ENERGYSOLUTIONS ARENA

Serving People With Disabilities

The Instructor's Guide

Guide for the Instructor

This instructor guide and training is made to be flexible and allow you to teach with your own personal style. Items that are italicized are optional questions and points that can be covered in the training. Before teaching, read through this guide as you review the slideshow to familiarize yourself with its concepts. Note that the information in this guide is also in the slideshow's notes.

Goals and objectives

- Guest Service employees and Security personnel will use proper language and terminology (e.g. treating them as a person instead of a referring to them as handicapped or other terminology) when interacting with patrons that have disabilities.
- Employees will identify what body language and gestures may be deemed offensive by persons with disabilities. (e.g. leaning against a wheelchair)
- Employees will not ask a patron if they have a disability or refer to the disability of a person unless it is needed in a conversation.
- Employees will direct persons with disabilities to the guest services counter or to the guest services manager when they request assistance. (When they need a wheelchair, listening device or binoculars).
- Employees will offer their assistance to persons with disabilities and wait to help until assistance is needed and requested.
- Employees will identify which situations where they are unable to help a person with disabilities because of insurance and liability issues. (e.g. Can't lift them up out of a chair, can't wheel them to their car off of ESA property, helping them up and down stairs).
- Employees will inform persons with disabilities, that weren't aware that they needed to request accessible seating before the event, how that request can be made.

Before the Training

Necessary Materials

This training is designed to use a combination of PowerPoint and class discussion. To use the PowerPoint portion of the instruction, you will need a projector, speakers and a computer with a copy of Microsoft PowerPoint. The room should be dim enough for the PowerPoint projection to be easily seen and, if possible, enough lighting for ushers to take notes. The PowerPoint is in PPT format, so it will work with both PowerPoint 2007 and earlier versions. The video files are included in the same folder as the presentation and can viewed using the most common media players, such as QuickTime and Windows Media. The video files must remain in the same folder as the PowerPoint file, otherwise the video will not display.

Time

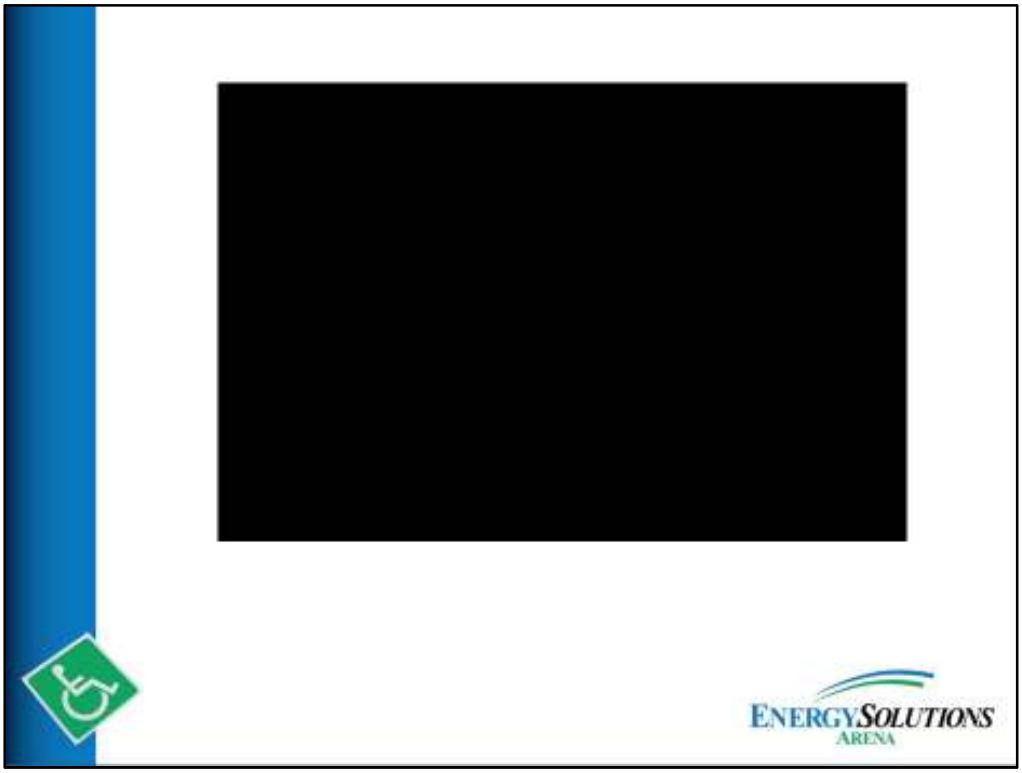
This presentation can be taught as one or two twenty minute sessions. In order to teach the presentation in one, twenty minute session the number of questions would have to be reduced to a bare minimum. Because questions can help clarify confusion and several ushers have valuable experience regarding interacting with persons with disabilities, it is recommended that the training over two sessions. Each training slide contains a links at the bottom for easy navigation to major points in the presentation. If you are running out of time, use these slides quickly move through the instruction.

Welcome everyone to the training and start by explaining the following:

- ESA management wants to make sure people with disabilities are being treated fairly and within the law.
- Ushers are already doing a good job in this area; the purpose of this training is to remind and clarify.
- Some of what will be covered is common sense, but they should pay attention because they might learn something.

1.Ask the audience if any of them have been treated poorly or unfairly and how they felt? Ask what way they would have wished to be treated?

2.Explain that most people with disabilities have certain ways that they would like to be treated that may be different from what you think.



Explain that this is video is an interview of Gordon Richins; an NBA fan who has been to the ESA several times between now and when he moved to Utah in 1988. Here's what he has to say about being accommodated at games.

Note that throughout the training, you'll mention what Gordon has to say about that particular subject.

1. After the video has finished playing ask how Gordon would want to be treated when he attended the Energy Solutions Arena.

Give proper terminology for people with disabilities. The word "handicap" comes from persons with disabilities who held their caps out to beg for money. Although "handicapped" has been considered acceptable and may have been used in the past, it is now considered inappropriate.

If you do not know someones name, the most polite thing to do is to ask them their name after introducing yourself, or use sir or ma'am. Just as you would ask anyone else.

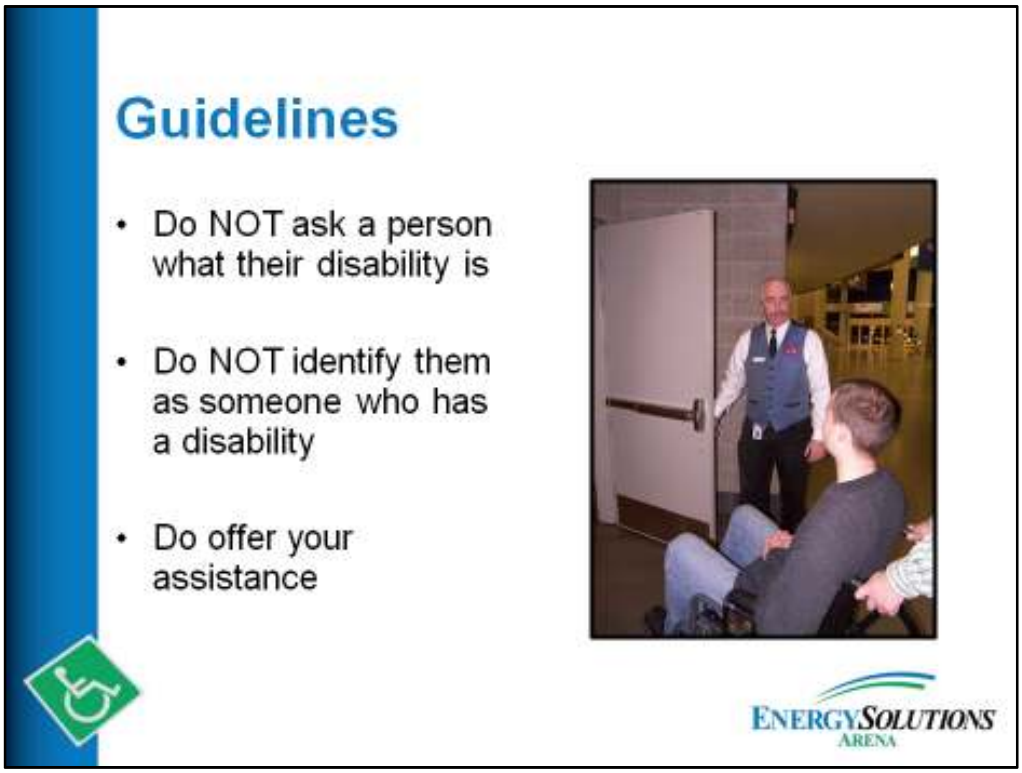
1.Ask if they have a friend or relative that has a disability. If yes, ask them how that person would like to be addressed.
2.Let's suppose that you were involved in a car accident and were suddenly paralyzed from the waist down, how would you want to be treated when attending a Jazz game?

Explain to the learners these words should be avoided even if said politely or with good intent.

Instead of disabled use person with a disability, instead of fat or obese use person of size. Instead of "midget" use "person of short stature." Instead of using retarded use person with a mental impairment etc. But as a general rule don't even focus on their disability just treat them like any other non-disabled person that you may encounter.

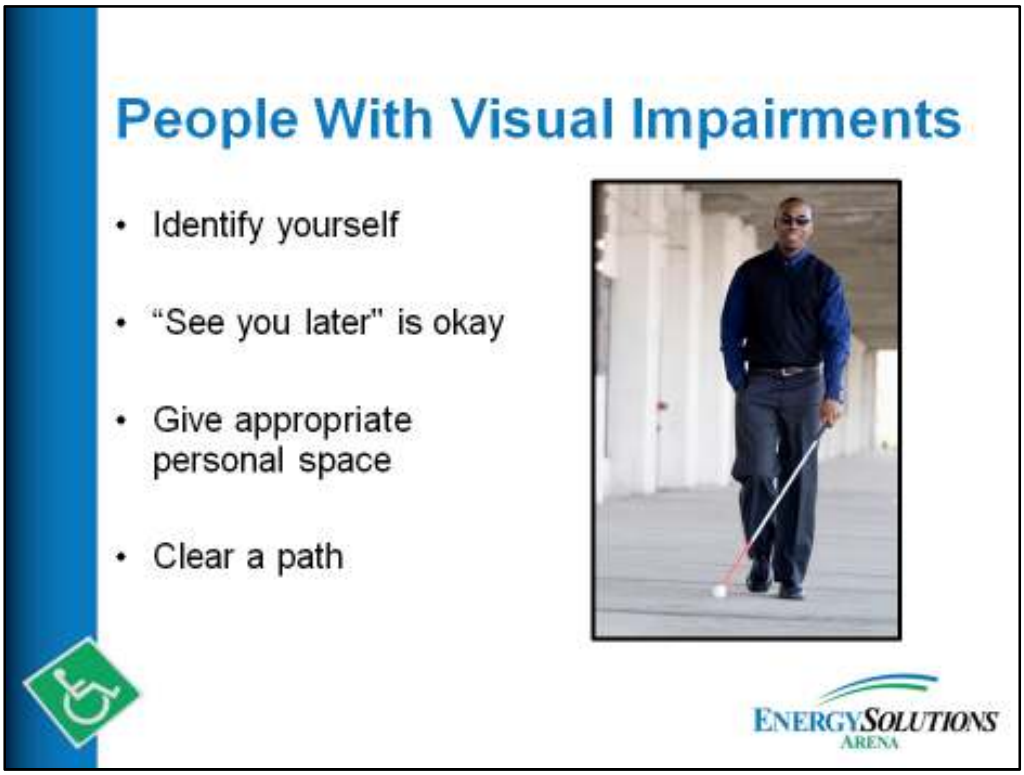
Gordon says 'appropriate distance' for a person with a disability is the same distance an usher would give a person without a wheelchair. A person's appropriate distance should be measured from the wheelchair rather than their body.

Explain that most people prefer to have a conversation at eye-level and prefer to be treated like an adult. These are simple guidelines but they are still violated by many who don't know how to interact with people with disabilities.



Tell the ushers that they should never ask a person what their disability is. Instead, they should ask "Is there anything I can help you with?" If they identify themselves as having a particular disability, then it is acceptable to say "Since you have a visual impairment maybe you would like to rent some binoculars." "Is there anything I can help you with?" is one of the most important questions that you can ask, because it does not point out any disabilities that the person has, yet it lets you to know if they need assistance. If you know the patron's name, then it is best to refer to them by name. Gordon says "The bottom line is an offer of help opens a line of communication."

1. Explain to the ushers that you will now be talking about different types of disabilities that people have and how to interact with people with these disabilities.



Explain to the ushers that they should introduce themselves to people with visual impairments first, so they know who is addressing them. Ushers should be sure to give persons with visual impairments the same space they would give someone who has full sight, and more space to those who are using service animals such as a guide dog. Gordon says "If there is an immovable object in front of a person with a visual impairment, tell the person what it is and how to get around it." It is not disrespectful of their abilities to tell them about obstacles.

Instruct the ushers that when they need to get the attention of a person with a hearing impairment, it is appropriate to tap them on the shoulder. Note that it is considered rude to look at the interpreter, not the person. Gordon says "I know it is hard to look at the person and not at the interpreter, but it's important, especially when the person is able to read lips. You may want to ask the person if they can read lips, and if they want them to talk slower."

Emphasize that ushers should not interrupt patrons. While events may be busy it is important that each patron feel like their needs are being met. Gordon says "If you don't understand, ask if they could repeat. Sometimes people have a favored way of communicating, such as a speech board or writing. You may want to ask what their preferred method of communication is."

Ask "Do you think the usher in the picture is appropriately addressing the person in the wheelchair?

Explain to the ushers that people using wheelchairs typically have to look up to see signs and interact with other people. Therefore, they appreciate being able to converse with people at eye-level. Explain to the ushers that if it's an appropriate time, such as an extended conversation, it is acceptable to squat down with your knees to reach eye level. Avoid simply leaning down, as that can look condescending. If an usher is unable to bend down with their knees, tell them not to worry about it; it's simply an "extra-mile" courtesy.

That helps a person in a wheelchair so that they don't have to crane their neck to look at you.

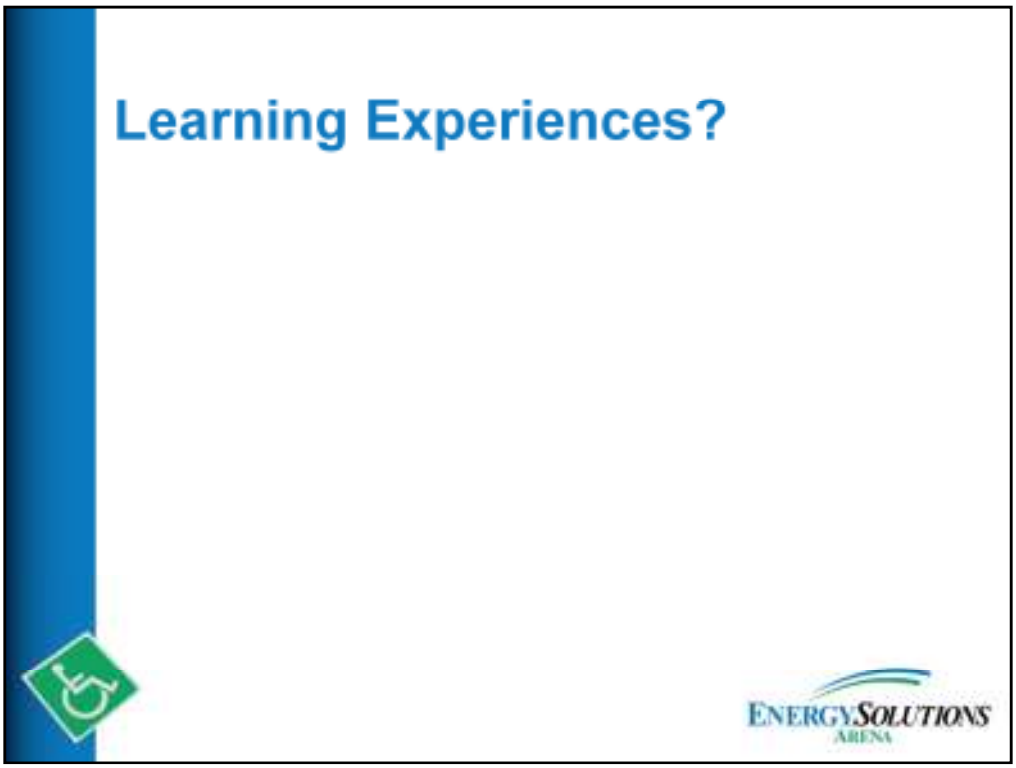
Make sure you don't act condescending to people using wheelchairs. Gordon says, "I don't mind if people lean on my wheelchair, but some might. It's better to play it safe and avoid doing it."

Ask "Why do you think leaning on a wheelchair might be offensive?"

Note some consider their wheelchair an extension of the person's body, so just as ushers wouldn't lean on a patron's shoulder, ushers shouldn't lean on wheelchairs.

Explain to the ushers that the best thing to ask when approaching a person with a disability is, "Is there anything I can help you with?" If the answer is yes, then ask what you can do. If the answer is no, then you don't need to do anything. Instruct the ushers that they are not required to excessively accommodate a person with a disability, but it is okay to accommodate when you can within the limits of liability (eg. getting drinks and food).

Ask ushers for stories about positive interactions they've had with people with disabilities while working at the ESA. What did they do to make it a positive experience for the patron? What advice would you give others in interacting with a person with a disability?



Ask ushers for stories when they may not have interacted positively with people with disabilities. Also ask for stories when they have had an issue or problem working with someone with a disability. What did they do to resolve the situation? What could they have done better? Make sure ushers understand they will not be penalized for sharing. What did they do that they wish they hadn't? What advice would they give others to make sure that this does not happen again?

Note that the wheelchairs do not stay with the patron, but are only for transporting them to and from their seat.

Liability Issues

- Patrons should not be physically assisted beyond making seating and wheelchair assistance available
- If someone needs assistance going down stairs, walk in front of them but do NOT carry, or physically help them down the stairs

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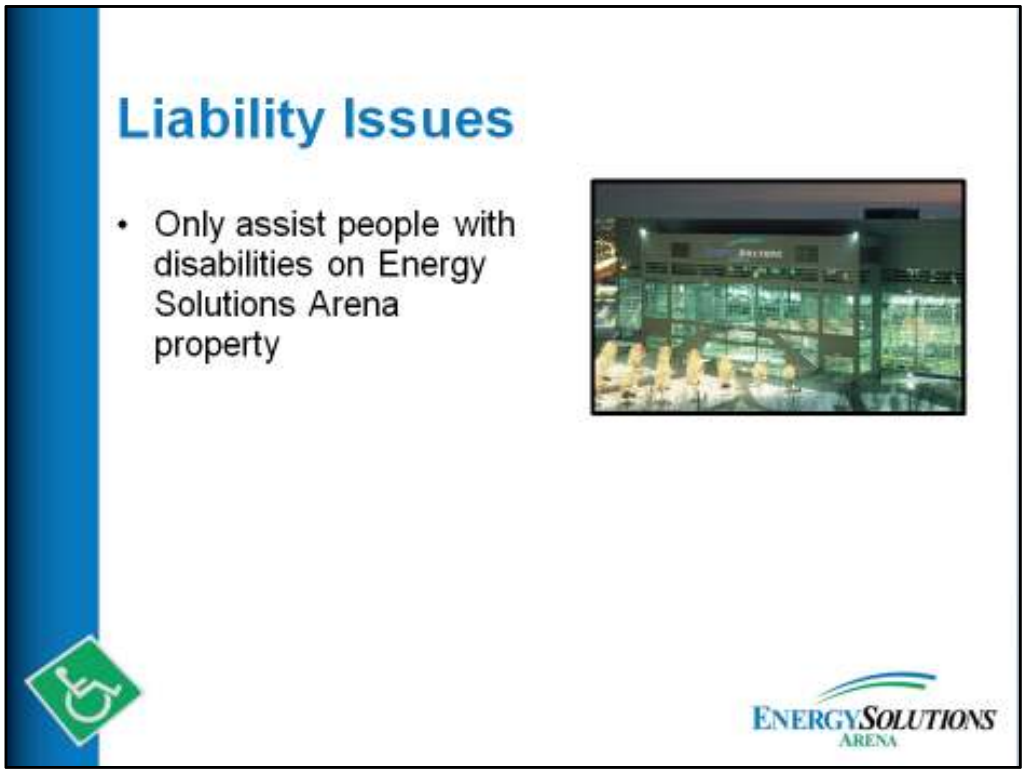
Make sure the ushers understand that they are not to assist patrons in and out of wheelchairs.

Tell the ushers that EMT services should only assist in medical emergencies, ushers should help patrons to their seat.



Energy Solutions property just goes to the curb. It does not include the parking lot, the gateway or the Trax station. It is a good idea to explain this to people as you assist them so they will not have any surprises.

Explain to the ushers that accessible seating sells quickly for popular events such as Jazz playoff games.

Explain that some patrons don't know how to get accessible seating. Instruct the ushers that they should inform patrons either to use the "request accessible seating" option on the Ticketmaster website or call the Ticket Office. Many people do not know how to request accessible seating before the event. If a person shows up without an accessible seating ticket, it may be a good idea to tell them how they can obtain accessible seating for the next time.

ADA Law

- Service animal admittance is required to all places available to regular customers
- Help with accommodations when you are able to do so

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The ADA says that places of business must make certain accommodations. The best way to tell if an animal is a service animal is to ask the person who is using the animal for assistance. If they say that the animal is a service animal then let it in. Again, note that excessive accommodation is not required. Help out when you can.

This slide can be done as a role play or you can just read one or all of the scenarios to the ushers. *Go through on or all of the following stories and ask ushers, "What would you do in this situation?" Try to encourage the discussion about this question and discuss the different points of view that ushers may have on how to handle this situation.*

Scenario 1:
"While working in the accessible seating area a person using a wheelchair approaches you. You check their ticket, they should be sitting at another part of the stadium. They claim that they didn't know that they didn't know how to request accessible seating. Also that the usher in their area they went to sent them here saying that there was room in the accessible seating area. When they discover that they are unable to get the seats they threaten to sue the Utah Jazz for not having enough seats if they won't get one."

Scenario 2:
"You are working in an upper bowl portal and a person in a wheelchair comes to you. Your area doesn't have accessible seating what do you tell them?

Scenario 3:
"A person is seated in the accessible seating area that doesn't appear to have a disability, someone in a wheelchair comes hoping to get an accessible seat what do you do?"

If a Person Requests Accessible Seating

- Find out what seat their ticket specifies
- If the ticket does not specify disabled seating, direct them to guest services or the ticket office
- If the patron is belligerent, contact your supervisor immediately
- If the ticket does specify disabled seating, direct them to their seating

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Explain that a small minority of people with disabilities will try to intimidate ushers and claim that they need excessive accommodation for events. Ushers should not promise them excessive accommodation and should contact their supervisor if the patron becomes hostile.

This slide can be done as a role play or you can just read one or all of the scenarios to the ushers.

Go through on or all of the following stories and ask ushers, "What would you do in this situation?" Try to encourage the discussion about this question and discuss the different points of view that ushers may have on how to handle this situation.

Scenario 1:
"A person on crutches comes to up to you. They were told that they could easily get to their seats, however their seats were in the middle of the row and up 10 rows of stairs. They are annoyed and want seats in the lower bowl. When you try to tell them that it just isn't possible they look at you with a puppy dog face and ask really nicely. The seating is filled up because the game is sold out. What do you do?"

Scenario 2:

"A man enters your area and you point his seat out to him. He will have to climb several steps up to get there and begins to do so. He stops abruptly, looks at the main stage area, comes back down to you and asks, 'I have a visibility impairment and cannot see the stage very well, can I be seated closer?'"

If a Person Requests a Closer Seat

- Ask if an assistive device (binoculars, listening devices) would help
  - Assistive devices are located at guest services
  - Do not ask about specifics of the disability
- If the patron refuses, suggest that they can pay the difference for a closer ticket at the ticket office
- If the patron still refuses, contact supervisor immediately

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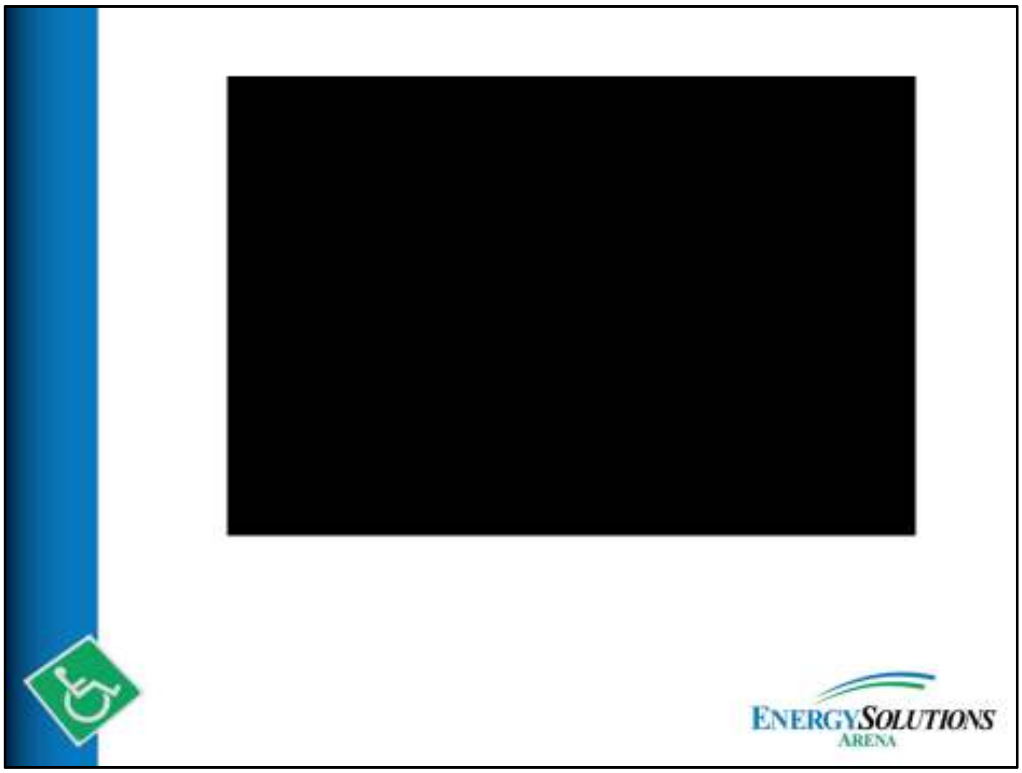
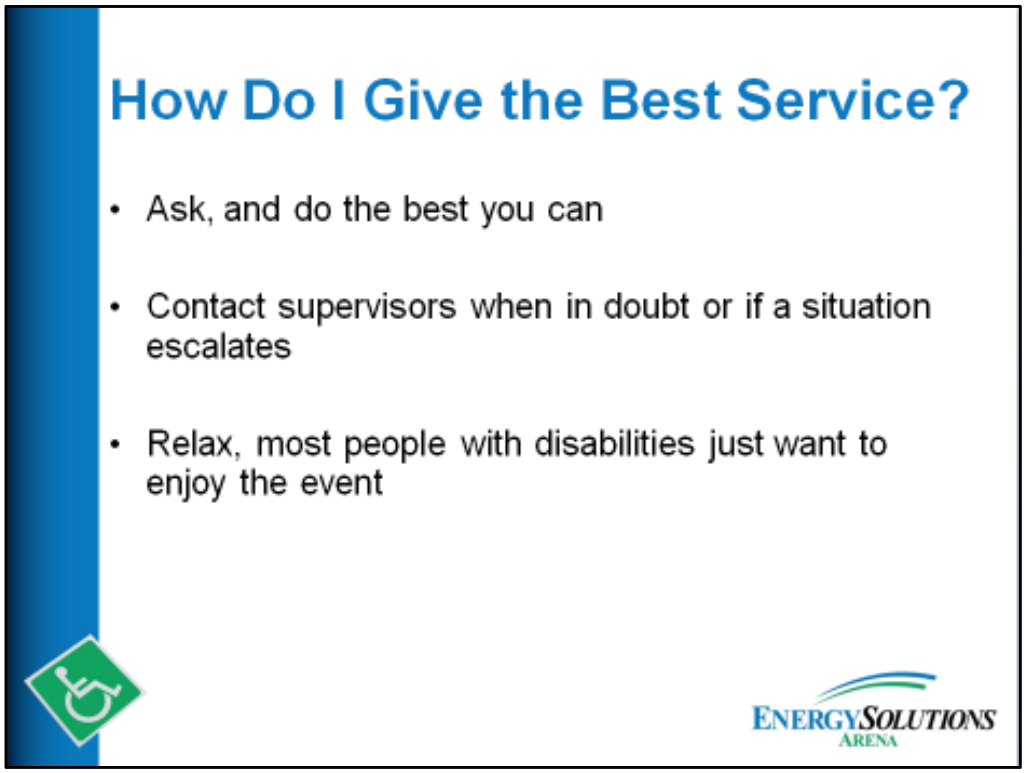
Review policy as outlined on the slides. Gordon says, "Listening devices are courteous, because it can get noisy."

1. *Ask if there any questions about ESA's seating policy.*



In this video Gordon talks about what to do if an usher doesn't know what to do; ask the person with the disability.

1. *Ask what the main point was that Gordon gave and how ushers can best do this.*



Remind ushers that the best thing one can do when encountering a situation is to ask "is there anything I can help you with." If the answer is yes, ask what they can do to help. If the answer is no, then nothing more is needed. Remind ushers to contact a supervisor if they are not sure what to do or if a situation escalates. Explain that most people with disabilities have just come to enjoy the event.

Thank the ushers for attending the training.