

MATTHEW CORKUM, PhD

Seeing the ABILITY in disAbility



Why the Tourism Industry should be more Inclusive.

Diversity and Inclusion are hot topics these days as workplaces try to navigate their way to practical, profitable, success. But how do we see past stigma, discrimination, and often unconscious prejudices to what unites us? How do we tap into the hidden potential in a disabled workforce or tap into tourism that attracts those with disabilities? Everyone benefits from knowing how to create, and be part of, a truly inclusive spaces. And how can businesses easily accommodate loyal, disabled customers?

Many people exclude those with disabilities due to:

- A fear of doing or saying the wrong thing.
- Concerns about their ability to do the work—and potential liability issues.
- Assumptions they make about the capabilities of those who are different. “Ableism” prejudices that they may not even be aware of.
- Don’t know the proper way to support those with disabilities

Walk a Mile in My Shaky Shoes Tap Into the Ability in disABILITY in Tourism (45 - 60 minutes)

In this lively presentation you will hear a unique, first-hand perspective on disabilities in the workplace. Become aware of the challenges, and potential, of hiring disabled employees and how your organization can capitalize on this untapped and valuable resource and client pool.

Business owners, managers and supervisors will:

- Learn how the myths about disabled employees are adversely affecting your retention, culture and bottom line.
- Learn how to capitalize on the Ability in all of your workers!
- Know when to make accommodation and understand most accommodation cost little to nothing financially.
- Grasp how accommodating people with disabilities creates a loyal client base—little things make a big difference!
- Set your staff up for success—know how to serve customers with disabilities.

Those who benefit from Matthew's messages include:

Tourism Operators, Business owners, managers, board directors, human resource workers, those who provide customer service, and those with disabilities.



“From his early experiences navigating life with Cerebral Palsy to his triumphs as an adult who enjoys skiing, biking, and many other adventures, Matthew’s story is both uplifting and relatable. His ability to speak openly and intimately about his life—while infusing the talk with humour and clever remarks—created an engaging and memorable experience for everyone in the audience.

Matthew’s warmth and authenticity were immediately apparent, and he skillfully tailored his message to suit the diverse audience. Whether through light-hearted anecdotes or powerful insights, he created an atmosphere where everyone felt connected to his message. His ability to adapt and make his talk resonate with a specific sector speaks to his exceptional communication skills and understanding of his audience.

What truly sets Matthew apart is not just his personal resilience but also his infectious enthusiasm, dry humour, and passion for life. I have no doubt that Matthew Corkum would be an outstanding keynote speaker for any event.” - Emily Griffiths, Project Manager, Tourism HR Canada

Having experienced bullying and discrimination his whole life has made Matthew Corkum passionate about ensuring that people with disabilities feel as worthwhile and wanted as everyone else! He is a stand for helping everyone focus on the ABILITY in disABILITY.

Matthew has not let his Cerebral Palsy limit his love of living an active life of contribution. Whether getting his PhD, advocating in his role as President of the board of directors for Rocky Mountain Adaptive, speaking professionally, or simply enjoying his favorite pastime biking and alpine skiing, he is all-in!

As an atmospheric scientist Matthew worked as a head meteorologist in Calgary, Alberta for 13 years at a top energy hedge fund. His humor, helpful insights, and contagious enthusiasm give audiences practical ways to eliminate the stigma, judgement, and misunderstandings that happen when dealing with people that are different. In his off time if he is not developing diversity and inclusion programs, or working out with his trainer, you can find him mountain biking in the summer and alpine skiing in winter.

Other presentations in the “Seeing the Ability in disABILITY” series:

- What the Medical System Doesn’t Know That’s Impacting Quality of Care
- What the Education System Doesn’t Know That’s Keeping Kids Back, Bullied, and Behind.
- Walk a Mile in My Shaky Shoes (for general audiences)

Just a few places Matt has presented at :



Tourism HR
Canada



RH Tourisme
Canada



LGMA
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA