Understanding Disability, Accessibility and Inclusion

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To achieve disability inclusion within your workplace and within your recruitment practices, **it's essential to have a strong understanding of disability, accessibility and inclusion.**

Disability can be defined in two ways:

The Medical Model Definition of Disability[1]

In this definition a disability can be, but not limited to; **physical, non-physical, sensory, intellectual, neurological.** A disability may be visible or non-visible, may be permanent or temporary and may have minimal or substantial impact on a person's abilities.

Under this definition, **the focus in on the conditions that affect people and the impact this has on daily living.** It implies disability is a hardship and focuses on what people with disability can't do rather than what they can do.

[1]Shakespeare, T. (2010). The social model of disability. In L. J. Davis (Ed.), The disability studies reader. New York: Routledge

The Social Model Definition of Disability[2]

The social model of disability holds a more contemporary view, and **defines disability as the result of interactions between people with disability and a society where physical, attitudinal, communication and social barriers exist.**

It doesn't deny the impact of disability on a person or that people with disability may have medical needs, rather the social model implies that **disability is simply a difference like race or gender, and that society needs to adapt to allow people with disability to be fully participating and equal citizens.**

[2]Shakespeare, T. (2010). The social model of disability. In L. J. Davis (Ed.), The disability studies reader. New York: Routledge

Within the context of recruitment, under the **medical model of disability,** interviewers may be **more likely to focus on the individual's disability and perceived capability when interviewing.** However, shifting mindset towards the **social model definition,** you would seek to **understand existing barriers within the workplace that can be overcome to help a person with disability to thrive.**
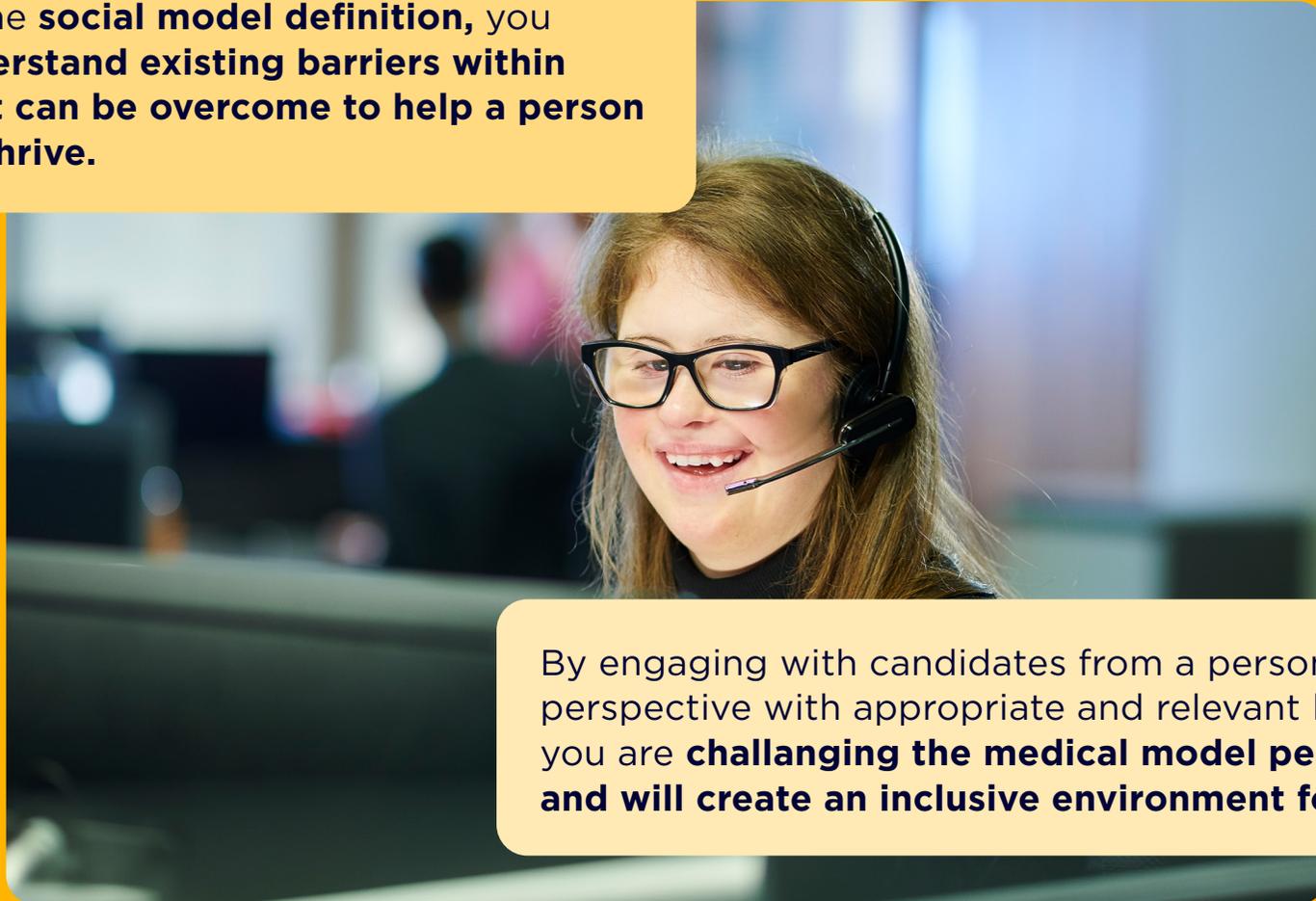
By engaging with candidates from a person-centred perspective with appropriate and relevant language, you are **challanging the medical model perceptions and will create an inclusive environment for everyone.**

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🔑 Accessibility

Accessibility is people with disability being able to do what they need to do with a similar amount of effort in a similar amount of time as someone without disability. **It involves making products, services, physical environments, training and development, digital technologies, communications and information services available for use by someone with disability.**

In short, having good accessibility makes it easy for people to:

- get where they want to go
- get the information they require
- and use the things they need to use

Accessibility is about understanding the diverse needs in our society and making sure we work to support those requirements to create equal and equitable access in all parts of our workplaces, including the recruitment and onboarding process.

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Inclusion

"Diversity is going to a party; Inclusion is being a member of the party planning committee."

Inclusion

Inclusion is ensuring that people feel a sense of belonging.

It is about involving people in discussions, opportunities and decision-making and valuing their input. Within the workplace context, **inclusion can be aided by providing policies, processes, environments and cultures that promote participation for people from diverse backgrounds, including people with disability.**

Inclusive recruitment is understanding and valuing different backgrounds, abilities and views to create processes and environments that support an organisation to seek, interview and hire diverse individuals.

Be a part of the **bigger picture** and learn how to be more inclusive of people with disability with the Recruitable resources.

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