

Module 2



LU 8 - Communication with people with disabilities and other access requirements; accessible tourism etiquette

Games Without Barriers project Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union
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LU Objectives:

1. To present correct ways to communicate
2. To avoid pitfalls and embarrassing situations
3. To help service providers to be more confident in their interactions with the Customer





General considerations

A correct communication system in providing Tourism Services requires:

- A condition of equality between the two elements of the relationship (Customer and service provider)
- Human capacity for empathy and understanding
- In depth knowledge of every possible requirement of the Customer
- In depth knowledge of each component of the Tourism Service Chain:
 - of every element of the Tourism Journey planning and fruition
 - of every internal element of the service offered





Who are they?

A tourist with specific access needs is

“ FIRST OF ALL ” a TOURIST!!!

Someone wishing to go on holidays in a
destination of

HIS CHOICE

for his next vacations.

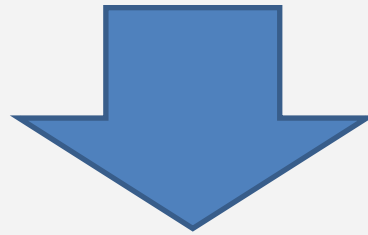




Who are they?

Customers with disabilities:

- Are NOT a segment of their own
- Have purchasing habits like all other tourists, even if



measured through the «specific requirements» of each person being met





Who are Service providers?

Any organisation public or private, manager or agent directly acting in the Tourism industry, in every element of the Tourism Service Chain, responsible for the smooth and qualitative delivery of its part of the service towards any Customer



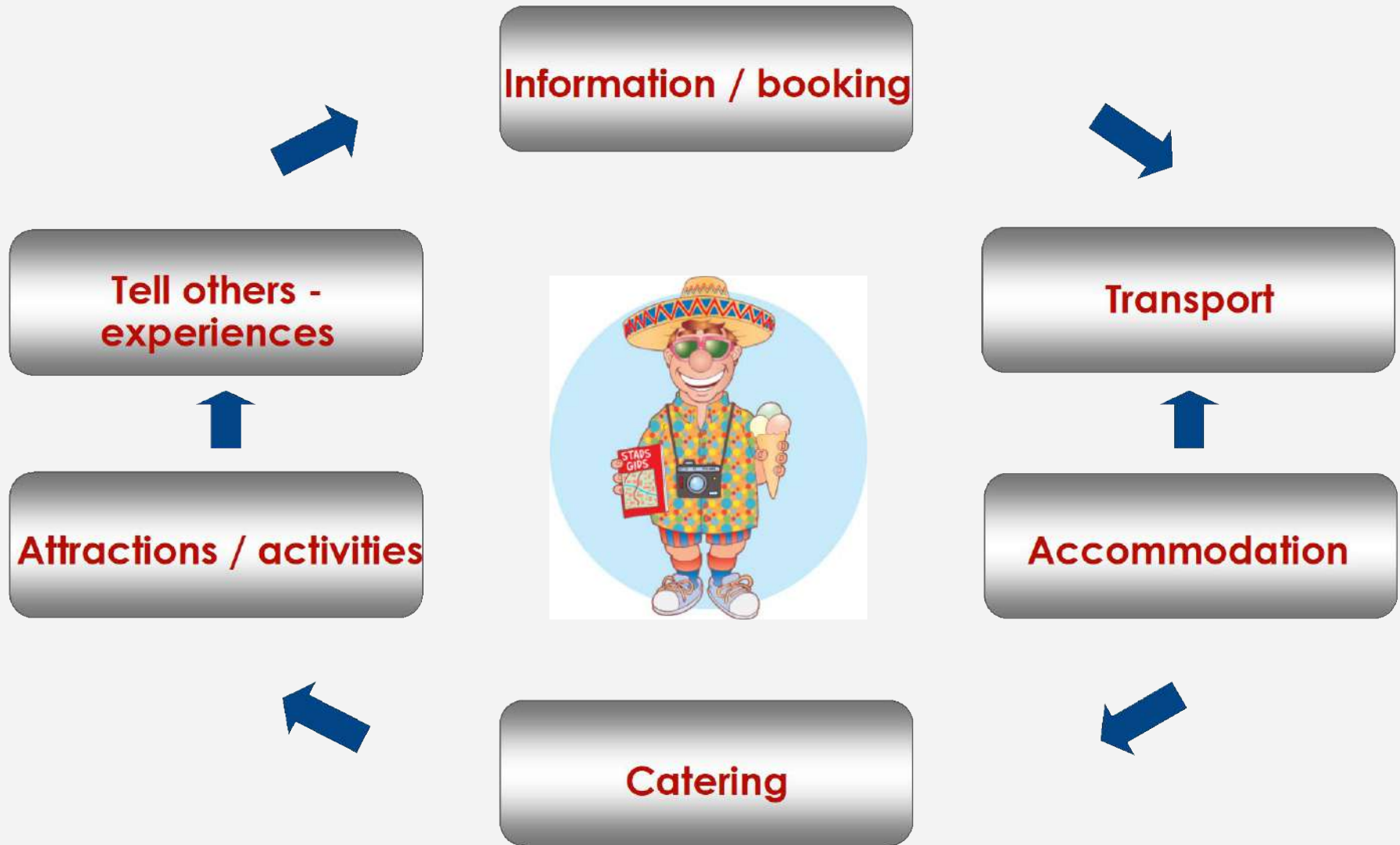


The Tourism Service chain

It is important to recall the concept of the Tourism Service Chain and how the accessibility of each element can influence the Visitors' journey.

All the elements are connected by a logical thread, operational and behavioural, that makes them a whole.







Each element has to guarantee

to each other:

integration

accessibility

expertise

comfort

QUALITY





How to provide and guarantee quality

- The different groups of requirements of Customers with disabilities have already been part of a specific Training unit.
- This Training Unit will examine to what extent those requirements influence the service provided and the related behaviours.





People with reduced mobility - Service

- Provide assistance to carry baggage or heavy items
- Follow the customer's timing
- Provide help to sit down and get up and move for short distances, if the customer is able to manage these movements
- Provide information on the destination, the condition of usability of places they are going to visit and tools to overcome difficulties, the availability of technical aids





People with reduced mobility - Service

- Make any effort to communicate without obstacles (e.g. a reception desk could be too high) and find alternatives (a desk, a sitting place)
- Avoid or reduce situations of discomfort or fatigue
- Offer your help and be prepared to follow the customer's instruction on how to help
- Be prepared to identify the obstacles and intervene
- Let the customer guide you in case of a manoeuvre
- Push the wheelchair gently and be careful
- Be discreet when helping





People with visual impairments- Service

- Introduce yourself and stay close to the customer to be easily identified
- Always tell them if you move away
- Attract their attention by calling by the name or touch gently on the arm
- Provide audio information or, if written, in macro characters or in Braille
- Make yourself understood with the use of words as the guests cannot perceive facial expression or gestures





People with visual impairments- Service

- Be ready to read the information aloud in a normal tone of voice (descriptions, menus, guides)
- If the customer asks to be guided offer your arm and go with him
- Describe the facility interiors precisely, the position of furniture, equipment, bathroom services etc. using spatial references (North/South, clock arrows) in relation to the customer's position
- Indicate if there are steps and if these are up or down
- If accompanied by a service animal, let the animal in at any time and in ALL areas of the facility





Assistance animals

The best known is the Guide Dog, but other animals are being considered that can make up with allergies or phobias towards dogs by part of the users.





Assistance animals

- The guide dog or assistant animal is a working animal, fully trained to behave calmly in any environment.
- It's important not to distract them by patting or giving food.
- Distractions can compromise their ability to support their handler and put them in danger.
- Assistance animals are allowed in all public spaces and on public transport. This right is protected by law.





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People with hearing impairments- Service

- Introduce yourself and explain your role
- When speaking stay in front of the customer, establish eye contact
- Do not have light behind you: this doesn't allow lip reading
- Lip reading is not easy when there are more than 2 people
- Do not speak too fast or too slow. Do not shout. Do not exaggerate your mouth movements. Use facial expressions and gestures
- Reduce noises in the room/area to a minimum





People with hearing impairments- Service

- Use short sentences and clear words
- Repeat the sentence if necessary and make sure the information have been fully understood
- Do not cover your mouth or turn your face
- Choose a quiet area to communicate
- Prepare yourself to longer timings for the dialogue
- Have pen and paper ready at hand
- To demonstrate a mechanism, explain first and then show the functioning





Sign Language

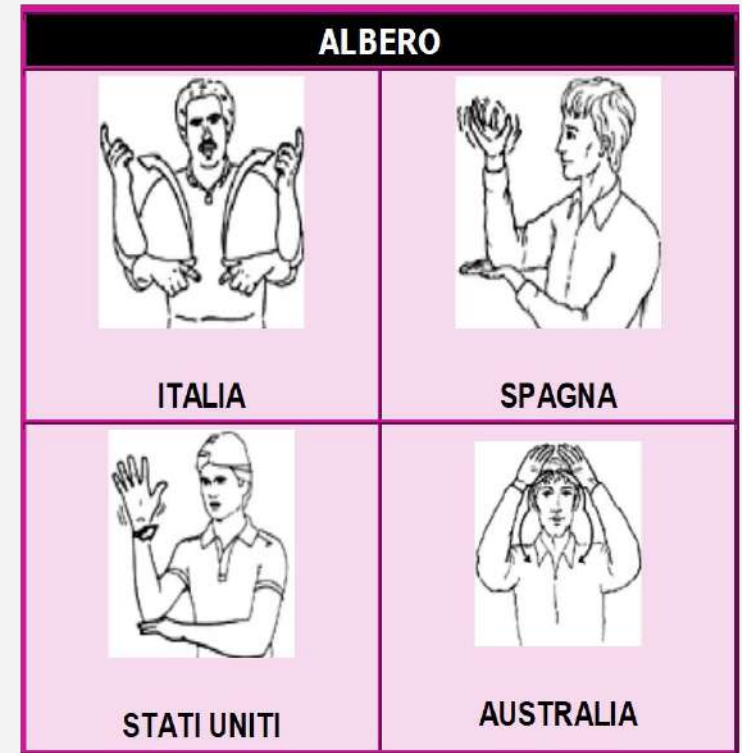
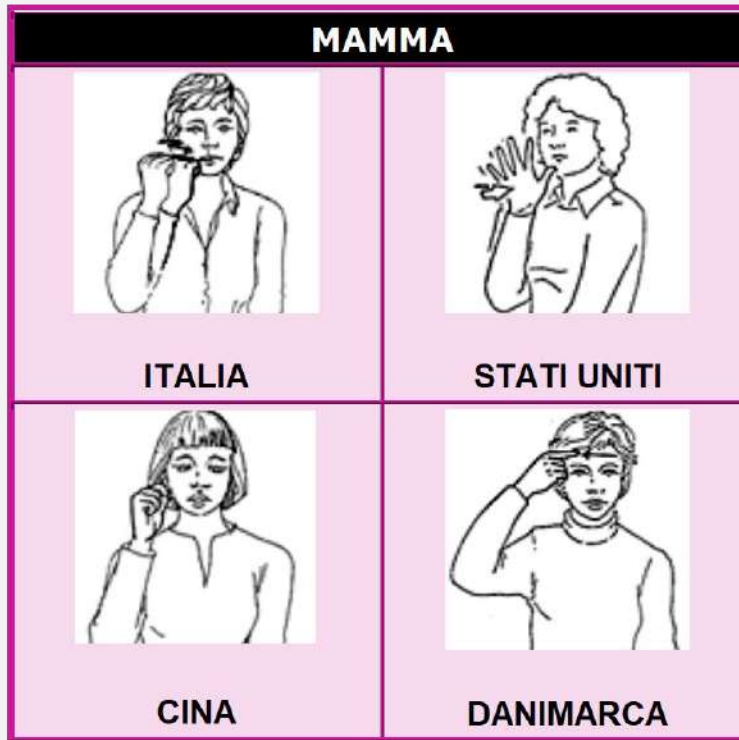
Sign language is a language in itself and is a NATIONAL language:

- LIS in Italy (Lingua italiana dei segni)
- ASL in the USA (American Sign Language)
- BSL in Britain(British Sign Language)
- LSE in Spain (Lengua de Signos Española)
- etc.





Sign Language



MAMMA = MOTHER; ALBERO = TREE





Myths on people with disabilities

- They always need our help!
- Are brave and courageous
- Wheelchair users are chronically ill
- Their lives are totally different than the lives of people without disabilities
- People who are blind acquire a «sixth sense»
- They are more comfortable with «their own kind»
- They are poor customers
- To be disabled makes you different inside
- ...and many more!





Dangerous assumptions

Myths and stereotypes lead us to make wrong and dangerous assumptions which may:

1. Reduce or compromise the quality of the service provided
2. Generate Customers dissatisfaction
3. Create a bad image of the destination/service
4. Influence negatively business results





Hints for a correct Communication

Consider you customer specific requirements and act accordingly:

1. Do not rise your voice with a hearing impaired person: it won't help!
2. Not every visual impaired person knows Braille: be prepared for alternatives!
3. Be prepared to make and repeat simple explanations for a person with a learning difficulty or a mental disability
4. Find a way to speak at eye level with a wheelchair user
5. Treat your customer with respect and dignity





Suggestions to make communication easier

Do not PANIC

Relax!

Speak directly to me

Person first!!!!

Treat me as anybody else

Don't help at any cost

Don't make assumption on what I need

Ask ME first!





Use of the language

- The use of a correct language and the correct words can help to create a situation of mutual understanding and a positive atmosphere.
- Remember you are dealing with a CUSTOMER
- Learn which are the expressions to avoid and consider the «person» first!





Use of the language

- Avoid expressions like handicapped, invalid, crippled, victim, retarded, bound to... etc.
- Better use other terms such as "person with a disability" or with "specific needs" or "requirements" or "person with reduced mobility" or "disabled person"
- Don't feel uncomfortable about using common expressions such as "see you later" with a blind customer.

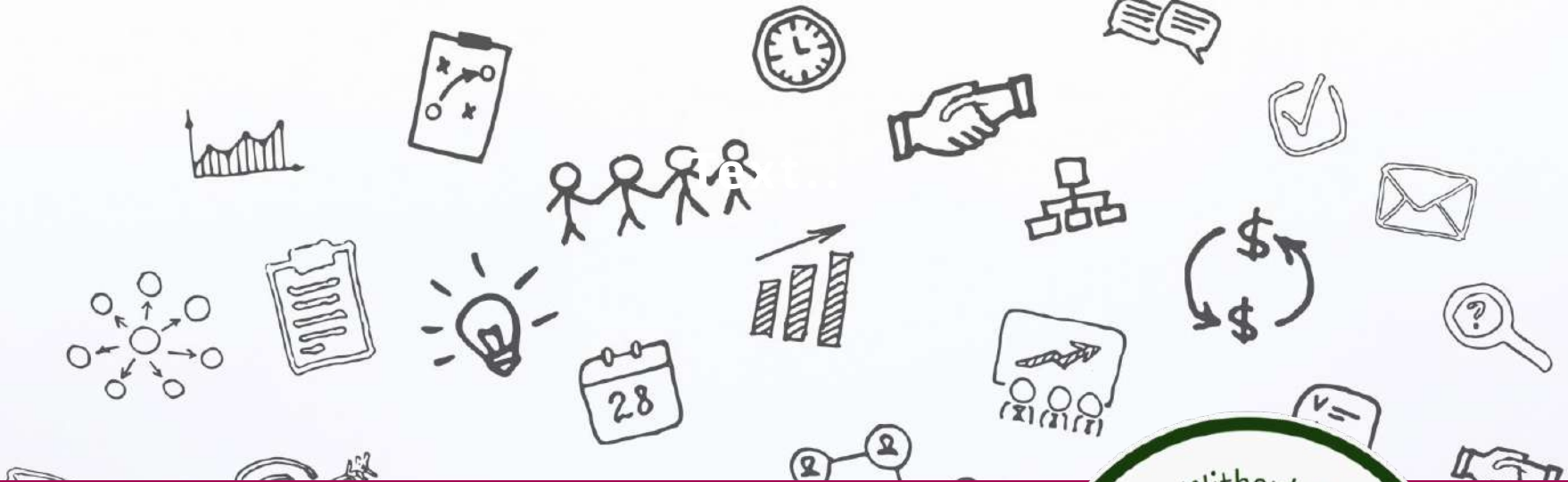




Use of the language

**pay attention to the “pseudo”
politically correct!**
differently able





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