

Dilemma:

"I can't access the building."

Each group has a host.

This dilemma card is for the host and contains:

- A host guide
- A dilemma
- Fact boxes
- A question guide for dialogue one and dialogue two

Host guide

As a host, your role is to facilitate a good, constructive dialogue where everyone gets to speak. Your role is not to participate by sharing your own perspective, but you are welcome to put your perspective into play by phrasing it as a question ("What if they ...?").

Try to be curious ("Why do you think that?") and investigative ("What if they react differently than you assume?").

Aim to make it safe for participants to say or share something vulnerable by making it clear that different perspectives are welcome and that everyone should be respectful.

The dialogue is divided into two parts.

The first part is about giving advice to the person who posed the dilemma, and the second part is about the theme of the dilemma from the perspective of the panellists and their experiences at DTU.

On pages 3 and 4, you will find questions and data, which you can use to qualify the dialogue.

After reading this guide and skimming the question guide, please read out the dilemma to the panel. Give them a moment to reflect on the dilemma. Then initiate dialogue one.

Dilemma:

Tom has found a job advert for his dream job at DTU and has submitted an application. And he has been invited for a job interview. So far, so good.

However, Tom is a wheelchair user and therefore always researches the conditions before visiting a new place. On a trip to DTU before his interview, he unfortunately realized that he will not be able to access the building without assistance, as there is no ramp. Furthermore, he noticed that the doors open outwards and need to be opened manually.

He has stated in his application that he is a wheelchair user, so the recruitment committee is aware of it. They are probably just not aware of which conditions are needed for people to get around in a wheelchair.

Tom's initial thought was to withdraw his application. It would be one thing to get a friend to go with him to the interview to help him get in and out of the building. But working there would be impossible for him until the conditions were improved. It is difficult enough to get a job offer already, and even more so as a wheelchair user, so the last thing he wants is to be a nuisance.

However, after discussing it with his network, he has become unsure of whether he should withdraw his application or say something—and what, to whom, and how? He would prefer to focus on his competences and his personality in the interview, not his special needs. And those special needs would not seem so special if conditions were already in place for wheelchair users to get around. He is already struggling with getting people to see and define him as a person and not just a wheelchair user. How can he solve the problem without negatively impacting his interview?

Tom would like the panel to discuss what the best solution is.

Dialogue one:

What advice does the panel give?

- [Start by hearing each panellist's thoughts on the dilemma so everyone gets the chance to speak from the start]
- "What could the underlying cause(s) for the dilemma be?"
- "Should there already be good conditions in place for wheelchair users even if there are no wheelchair users working in the department, so that the department doesn't risk missing out on potential talent?"
- "What do you think of the options stated by the person who posed the dilemma?"
- [Feel free to use the data from the boxes to boost the discussion]
- [Other investigative questions]
- "We have to come up with an answer, but you don't all have to agree. What does each of you think the person who posed the dilemma should do?"

The law states that work places need to be accessible and that it is the employer's responsibility to ensure it. However, companies are protected against 'disproportionate burdens'. But companies can apply for state funding for designing the workplace.

(Danish law prohibiting discrimination in the labour market)

Out of 400 employers, 70 per cent would hire a positive and energetic employee with a couple of years of experience. When they were subsequently told that the applicant was a wheelchair user, which means that employment would require minor practical adjustments in the workplace, only 22 per cent were likely to offer the applicant a job.

(Study by Research Center for Disability and Employment (FHB) at Aalborg University, 2019)

2 Dialogue two:

What do you do, and what could you do?

This part of the dialogue focuses on the panellists' own experiences at DTU.

Start dialogue two by telling the panel that the focal point is still the theme of the dilemma, but now they should look at the conditions in their own unit as well as considering other solutions.

Please note that dialogue two may be a bit more sensitive. Aim to create a safe and respectful space for everyone. The goal is still not to agree on everything, but to learn more about each other's perspectives.

- "Do you recognize the dilemma or parts of it, either on a personal level or through observation?"
- "How would you react if an applicant contacted you about a lack of accessibility prior to an interview?"
- "Is there a part of the advice you gave that you practise in your unit? If yes, what? If no, would that be possible?"
- "What else could you do? At individual, group, and organizational level?"
- [Other investigative questions]
- "What will each of you take with you to your unit, either as a point of attention or as possible solutions related to the theme of the dilemma?"