

# **Accommodation Ideas for People with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**

## ***Memory:***

- Provide written instructions
- Use a daily or weekly task list
- Provide verbal prompts and reminders
- Encourage the use electronic organizers or hand held devices
- Allow the client to tape record meetings
- Provide written minutes of each meeting

## ***Maintaining Concentration:***

- Reduce distractions in the environment
- Provide space enclosures or a private space
- Increase natural lighting or increase full spectrum lighting
- Divide large assignments into smaller goal-oriented tasks or steps
- Plan for uninterrupted work time

## ***Time Management/ Completing Tasks:***

- Make daily "TO-DO" lists and check items off as they are completed
- Divide large assignments into smaller tasks and steps
- Remind client of important deadlines via memos or e-mail

## ***Disorganization:***

- Use calendars to mark meetings and deadlines; electronic organizers
- Hire a professional organizer or organizational coach
- Assign a friend/family member, etc to assist the client

## ***Coping with Stress:***

- Provide detailed, regular guidance and feedback
- Provide positive reinforcement
- Provide clear expectations and the consequences of not meeting expectations
- Develop strategies to deal with problems
- Allow the use of a support animal
- Identify and remove environmental triggers such as particular smells or noises

*This document was edited to reflect the needs of the EJW presentation topic. Additional information about TBI and employment can be found on the **America's Heroes at Work** Web site: [www.AmericasHeroesAtWork.gov](http://www.AmericasHeroesAtWork.gov).*

This fact sheet was developed in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Office of Disability Employment Policy, the Job Accommodation Network, the Veterans' Employment and Training Service, the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury, and the Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center.

# **Accommodation Ideas for People with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)**

## ***Physical Limitations:***

- Install ramps, handrails, and provide handicap parking spaces
- Install lever style door handles
- Clear pathways of travel of any unnecessary equipment and furniture

## ***Visual Problems:***

- Provide written information in large print
- Change fluorescent lights to high intensity, white lights and increase natural lighting

## ***Maintaining Concentration:***

- Reduce distractions in the meeting area
- Provide space enclosures or a private office

## ***Difficulty Staying Organized and Meeting Deadlines:***

- Encourage the client to use daily TO-DO lists and check items off as they are completed
- Use a special calendar to mark meetings and deadlines
- Remind clients of important deadlines via memos or e-mail or weekly meetings
- Use electronic organizers
- Divide large assignments into smaller tasks and steps
- Be patient and don't personalize - recognize that emotionality and irritability can be common following some TBIs
- Recognize that the individual's ability to manage stress can be impacted by a TBI

## ***Memory Deficits:***

- Allow the client to tape record meetings
- Provide type written minutes of each meeting
- Provide notebooks, calendars or sticky notes to record information for easy retrieval
- Provide written as well as verbal instructions
- Limit verbal instructions to shorter, manageable chunks of information
- Provide written checklists and use color-coding to help identify items

***Problem Solving Deficits:***

- Provide picture diagrams of problem solving techniques (e.g., flow charts)

***Difficulty Handling Stress and Emotions:***

- Provide praise and positive reinforcement
- Provide sensitivity training to coworkers

***Issues of Change:***

- Recognize that a change in the office environment or of staff may be difficult for a person with a brain injury
- When transitioning staff, maintain open channels of communication between the client and the new and old staff member

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