Welcome

- Introduction - 3 min

- Territorial acknowledgement - 2 min

- Before the Accessible BC Act – 20 min

- What is Accessibility? - 20 min

- Interrupting Ableism 10 min

- Feedback exercise – 20 min

- Discussion about timelines – 10 min

- Close – 5 min

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About Us

Untapped Accessibility is a social enterprise, part of Open Door Ventures. We draw on the diverse lived experience and professional expertise of our team to deliver comprehensive and innovative approaches to disability inclusion.

Our mission is to improve accessibility in Canadian workplaces by:

- Helping organizations to deliver on accessibility

- Creating employment for professionals with disabilities

- Generating revenue for Open Door Social Services Society

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accessibility
beyond compliance

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Our team

Opening poll:
Why do you think accessibility is important?

You can answer by raising your hand.

Legal Framework: perspective

- Disability was added to BC Human Rights Code in the 80's as a protected characteristic

- The establishment of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms

- The ratification of the UN CRPD and its optional protocol

- The establishment of provincial accessibility requirements

- In the grand scheme of things, they are still a "pilot-project" contrasted to the way people used to be treated.

Social change in action: perspective
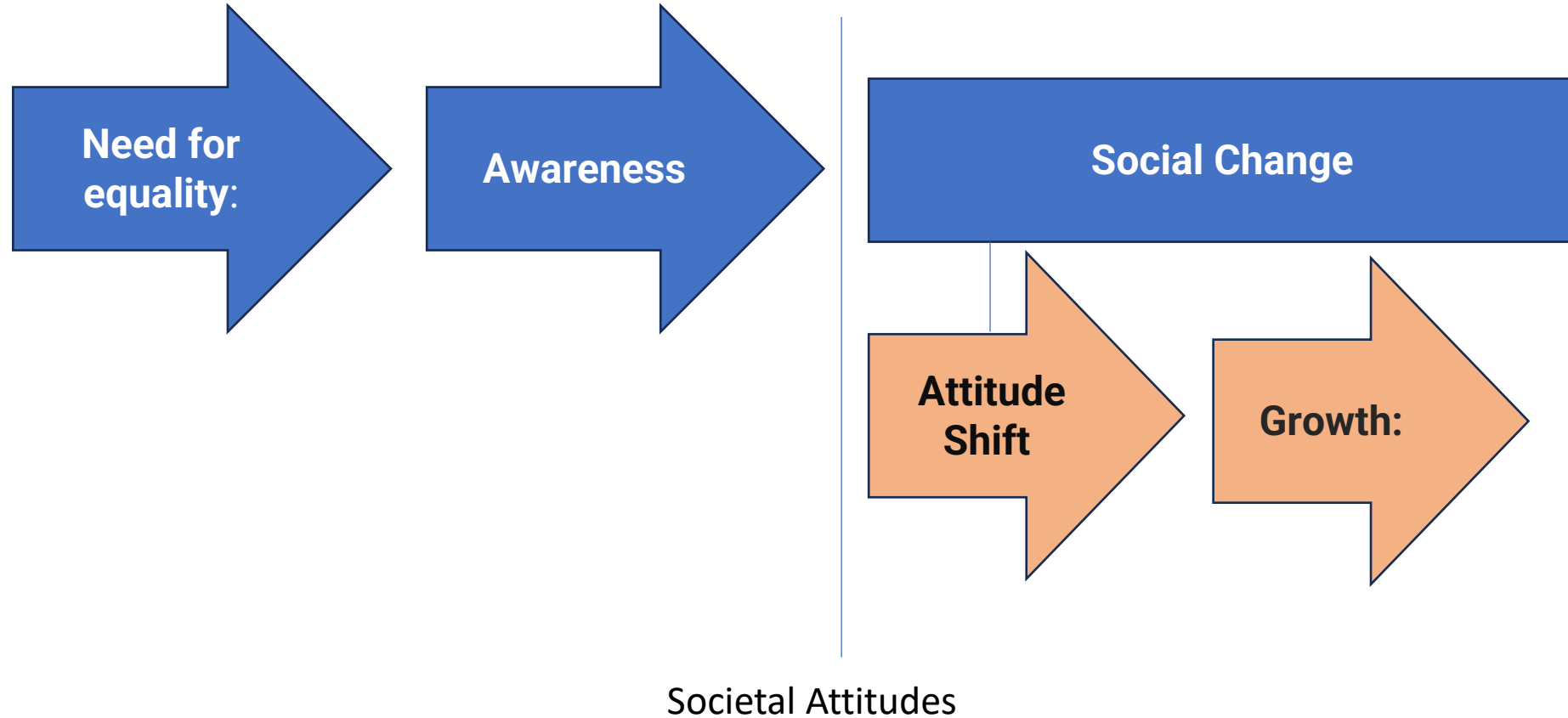
Legislation in action: perspective
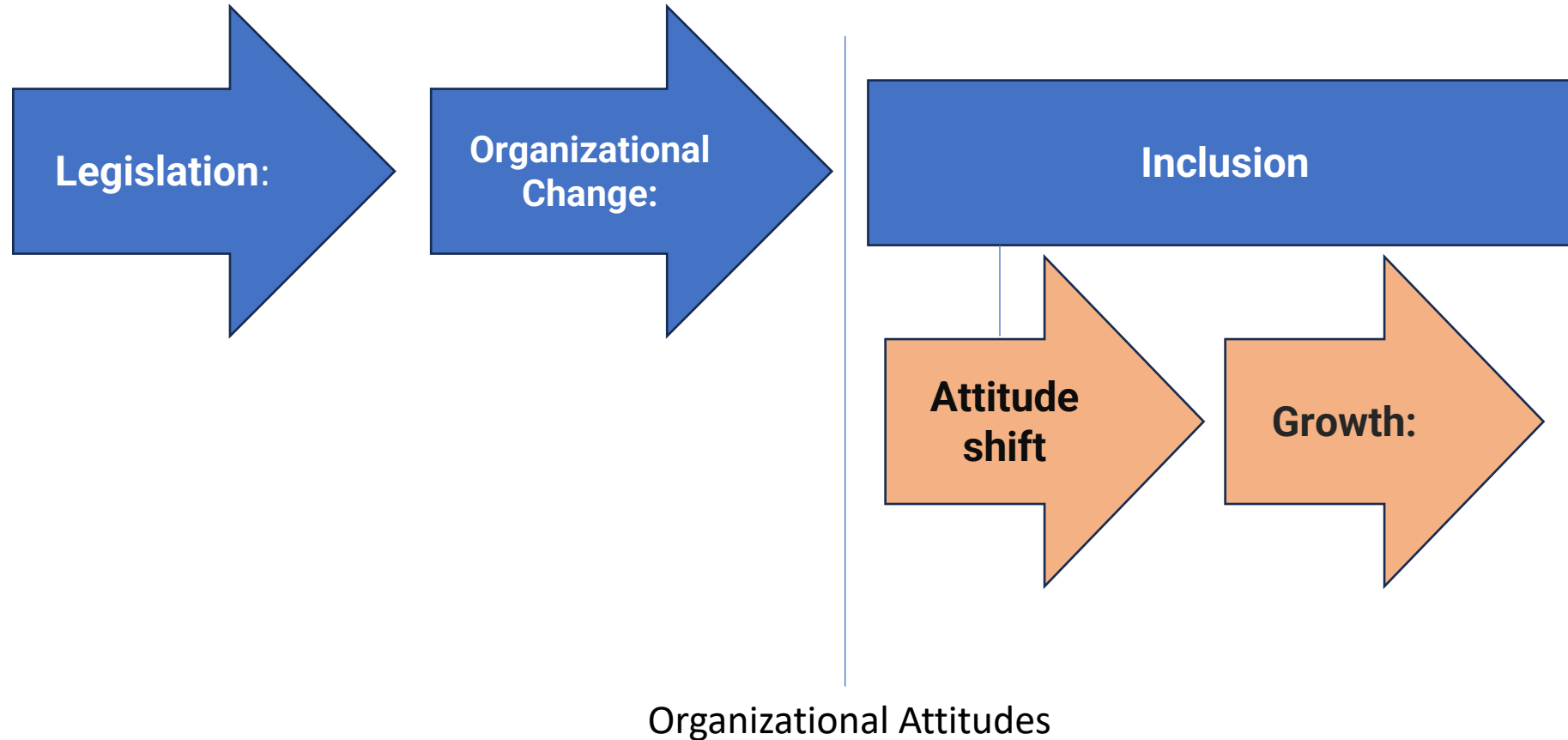
Accessibility Through a Human Rights Lens

The largest number of applicants to the BC Human Rights Tribunal are people with disabilities.

- **2021-2022**: 43% (24 % physical disability, 19% mental disability)

- **2020- 2021:** 44% (24% physical disability, 22% mental disability)

- **2018-2019:** 46% (26% physical disability, 20% mental disability)

BC Human Rights Tribunal Annual Reports:
http://www.bchrt.bc.ca/tribunal/annual-reports.htm

Overview

The Accessible BC Act was enacted to foster an inclusive environment and remove barriers for members of the disability community.

BC Act – What is Required?

What are Prescribed Organizations required to do?

1) Create Accessibility Committees

2) Create Accessibility Plans

3) Establish a process for receiving public feedback

Source: *Accessible British Columbia Act*

ABC Act: Coming Standards

Standards will be developed in the following areas, and maybe others:

- Employment
- Delivery of services
- The built environment
- Information and Communications

- Transportation
- Health
- Education
- Procurement

BC Act: Guiding Principles

Inclusion: All British Columbians, including persons with disabilities, should be able to participate fully and equally in their communities.

Diversity: Accessibility plans should acknowledge the principle of intersectionality and the diversity within the disability community.

Adaptability: Accessibility plans should reflect that disability and accessibility are evolving concepts that change as services, technology, and attitudes change.

Collaboration: Promoting accessible communities is a shared responsibility and everyone has a role to play.

Self-determination: Accessibility plans should seek to empower people with disabilities to make their own choices and pursue the lives they wish to live.

Universal Design: An accessibility plan should be designed to meet the needs of all people who wish to interact with the Organization.

The ABC Act reflects the social model of disability

Medical Model

- Sees disability as a "problem" of an individual. Views those with disabilities as "not normal".

- Sees disability as an illness that needs to be cured or rehabilitated.

- Disabled people are isolated to receive the care that they need.

- Members are not given the opportunity to contribute and participate equally in society.
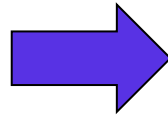
Social Model

- Recognizes that society must change, not the person with the disability.

- Sees how we have designed our environments, policies and culture as the "problems" to solve.

- Views disability as a normal part of the variation of human experience, not a special circumstance.

- Disabled people have equal rights and equal responsibilities to contribute to society.

What is accessibility?

Accessibility is the work we do to ensure that people with disabilities can participate in society on an equal basis with others.

We now acknowledge

It's not necessarily the health condition that creates barriers for people disabilities, it's the physical barriers, the rules we create, and the attitudes we hold that get in the way.

What is accessibility Cont.

- Accessibility is a holistic approach to building environments where people can live, work and enjoy.

- Accessibility is the mechanism through which people have equal access to their rights on an equal footing with their peers.

What are Barriers?

- For the purposes of the Accessible BC Act, a barrier is anything that hinders the full and equal participation in society of a person with an impairment.

- Barriers result when design processes don't properly consider the inherent diversity and variation of the human condition.

Types of Barriers:

Physical: How we design buildings, parks and other public spaces.

Attitudes: The stereotypes we believe, the assumptions we make about what a person can do, and what we believe.

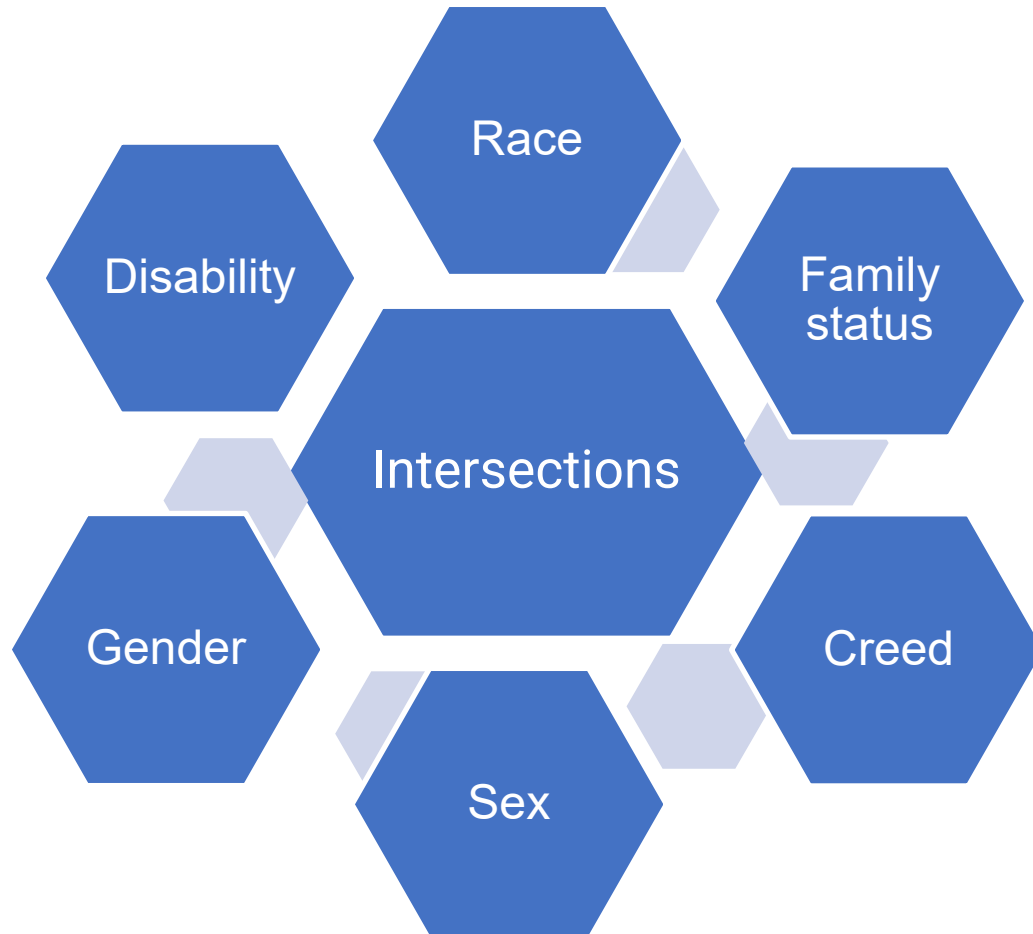**Policies:** How we design programs, the rules we create.

Information and Communication: the ways we share information.

Technology: The websites we design, the software and programs we use, and the way we commit to our responsibilities.

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Interrupting Ableism in the Class

Intersectionality

~25%
People with disabilities are living below the poverty line

~65%
People with disabilities have two or more disability types

~30%
Indigenous Canadians report having a disability

Key Definitions

Ableism- "An ideology and system of oppression in society that holds that some bodies are more valuable than others, which limits the potential of people with disabilities.

Ableism can be conscious or unconscious, and is embedded in institutions, systems, and the broader culture of society."

Ally- A person who is not part of a particular group, but is supportive of the group's struggle for rights and freedoms.

Active Bystander- An ally who chooses to make discrete choices to respond to concerning behavior.

Inclusive Language

Use Person-Centric Language

- 'Person with disability' or 'disabled person' instead of 'the disabled'
- 'Autistic woman', rather than 'an autistic"

Use Plain Language

- Speak clearly & calmly using short sentences
- Avoid jargon, slang, and acronyms
- Written material should be at a Grade 8 reading level

Always Ask!

If You Make A Mistake, Apologize & Move On

Resources: The Power of Inclusive Language
Plain Language Checklist

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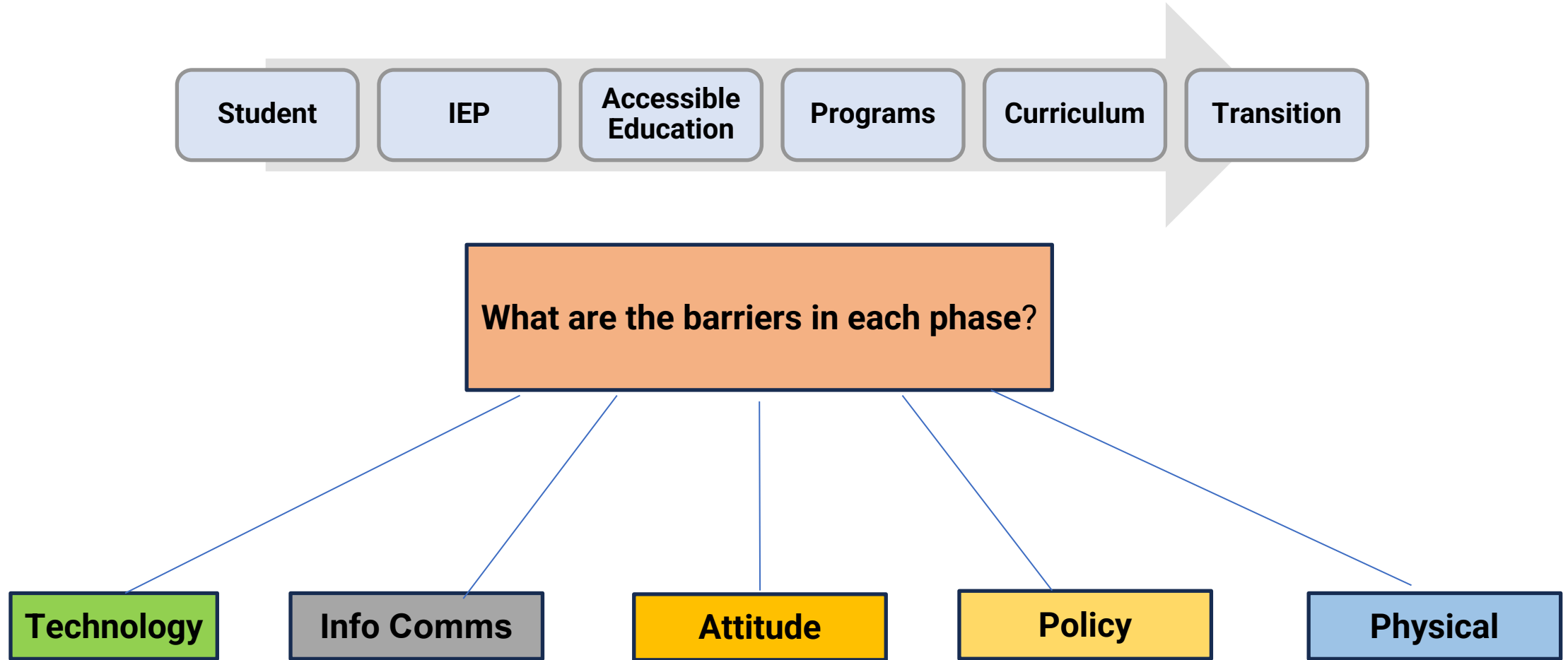
Feedback Exercise

Ask yourselves these questions?

- **What type of barrier is it?**

- **What is the category?**

- **What is the plan to remove or mitigate this barrier?**
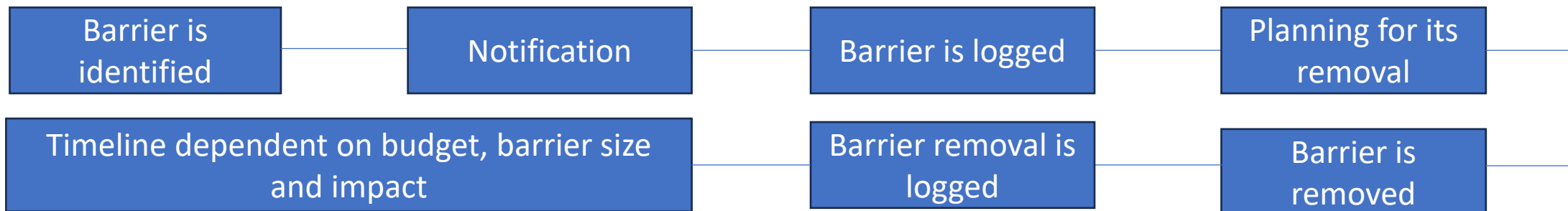
Education cycle

Student → IEP → Accessible Education → Programs → Curriculum → Transition

What are the barriers in each phase?

- Technology
- Info Comms
- Attitude
- Policy
- Physical

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Discussion about Timelines

About Timelines

Barrier is identified	Notification	Barrier is logged	Planning for its removal
Timeline dependent on budget, barrier size and impact	Barrier removal is logged		Barrier is removed

How Barrier Information Sharing Could Occur

Barriers/External

Feedback Mechanism or Public Engagement

Barriers/Internal

Accessibility Committee or Feedback Mechanism

Review by Accessibility Committee and Working Group

Barriers Database

Accessibility Plan Action Items

Planning for Actions

Low Cost **Low Importance**	**Low Cost** **High Importance**
High Cost **Low Importance**	**High Cost** **High Importance**
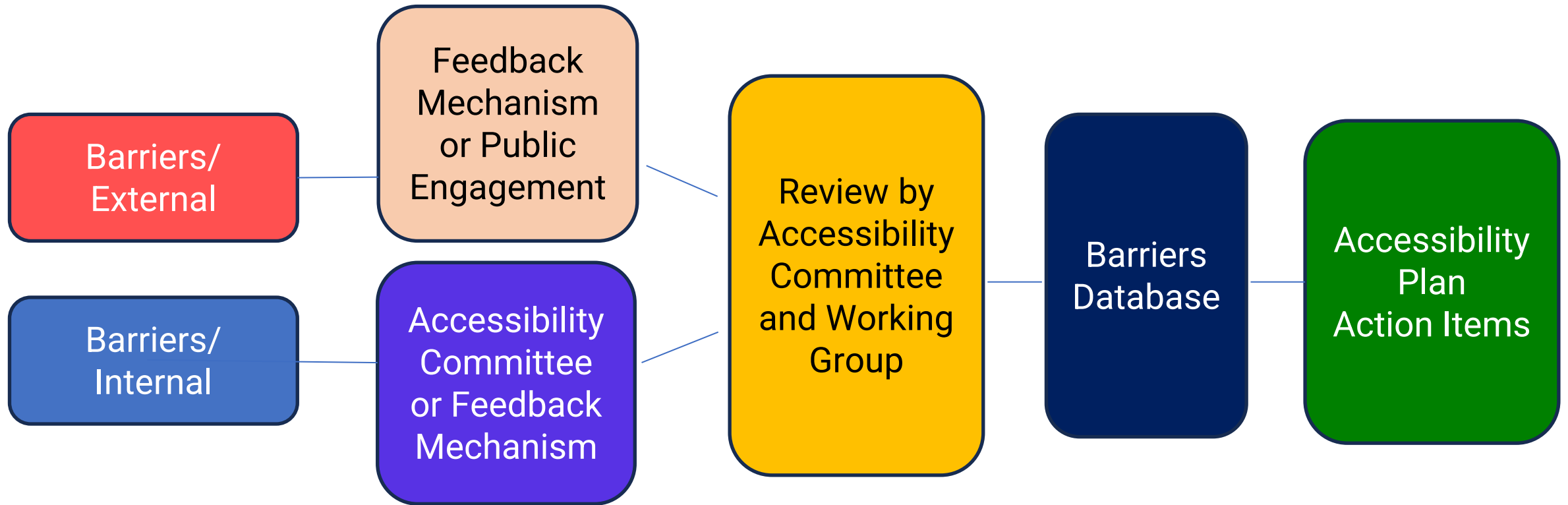
Questions?

Resources

Disability Inclusive Employer Self-Assessment
disabilityinclusion.ca

Video: How to be an ally to people with disabilities
www.youtube.com/watch?v=R2jluFJRn18

What You Can and Can't Ask in the Interview
accessibleemployers.ca/resource/interviews

Job Accommodation Network's AskJan
https://askjan.org/

Sign up for FREE "Creating Accessible Workplaces" Course
accessibleemployers.ca/learning

The CIRCA course on neurodiversity in the workplace
circa.educ.ubc.ca/autism-in-the-workplace

Training on document accessibility and other topics
accessibilitycanada.ca

Thank you!