

**The Foundation:
The Principles of Relaxed Performance**



Language

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General Terms to Avoid	Respectful and Positive
<p>The handicapped The disabled</p>	<p>People with disabilities, disabled people People living with a disability The disability community</p>
<p>Physically Challenged Intellectually Challenged</p>	<p>A person with a physical disability A person with an intellectual or developmental disability</p>
<p>Afflicted with... MS Suffers from... muscular dystrophy Lupus Sufferer Stricken with multiple disabilities. Victim of... polio Invalid (the literal meaning of the word is not valid) Words like “stricken,” “afflicted,” and “victim,” imply helplessness and sensationalize a person’s disability.</p>	<p>Person who has multiple sclerosis He has muscular dystrophy. Person with lupus Person with multiple disabilities A person who had polio Someone living with arthritis</p>
<p>Birth Defect Congenital Defect Deformity</p>	<p>Person with a disability from birth e.g. He is blind from birth. She has a congenital disability. He has had a disability since birth. He was born with a disability. Person with a congenital disability</p>

Language, continued

<p>Disabled Parking, Handicap Parking Handicapped bathroom stall, rooms Disabled seating</p>	<p>Accessible Parking Accessible Bathroom, Accessible Rooms Accessible seating Seating for viewers in wheelchairs</p>
<p>Special needs Special “travel tours”</p>	<p>Adaptive needs Accommodations for individuals with disabilities Tours for people with disabilities</p>
<p>Is non-verbal</p>	<p>Communicates with a device or eyes A person who does not speak A person who has a speech disorder</p>
<p>A normal person, healthy This implies that a person with a disability is not normal, healthy</p>	<p>A person who is able-bodied A person who does not have a disability</p>
<p>The institutionalized The infirmed</p>	<p>People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility</p>
<p>Mobility disabilities – words to avoid</p>	<p>Mobility disabilities – words to use</p>
<p>Confined to a wheelchair Using a wheelchair or scooter provides independent mobility not confinement. Girl in a wheelchair Quadriplegic, Paraplegic Spastic, Spaz</p>	<p>Wheelchair user Person who uses a wheelchair or a scooter Refer to the girl by name Person who has quadriplegia She has paraplegia. Person who has cerebral palsy</p>
<p>Cripple Lame</p>	<p>Person who uses a mobility aid e.g. crutches or a leg brace Person who walks with a limp</p>
<p>Dwarf Midget, Vertically challenged</p>	<p>Someone of short stature Little person</p>
<p>Epileptic Fits or Spells</p>	<p>Person with Epilepsy Person with a seizure disorder Seizures</p>

Stutterer	Person who stutters
Visual disabilities – words to avoid	Visual disabilities – words to use
The blind The blind writer The visually impaired He is visually impaired.	People who are blind The writer who is blind People with vision loss He is partially sighted. She has low vision. He has limited vision. She is visually restricted. People of varying visual abilities Many people have varying degrees of vision loss while others are blind
Hearing disabilities – words to avoid	Hearing disabilities – words to use
Deaf mute Deaf and dumb	A person who can neither hear nor speak The Deaf Deaf Person who is deaf A person who is medically deaf but who does not necessarily identify with the deaf community Deaf with capital D People who are medically deaf and identify as part of the Deaf community. Their preferred mode of communication is Sign language Manual deaf, Signing deaf A deaf person whose preferred mode of communication is Sign language Oral deaf A deaf person whose preferred mode of communication is verbal and auditory and/or lip-reading, although they can sign Deafened A person who becomes deaf, perhaps later in life
Hearing impaired	A person who is hard of hearing A person with hearing loss A person with partial hearing loss A person who is partially deaf

The deaf-blind The deaf-blind woman	People who are deaf and blind The woman who is deaf-blind
Intellectual or learning disabilities –words to avoid	Intellectual disabilities – words to use
Downs, Mongoloid, Mongolism	A person with Down Syndrome
Learning disabled, Learning disordered	A person with a learning disability A person with a cognitive disability
Mentally retarded, Retarded, Retard Mentally Handicapped, Feeble Minded, Special Slow, Imbecile, Moron, Backward, Simple	Person with an intellectual disability Person with a developmental disability
Autistic	Person with autism A person with Autism Spectrum Disorder
Brain-Damaged Vegetative	A person with brain damage Person in a coma Person who is comatose Person who is non-responsive
Psychological or Emotional Disabilities Words to Avoid	Psychological or Emotional Disabilities Words to Use
Mental, Mental patient Psychotic Unsound mind Insane Schizo, Schizophrenic Neurotic Psycho, Loonies Wacko Nuts Crazy Drives me nuts	A person with a mental health illness A person with a psychiatric disability A person with a psychosocial disability A person with a mental health disability A person with schizophrenia A person with a mood disorder e.g. A person with bipolar disorder A person with a personality disorder e.g. A person with anti-social behavior A person with an anxiety disorder e.g. A person with an obsessive-compulsive disorder

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Glossary

Relaxed Performances:

Relaxed performances were initially designed to make theatre spaces more comfortable and welcoming to audience members with autism spectrum disorders, sensory and communication disorders or learning disabilities. Other audience members who benefit from Relaxed Performances include parents with toddlers, people with Tourette's syndrome, people who experience anxiety or people who are not comfortable with the conventions of a traditional theatre setting.

The term 'Relaxed' is used as it is more inclusive, than the also used "sensory-friendly" and "autism-friendly" performances.

Sensory-Friendly / Autism-Friendly performances:

Sensory-Friendly / Autism-Friendly performance will use the same basic premises (a relaxed attitude to noise & movement, and small changes to the sound levels and some lighting effects in the show). The term is often used for children shows.

Extra live performances:

Also similar in principle to Relaxed Performances, Extra live performance tends to involve the audience a bit more in the participation of the show. In Jess Thom's terms, it has "a more positive term that's likely to intrigue people and prompt them to find out more, and it emphasises the potential benefit to the whole audience – that everyone gets 'extra' from such performances."

Source: Article by Jess Thom, "Relaxed' vs. 'Extra Live", www.touretteshero.com

Ableism

The term ableism is the equivalent of terms such as "sexism," "racism," and "homophobia." Ableism discriminates that people with disabilities should have to adjust to the "normal, nondisabled" world, rather than seeing "normal" as a world where everyone can participate and belong.

Accessibility and Inclusion Manager, Accessibility Service Specialist, Access Coordinator, Accessibility Ambassador Access Usher, Access Customer

Person who coordinates or manages accessibility for a business, or

Ushers who assist patrons with disabilities from the entrance to their seats, or

A customer with a disability

Glossary, continued

Accessible route

A continuous, level, smooth, hard surface pathway that follows building codes, provincial legislation and municipality regulations and guidelines

Adaptive clothing

Fashions specifically developed for the sitting position of a wheelchair user

Adaptive dance company

Physically integrated dance
Dance performed by people with and without disabilities together on the same stage as part of the same piece of choreography

Age in place

Accessible features are built into a dwelling so residents can stay in their home as they age.

Audio description, Audio description - live theatre Interpretive performances, Audio described tours - art galleries and museums, Descriptive dialogue

- Added commentary offering visual description for people who are blind or partially sighted, used in TV shows, movies, theatre performances and sporting events
- A narrator describes the colors, setting, costumes, and body language used in live productions.
- Vivid, succinct audio descriptions of paintings and sculptures, prompting tactile interaction with exhibit models

Companion seat

An extra seat or seats designated for friends and family beside an accessible seat

Complete Streets

A Complete Street is designed for all ages, abilities, and modes of travel.

Crip (“Crippling” the Arts)

An activist/artist reclamation of the previously oppressive, derogatory term “cripple”. The word “Crip” is meant to expose how disability and difference can disrupt the everyday in creative, productive ways.

Curb to seat service

Service offering assistance to a person from the entrance of a building to their seat

Diversability

This describes the wide range of human abilities that manifest differently in different people.

Extra abled

The opposite of “dis” abled, “extra” abled refers to acquiring more abilities as a result of having a disability.

Exclusion

In the context of disability, exclusion happens when a person with a disability is ignored or not given an opportunity to participate in a life activity, due to social, structural or systemic barriers.

Includification

Accessible gaming
This refers to the accessibility of video games.

Inclusion

Inclusion in terms of disability, means taking action to involve and welcome people with disabilities in everyday activities and ensuring they have ways to participate that accommodate their needs.

Inspiration Porn

This describes instances where someone with a disability is called “heroic” or “inspirational” not because they have done something truly remarkable, but because they are living a regular life with a disability.

Glossary, continued

Intersectionality

A description of many overlapping identities and related systems of discrimination (such as ableism, racism and sexism) that combine, overlap, and intersect in the experiences of marginalized people or groups.

Invisible disabilities

InvisAbilities

Invisible Disabilities is an umbrella term capturing a whole spectrum of disabilities that are not evident. Learning disabilities, brain injuries, and mental illnesses are some examples.

Medically complex

Highly evolved disabilities
Severe and/or multiple disabilities

Mobility devices

Mobility assistive device

This includes scooters, wheelchairs, walking canes, crutches, walkers and other similar equipment designed to aid individuals with mobility limitations to move between locations.

Mobility chair, power chair, beach wheelchair, freewheel

Freewheel is a wheelchair equipped with a third wheel, used for traveling over rough terrain.
Different types of wheelchairs

People First

Acknowledging the personhood of individuals before their disability (e.g. “people with disabilities”, “person who uses a wheelchair”, “person with cerebral palsy”, “person has a physical disability” etc.).

Seated individual

Seated client

Sitting view

Person in a wheelchair
Perspective from viewers in wheelchairs

Service animal

Trained animals such as dogs, ferrets, monkeys and rabbits, providing services to people with disabilities

Stigma

Underlying stigma are negative perceptions or attitudes about disability that are based on outdated and incorrect assumptions.

Temporarily able-bodied (TAB)

Nondisabled

A term that highlights if we live long enough, everyone experiences disability at some point in their lives.

Appropriate term for people without disabilities.

The social model of disability

The social model of disability identifies the systemic barriers and negative attitudes that exclude people with disabilities.

The medical model of disability

The medical model focuses on curing and managing a disability.

Universal Design

Inclusive Design

Universal design is based on principles that produce buildings, products and environments inherently accessible to older people, people with disabilities and people without disabilities.

Visitability

Visitability is an affordable, sustainable and inclusive design approach to integrating basic accessibility features into all newly built homes and housing.

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The Foundation: Checklist

Organizationally:

- Environmental audit of your facilities / venues
- Clear booking arrangements
- Box office ticketing policies and seating plan
- Feedback mechanism
- Front of house policies and staff training
- Accessible marketing material and web content
- Keep up to date on language and concepts

Performance-Specific:

- Performance audit
- Artist Negotiation / Buy In

Preparatory Materials:

- Visual Story development & preparation
- Familiarization Visits
- Promotion / Media Events
- Partnerships with relevant organizations
- Travel and parking guidelines

At the show:

- Prepared Staff and Artists
- Welcome speech detailing what RPs are
- Chill Out Space
- Clear Signage
- Feedback Area
- Pre-performance introduction
- Post-performance Q&A

Some typical performance adjustments for Relaxed Performance:

- Doors remain open to the lobby/foyer
- Lighting in audience remains on (though often slightly dimmed)
- Production lighting effects slowed, or given less intensity
- Production sound effects slightly reduced
- Screaming or shouting reduced in volume, intensity or length
- Visual effects (i.e. stage haze) reconsidered, and well communicated
- Surprising actions (i.e. entrances/exits/violence/sexuality/explosions) adjusted
- Actors return to stage to say goodbye to the crowd as themselves (not their characters)

The Foundation: Sample workplan

As far in advance as possible:

- Engage appropriate colleagues in a conversation about feasibility of developing RPs
- Select the production that will feature RP and date/time
- Create RP advisory group
- Identify alternative ticketing process, if needed
- Discuss marketing plan and determine how patrons will identify Relaxed Performances on your website and printed material
- Provide FOH staff, volunteers, box office and security staff education about the show, house modifications and knowledge of individuals with sensory, cognitive, and learning disabilities

4 months prior to the show:

Convene an advisory group to develop plan and tasks for RP (which materials to create, seating plan, training and preview dates)

2-3 months prior to the show (and on-going):

- Continue advertising and marketing of performance
- Identify needs, potential outcomes, and create evaluation content and process
- Create preparation materials: visual story

The Foundation: Workplan continued

1 month prior to the show:

- Preview performance show (discuss performance with creative team and house modifications with technicians and staff)
- Discuss performer preparations and potential performance rehearsal with modifications
- Disseminate preparation materials to families, teachers, or schools

1-2 weeks prior to the show:

Offer familiarization visit opportunities
Disseminate and collect pre-evaluation data (online or paper evaluations)
FOH staff, volunteers, box office and security staff training refresher

The Foundation: Workplan

As far in advance as possible:

4 months prior to the show:

2-3 months prior to the show (and on-going):

The Foundation: Workplan continued

1 month prior to the show:

1-2 weeks prior to the show:

Relaxed Performance Notes

General comments:

Example of areas to cover in this section (where applicable and not limited to)

Age Restrictions/Guidance:

Seating:

Exit and entrances:

Front of House:

Pre-show & Interval observations:

Environmental factors:

House lights:

Visual Story:

**Relaxed Performance Notes,
continued**

Sound:

Lights:

Action:

Visual Story: Checklist

For venues:

- Cover page: Venue name, image, address, hours of operation, main contact name and phone number
- How to get there: transport (bus, subway, taxi, parking options, drop off wheel trans, bike
- Entrance - Main space – Lobby
- Washrooms – accessible washrooms
- Where to get your tickets?
- Staff – pictures and titles
- Theatre space – Performance Hall – what does it look like on the night of the show? Flashing lights in the foyer?
- Chill-out space
- Restaurant – Giftshop
- Lobby when leaving the hall
- Feedback and comments: main contact name, phone number

For shows:

- Cover page: Show title, date, venue name, address, hours of operation for box office, main contact name and phone number
- Description of a Relaxed Performance
- Performance time – intermissions
- Images of the set
- Images of the cast in characters and headshots
- Clear description of the show – About the story
- Things to look out for (sound; lights; content)
- Feedback and comments: main contact name, phone number



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