

Refire

A SIX WEEK SERIES



Workbook

Refire, a six-week speaker series in the spring of 2021, gathered six experts in their chosen fields to talk about making meaningful changes to the systemic issues that plague hospitality. Each speaker brought their unique experiences from outside of our industry and applied them to problems we encounter at our workplaces everyday. We asked them all to supply actionable steps we might take as individuals and as a community to make a kinder, more equitable future. This workbook is a collection of resources in one centralized location for you to make notes, add your thoughts, and refer back to whenever you might need a refresher. We also will be sifting out important concepts and defining and delving into the words that are the foundation to transformation. We encourage you to flesh out your own reflections, and challenge you to use these conversations as the jumping off point for creating change within your own sphere.

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Refire

A SIX WEEK SERIES

X Paper
X Pencil
X Open Mind

THE BLEND
by Beam Suntory

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WORKBOOK CHECKLIST

Now it's up to all of us! Our Refire speakers asked us a lot of questions and called out some important actions we can take to build a better future in our workplaces and communities. So let's strategize! This workbook was created as a space for reflection. The last page is great to print out and write on, or you can grab your favorite pen and notebook to journal your thoughts. Our hope was that bringing all of the information together might help build a guide to plan out the meaningful changes we all want to make. We can't wait to see what this community can do.

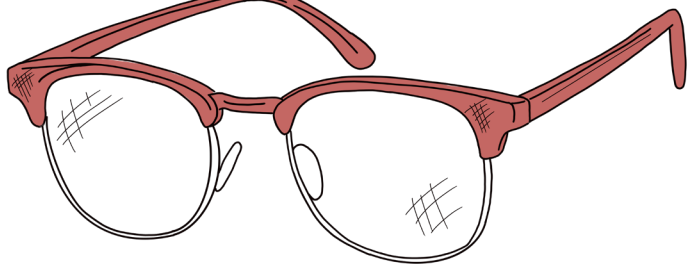
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Planning for Accessibility

WITH DAWN SERRA

Dawn Serra sat down with Kisira Hill and talked about accessibility. Everyone has their own level of accessibility needs. Our bodies and our abilities are always changing, so how do we welcome everyone into our spaces? As hospitality professionals, let's explore smart and efficient ways to make our events and workplaces great experiences for all.



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In the United States, one out of every four people has a disability - There's all kinds of people navigating life with all kinds of disabilities.

DAWN SERRA

ACCESSIBILITY THROUGH A NEW LENS

Accessibility can be defined as the ease of use and utility for a physical or digital environment, space, or event. Considering accessibility for our in-person and online events, hotels, restaurants and bars should no longer be an afterthought - we must begin to plan for accessibility. These questions are vital to ask when preparing for the places people gather, whether in physical or digital spaces.

Dawn Serra, founder and CEO of Radical Summits, explains that her understanding of the term radical comes from Angela Davis, who defines radical as “grasping things at the root.” For Dawn, that meant flipping the traditional model and asking things from a different perspective. In her experience executing event programming in physical and digital spaces, Serra began asking herself, her peers and those in the disability justice community questions about accessibility: “How can I be of service? How can people meet me here? How can I do this from a place of relationship?”

MISCONCEPTIONS REGARDING ACCESS

RADICAL RETHINKING

Access needs are only for folks with disabilities.

Make accessibility a core, foundational value in everything you do.

Accessibility is a “nice to have” - not a necessity.

Meet everyone's needs by centering those with the most access needs.

Increasing accessibility is expensive.

Utilize low or no cost technology to increase access.

Digital events are inherently accessible.

Consider hosting digital/virtual versions of your in-person events.

PERFORMING A

Digital Accessibility Audit

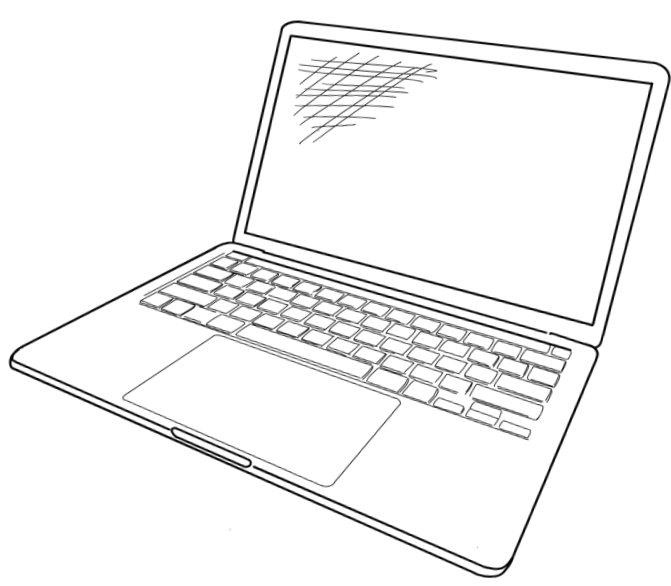
In the process of putting together a virtual or online event? One of the most common fallacies when it comes to producing digital content is that they are intrinsically accessible. Follow these steps to make sure your event is bringing everyone into the (virtual) room:

Engage with and include people who are part of the disability community in the planning process. This is much easier than many people think - look to your friends, family, coworkers, or even accessibility consultants like Dawn!

Brush up on your own knowledge by taking advantage of free online resources, like this [“Digital Accessibility Foundations”](#) course offered by the Web Accessibility Initiative.

For a more in-depth take, Dawn leads a “DIY Summit Course” through her company Radical Summits, that'll take you all the way from the planning to execution phase of your next event. ([learn more here](#))

Implement low or no cost features to make your (web) space more accessible like alt text, closed captions, subtitles, and color contrast. Remember to make your digital space easy to navigate, and accessible on different devices (mobile, desktop, tablet, etc.) - there is value in simplicity!



Looking to the Future

As strategists like Dawn carve a new path forward, they are reimagining what accessibility means. In addition to continuing to design spaces with the traditional understanding of accessibility in mind, it is important we start thinking about “non-traditional limiters” that would limit one's access; inadequate affordable child care options, language barriers, and transportation restrictions are now being considered serious accessibility issues.

The surge in digital/web-based events has led to an increased knowledge and awareness of event platforms and technologies. As we embrace the return of the in-person world, let's think about how our events can exist beyond a physical space. By leaning into these technologies, we're challenging ourselves to bridge the gap between the physical and digital world - all while increasing accessibility by creating exciting mixed modality experiences.

KNOW YOUR RESOURCES

Here are some additional sources to educate yourself on ensuring required accessibility standards are met in physical and online spaces.

1. [ADA Checklist for Existing Facilities](#)
2. [Hospitality and Travel Accessibility Audits](#)
3. [Accessible Language: A Guide for Disability Etiquette](#)
4. [Designing for Accessibility](#)
5. [American Bar Association: Virtual Meeting Accessibility Checklist](#)
6. [Social Tables: Event Planning for Accessibility](#)

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Your employees are the experts in their own needs. Ask them where they are.

DAWN SERRA

Planning for Accessibility

WORKSHEET

While it is important to prioritize accessibility for our guests, patrons, and attendees, it is just as necessary to extend those same considerations to our staff. As Dawn puts it, “there’s already lots of people out there who are talking about [access needs] and your employees are the experts in their own needs. So ask them what they are.”

What are **your** access needs in physical or online spaces?

Have you ever opted out of participating in something because it was not accessible to your needs? What could the event planner/restaurant/bar/hotel have done to ensure you could join the experience they were offering?

Do you know the access needs of your coworkers and/or employees? Are you considering less visible disabilities like neurodivergence, color blindness, and hearing loss? Reflect on how you can make yourself aware of the needs of others you interact with daily.