I plan to do two things:

1. Discuss how Ernst & Young employs and supports people with disabilities
2. Share our approach to accommodations

Disabilities inclusiveness is a key priority.

- Inclusiveness is among top global priorities
- Core competitive advantage
- Accountability
  - Global Sponsor
  - Americas Inclusiveness Officer
  - Advisory Council
  - Steering Committees
  - Network Leaders

Four keys to successful inclusion of people with disabilities

- Recruit the best talent – in whatever “bodysuit”
- Provide the tools, resources, information, equipment and environment needed to excel
- Plan for career growth
- Educate everyone – not just key groups

Our strategy focuses on environment and culture:

1. Enabling people by providing tools, information, resources, and career support
2. Building awareness and educating so people of all abilities feel included

We have several networks focused on disabilities

AccessAbilities™
- 200 members, with/without disabilities, all ranks, regions
- Focus on firm-wide changes
- Advise on initiatives, create activities to build awareness

Abilities Champions
- By region and functional group
- Improve how EY processes impact people with disabilities

Caregivers Circle; Parents Network
- Knowledge resource and support groups
- External experts run calls; post information on internal sites
We focus on three areas. The first is safety and productivity.

- Emergency evacuation plans, audits, education
- Accommodations consultations
- Technology accessibility – e.g. captioning
- Office accessibility improvements, e.g. electric doors

The second is career development.

- We plan ahead so disability doesn’t limit opportunities
- Career paths
- Performance issues
- Changes in business process
- Flexibility
- We provide support for people with disabilities
- Coaching and mentoring
- Consulting
- Networking internally and externally

The third is education.

- Key groups – recruiters, human resources, managers, trainers, technology staff
- Build awareness through embedding in business group events, communications
- Include in online newsletters, meetings and events
- Include messages and photos in sites and materials
- All our resources made available on an internal site

We use a variety of materials. These include quick reference guides …

and videos that tell stories.

- AccessAbilities video – our people discuss working with disabilities and how each of us can be more inclusive
- AccessAbilities “minutes” – EY people share true stories about working with disabilities that teach what and what not to do

We create handbooks on special topics

Getting support, supporting others offers guidance on non-visible disabilities.

- Explains accommodations
- Discusses disclosure, building relationships
- Addresses concerns of people with disabilities, colleagues, human resources, managers
- Shares real stories and advice
AccessAbilities

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It’s key to understand what accommodations are and are not.

- Employers must reasonably accommodate individuals with known disabilities. Even if no assistance is requested, if we suspect a disability is impacting ability to perform, we must explore accommodations.
- We are required to “engage in an interactive process”.
- Most accommodations that don’t significantly change our business operations would be considered reasonable for a large employers like Ernst & Young.
- Accommodation does not mean different standards of performance, only different ways of working
- Accommodation does not mean changing essential job functions

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Accommodations improve performance and add value to the business.

- A productivity tool, like technology
- An investment in building capabilities, like training
- Requested / implemented by the field; funded and approved by each business unit
- Simple documentation; positive presumption
- AccessAbilities consults with all parties; a collaborative, ongoing process with scheduled check-ins

AccessAbilities

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Accommodations change how work is done – where, when, with what tools or processes.

- Tools and equipment – screen readers, voice to text, ergonomic furniture, electric doors, temperature adjustments
- Location and schedule – telework, office change, adjusting hours, days
- Business processes – professional services like reader, interpreter, proofreader, speech therapist, coach, also added reviews, “restatement” memos, quality checklists, etc.