topic, we cover a range of learning - a micro learn, a decision-making framework, a podcast and videos to help you learn about NDIA's guiding principles that form the basis for Engaging with Respect.

Learning Option 1: Multi-modal

[The Guiding Principles \(5 min\)](#)

This micro learn takes you through an interactive experience where you are presented with all modes of learning with nudges along the way to explore more as you go.

If you prefer to pick a different mode, visit the next few resources that cover similar information as standalone, just in time, learning resources.

Learning Option 2: Listen

[A Message From a Trusted Leader \(1 min\)](#)

A trusted leader at NDIA shares an inspiring, motivational message on the real purpose of the guiding principles, how they are intended to work and the impact they can have to everyone working at the NDIA or engaging with the NDIA.

Learning Option 3: Watch/Read

[The Guiding Principles Explained \(2 min\)](#)

This is your opportunity to use the guiding principles to support with decisions you need to make in your everyday work.

Have a look at the interactive infographic where you can progressively learn how to put your intentions into practice. This starts with the right form of questioning, including asking *How? Which? What? When? Would?*

Topic 1: The Guiding Principles (Reflections)

Use the space below to capture your reflections. Remember to Save your notes before you close the workbook. The workbook will need to be saved outside of the Learning Management System as it will be your own personal journal.

<Enter notes here>

Welcome to Topic 2: **Respectful and Inclusive Communication**

As we progress deeper into respectful communication, we unpack the different dimensions of respect and recognition to ensure that the exchange is occurring with the person, not the disability.

Learning Option 1: Multi-modal

[Respectful and Inclusive Communication](#) (5 min)

Similar to topic one, this microlearn takes you through an interactive experience where you are presented with all modes of learning with nudges along the way to explore more as you go.

If you prefer to pick a different mode, visit the next few resources that cover similar information as standalone, just in time, learning resources.

Learning Option 2: Read

[NDIA Allyship Guide: \(3 min\)](#)

Want to go deeper into respectful communication? The NDIA Allyship Guide shares practical ways to be an everyday ally, from using inclusive language and pronouns to challenging bias and standing up for colleagues and participants.

It's a quick reference you can return to whenever you want to check your language or build confidence in creating safe, respectful conversations.

Visit the NDIA Intranet to view the guide: Open the intranet home page and search for "allyship guide". Select "Guide – NDIA Allyship".

Learning Option 3: Read

[Conversation Lens: Respectful Communication in Practice](#) (2 min)

So, what does respectful communication look like in practice? Have a read through a variety of real stories where NDIA staff show how adaptation and needs go hand in hand.

As you read through the short stories, you will be able to quickly see how little changes can bring about big, positive impacts to everyone involved.

Topic 2: Respectful and Inclusive Communication

Learning Option 4: Listen

Max and Liam's Story (5 min)

Watch a video that demonstrates how to adapt your style when multiple aspects of identity are at play.

Max and Liam are two colleagues, and the video beautifully captures how being flexible and responsive can help build trust and inclusion.

It all begins with one big question – *How should I communicate with you?*

Learning Option 5: Listen

A Story of Help-seeking (6 min)

Every person you meet will bring different strengths, needs, and ways of communicating. Unless we ask, we can't know what matters most to them.

This short audio story highlights real examples such as; vision, hearing, movement, and communication. Through the story, reflect on how simple it can be to check in and adapt. Think about:

- *What differences might you notice in your next conversation?*
- *How could you ask about preferences in a respectful way?*
- *What's one small adjustment you could make to help the person feel heard and supported?*

Learning Option 6: Read

Our Culture Values (3 min)

At the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) we have a strong culture of embracing diversity and championing inclusion. In your role, you will work with people from diverse backgrounds and with differing experiences. You may also be from one or many diverse groups yourself.

Familiarise yourself with Our Culture Values by visiting this resource on the NDIA Intranet.

Open the intranet home page and search for "our values". Select "Our values".

Topic 2: Respectful and Inclusive Communication

Learning Option 7: Watch

Vanessa and Alysha's Lived Experience (4 min)

Vanessa and Alysha take you through an example-based explanation to show you just how different communication preferences and supports can make all the difference.

The example expresses:

- A need (e.g. clear, concise communication, interpreter, notes, lip-reading).
- A feeling or frustration (e.g. difficulty with subtlety, frustration at assumptions, exhaustion from concentrating).

Topic 2: **Respectful and Inclusive Communication (Reflections)**

Use the space below to capture your reflections. Remember to Save your notes before you close the workbook. The workbook will need to be saved outside of the Learning Management System as it will be your own personal journal.

<Enter notes here>

Welcome to Topic 3: **Respect for Identity and Support Needs**

This topic is the last in the series where we explore identity, individual preferences and support needs. For many, support needs aren't always visible or obvious. Choose your mode of learning to learn tips and strategies to help you build awareness of how drastically individual needs may differ and what you can do to support.

Learning Option 1: Multi-modal

[Respect for Identity and Support Needs \(5 min\)](#)

Similar to previous topics, this micro learn takes you through an interactive experience where you are presented with all modes of learning with nudges along the way to explore more as you go.

If you prefer to pick a different mode, visit the next few resources that cover similar information as standalone, just in time, learning resources.

Learning Option 2: Watch

[Living With a Disability: What We Wish People Knew \(10 min\)](#)

This video takes you into the lives of multiple people experiencing different forms of disability.

The underlying message is to recognise just how unique every person's needs are and how respect, identity and recognising the need for adjustment and adaptation is absolutely critical when communicating with respect.

Learning Option 3: Listen

[Voices of Lived Experience \(7 min\)](#)

Real people with disability express all the things they just wish everyone knew.

Some share stories of their struggles with reading and writing, others talk about the lack of awareness in others leading to feelings of exclusion, and all of them talk about how making assumptions only takes you one step further from really getting to know the person.

Topic 3: Respect for Identity and Support Needs

Learning Option 4: Read

Disability Navigator (4 min)

The Disability Navigator is a tool you can use to help improve your awareness and understanding of the lived experience of people with disabilities.

How to access the Disability Navigator:

1. From the intranet home page, select the 'Supporting disabilities' dropdown menu
2. Select 'Disability Navigator'.

Take some time now to explore the different disability snapshots available in the Disability Navigator.

Learning Option 5: Watch/Read

Book an Interpreter (2 min)

One of the tasks you'll need to know how to do is to book an interpreter if a participant requests this communication method. Fortunately, there is plenty of information available in the Practice Guides (and on the Accessibility Hub) to assist you.

How to book an interpreter:

1. Open the intranet home page and search for "booking an interpreter".
2. Select "Booking an interpreter" from the search results.

Learning Option 6:

Pronouns: Pride in Diversity (5 min)

A 30-min training on pronouns is available on the NDIA Intranet. We encourage you to spend a maximum of 5 minutes watching the resource and saving it for future reference. It covers:

- What personal pronouns are, and the different types of pronouns
- Why organisations may focus on pronouns and other inclusive language to support trans and gender diverse people
- How to use different pronouns to support an inclusive culture
- How to correct yourself and others if a mistake is made.

Open the intranet home page and search for "pronouns". Select "LGBTIQASB+ 101" in the search results. Then select "Pride in Diversity Pronouns Training (external video)" from the Additional resources section of the page.

Topic 3: Respect for Identity and Support Needs (Reflections)

Use the space below to capture your reflections. Remember to Save your notes before you close the workbook. The workbook will need to be saved outside of the Learning Management System as it will be your own personal journal.

Reflection question: *How would you ask about needs respectfully?*

<Enter notes here>

Thank You: Engaging with Respect at NDIA

Congratulations on completing this learning experience. We hope you now feel more confident, informed, and supported to engage in respectful, inclusive and empowering conversations with peers and NDIA participants.

Re-visit the **Self reflection**

exercise to check in with how you feel after this learning and consider how you'll carry these skills into your everyday conversations.

You should be able to:

- Use respectful speaking, listening, and questioning skills
- Apply the guiding principles as a basis for conversations
- Adapt to unique differences and preferences in conversations
- Use supports and resources for yourself, peers and participants.

Self Reflection Exercise

Now that you have reached the end of your learning experience, spend a few minutes re-doing your self-reflection reflection. Think about who you most related to at the start of this journey, how are you feeling now? Remember to take notes and share them with a leader, mentor or coach at NDIA.

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Thank You

Finish Learning