



AGE FRIENDLY

RIDGEWOOD

Tips for Creating a Dementia Friendly Business

Why is it important to be Dementia Friendly?

- There are more than 5 million people living in the United States with Alzheimer's Disease.
- 1 in 10 adults 65 and over has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease. Alzheimer's Disease and other dementias are not a part of normal aging.
- 1 in 3 adults age 85 and over are diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease.
- Almost two-thirds of Americans with Alzheimer's are women.

Interacting with older adults who have dementia

- Speak clearly and be patient
- Listen closely
- Smile warmly and make eye contact
- Respond to a look of distress
- Help when confusion is present
- Watch for signs of change and offer help accordingly – every day can be different

Tips for Businesses when serving an older adult with dementia

- **Remembering and finding items.** People with dementia may have forgotten what they came in to buy. They may have a list, but have problems finding the things they want. Offer to help them with their list.
- **Making choices.** While having choice is good, for someone with dementia, too much choice can be confusing. Ask what the person would like and then describe two or three options. Allow him/her time to think and make a decision.

- **Handling money.** Counting money, calculating change, recognizing coins and bills, and knowing the value of money can all be difficult for someone with dementia. Offer to help count out the money and be sure to provide a receipt.
- **Forgetting to pay.** People with dementia may forget to pay their bill. Approach the person before they leave the store, ask them if they are done shopping for the day and say you would be happy to help them check out.

Tips on Creating a Dementia Friendly Physical Space

Small changes in a physical space can make a big difference when designing an environment that will feel safe to someone with dementia. A welcoming environment (both indoors and outdoors) helps a person with dementia continue to access your business. There are many best practices you can consider to improve access for people with dementia. Most are relatively low cost and can benefit everyone.

- Entrances should be clearly visible and understood as an entrance. Make sure that glass doors are clearly marked.
- Signage for finding your way around should be clear, should use bold type, and should have contrast between the words and the background.
- Lighting at entrances should be high powered and include natural light when possible. Avoid pools of bright light and deep shadows.
- Flooring should be plain, not shiny, and not slippery. Pathways should be wide and free of clutter.
- Quiet areas for someone who may be feeling anxious or confused can help that person recover enough to independently complete what they were doing.
 - Seating areas in large spaces, especially areas where people are waiting, can be a big help.
 - Layout of an area should be free of clutter and arranged to make it easy to move around and easy to see products.
- A family/unisex restroom will allow someone to be assisted without causing embarrassment to them or another user.

Age Friendly Business is Good Business