# THE FOUR A's OF ACCESSIBILITY

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# The Four A's of Accessibility
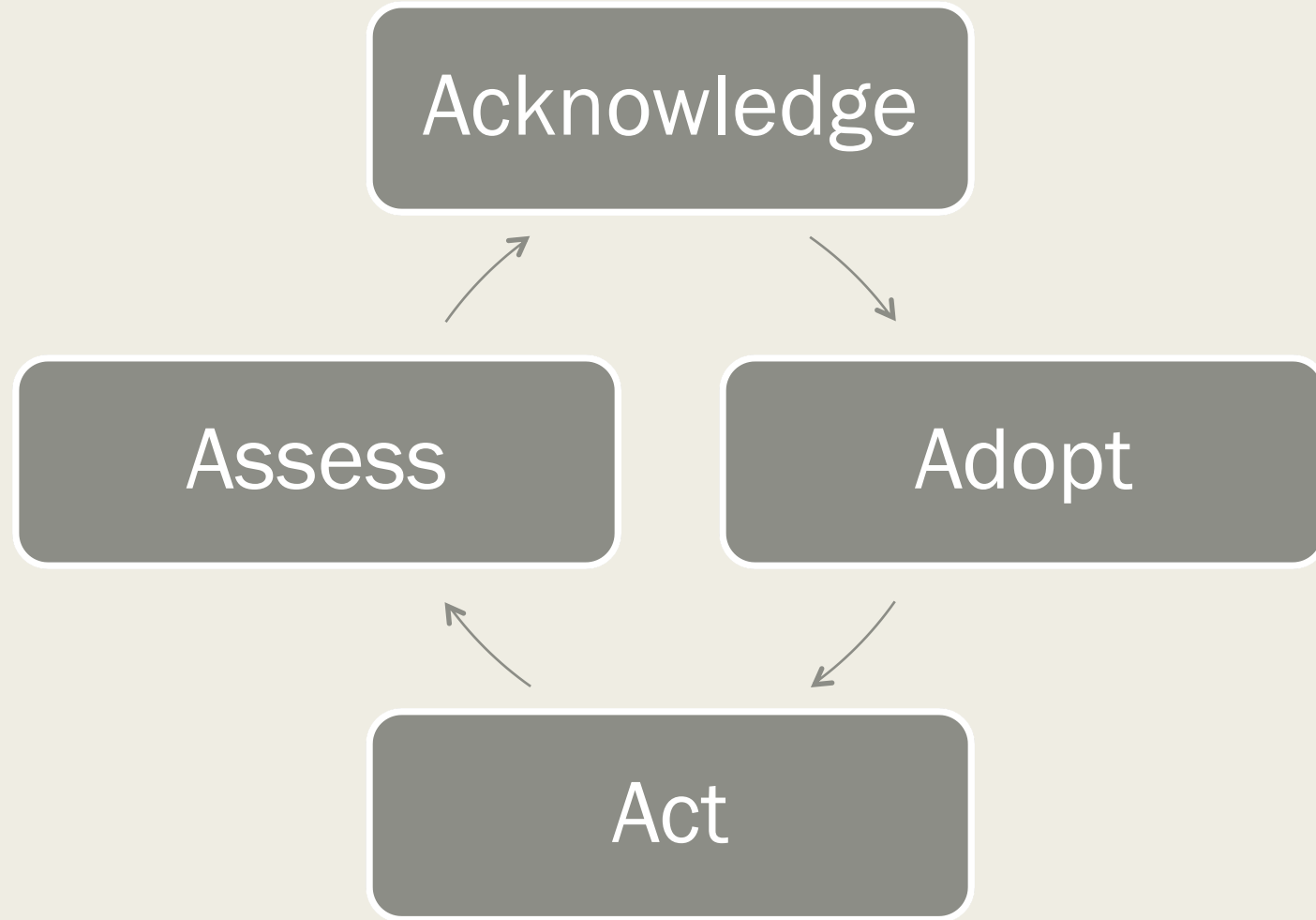
# Acknowledge

- What is accessibility and why does it matter?
- Knowing what you don't know.
  - Willingness to be vulnerable, transparent, and confront your biases.
  - Have a growth mindset and be open to learning.
    - Ask questions
    - Make learning collaborative.
      - Explain and share concepts as you learn them.
      - Engage experts in the field.
- Recognizing accessibility as more than a box to check.
  - A complete cultural shift.
    - Accessibility is who we are, not something we do.

# Adopt

- Understand accessibility in your organization.
  - What is accessibility and why does it matter **to us**?
  - Where are we now?
- Brainstorm your goals.
  - Where do we want to go?
    - We want to _____ so that we can _____.
  - What is the best path to get there?
    - What resources do we have and what do we need?
      - Is there internal buy-in?
      - What are the parameters?
    - How far are we able to go to meet those goals?
    - What could prevent us from meeting these goals?

# Act

- Put your plan into action.
  - Connect every step of your plan back to the **why**.
  - Celebrate your successes along the way.
  - Sometimes, you just need to start.
    - Avoid analysis paralysis and the expectation of "perfect" or "right."
- Manage your attention and stay aligned to your goals.
  - The Baader - Meinhof phenomenon / the frequency illusion.

# Assess

- Review your goals.

- Evaluate your implementation.
  - What is or is not working?
  - Should you make changes to your plan?
    - If not immediately, at what point will you know it is time to change course?

- Continue learning and evaluating!
  - This is an ongoing process.

# Connecting the Four A's of Accessibility

Acknowledge

Assess

Adopt

Act
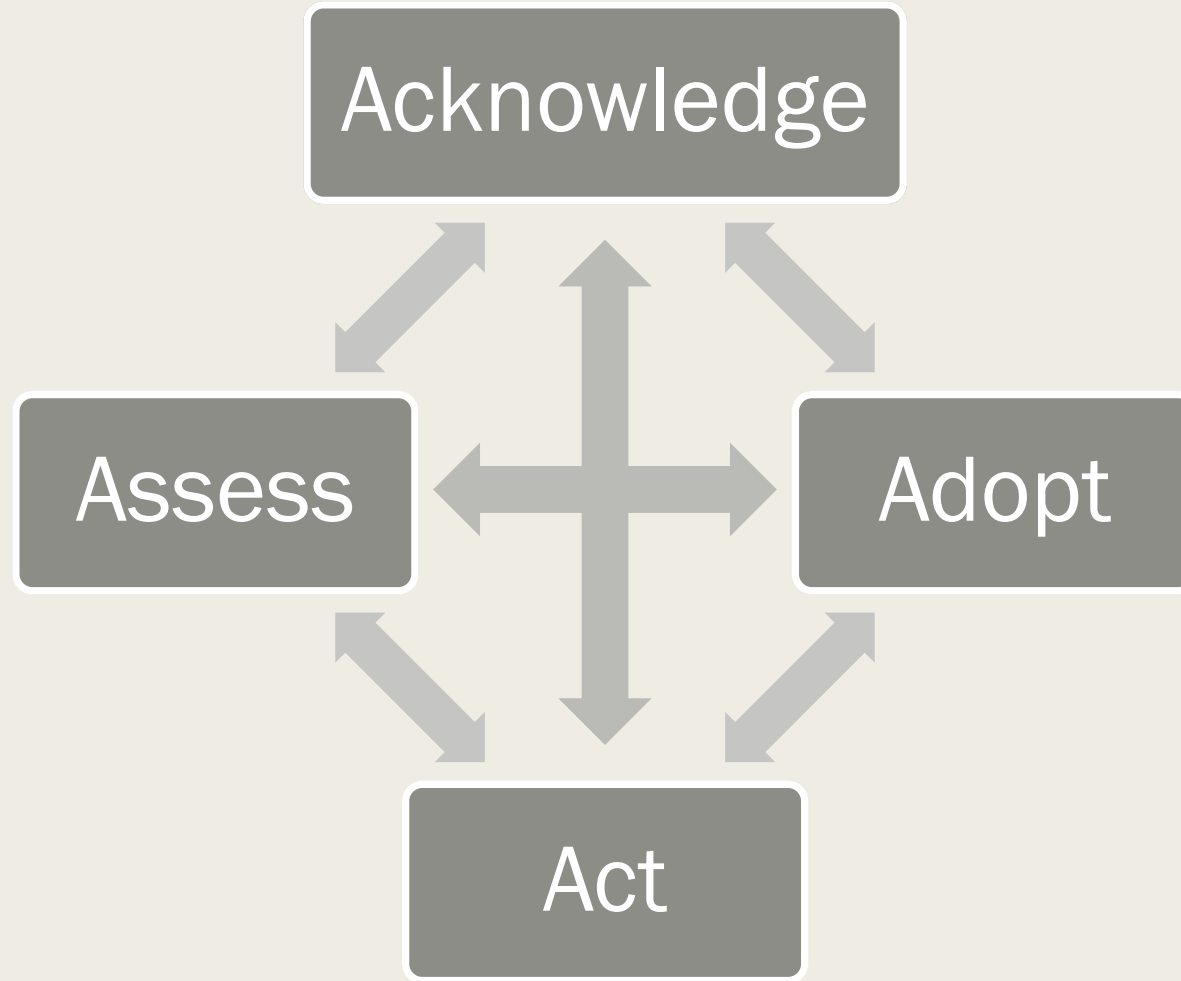
# Case Study: Document Accessibility

- Acknowledge

- What is document accessibility and why does it matter?
  - If you ever wonder why something like document accessibility is important, try to place yourself in the situation. Think back to a time when a document didn't respond the way you were wanting it to. Imagine the frustration building. People with disabilities face this feeling daily.
  - Making sure the creation of a document is readily useable and understandable by those of varying abilities, whether digital or hard copies.
  - Document text needs to be accessible
    - Font color and size, language, structure (headings, alt text image descriptions, etc.)

- Understanding document accessibility Legal requirements and standards.
  - ADA
    - Americans with Disabilities Act, passed in 1990, requires that public entities make their documents / information accessible to those of all abilities.
  - Section 508
    - Section within the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which requires that all documents be in an accessible format for people with or without disabilities.

# Case Study: Document Accessibility

- Adopt
  - Once the problem areas are acknowledged, then make a plan to rectify the areas of concern.
  - Know your audience and seek feedback from individuals / groups who are directly impacted.
- JFK Partners acknowledged a need of document accessibility, with hard copy / printed fellowship evaluations. They realized making it electronic created more independence and accessibility for those who had print reading disabilities.
- JFK Partners Adopted a plan to make the evaluation electronic by getting feedback from s student in the fellowship and having them test it out.
- JFK Partners further adopted a plan to continue the accessibility efforts, by reviewing other internal documents

# Case Study: Document Accessibility

- Act

    You don't know what you don't know, so educate yourself, by asking questions and  taking trainings.

    Tools and resources for creating accessible documents.

    - -Microsoft (Built in accessibility checker under tools)

    - -Adobe (Built in accessibility checker under tools)

    - -WebAIM (Website that offers resources, such as document accessibility  trainings)

- -JFK Partners educated themselves about enhancing document accessibility by acting on the feedback they received, as well as providing trainings to their students / fellows, to continue the mission of accessibility.

- Best practices for creating accessible documents.

    - -Use headings (Easier navigation for screen readers)

    - -Alt text for images (Allows those with visual impairments to know what an image is)

    - -Proper color contrast (Easier navigation for those who are low vision or color blind)

    - -Plain language (Easier understandability for those with learning disabilities)

# Case Study: Document Accessibility

- Assess
    - Strategies for maintaining document accessibility over time.
    - User testing and feedback is crucial.
- Ensuring long-term document accessibility through regular assessments of functionality.
    - Regular training.
    - Monitoring and updating accessibility practices.

# Case Study: PPCH Website Accessibility

- Acknowledge
  - Internally: Our website is not accessible.
  - Externally: HB21-1110 makes it a civil rights violation for a **government agency** to exclude people with disabilities from receiving services or benefits because of lack of accessibility.
    - Effective July 1, 2024.
    - Establishes statewide accessibility standards.
      - Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2. AA at minimum.
  - PPCH is a non-governmental organization and are not **required** to meet this regulation.
    - Prime sponsor of the bill Representative David Ortiz: "We are talking about access, not convenience…. This should be a priority."

# Case Study: PPCH Website Accessibility

- Adopt
  - Focus on our website.
    - Worked with a marketing agency who specializes in web accessibility.
      - Determine current accessibility.
      - Identify deficit areas.
        - Logo colors
        - Alt descriptions on pictures
        - Slow web speed
  - Set goals after the discovery process.
    - What immediate changes would provide the best customer service?

# Case Study: PPCH Website Accessibility

- **Act**
  - Internally
    - Attend accessibility training offered through Microsoft.
    - Identify internal subject matter experts within specific topic areas.
      - Website
      - Training
      - Policy
    - Shift internal practices that are not accessible.
      - Stop renewing contracts with vendors whose products are not accessible.
      - Keep notes listed in word documents rather than embedded in tables.
        - If tables are necessary, ensure they are formatted properly.
      - Check reading level on all internal communications.
  - Externally
    - Update logos and branding to ensure proper color contrast.
      - Web Accessibility in Mind (WebAIM)
      - Accessible Web
    - Add alt descriptions to pictures
      - All new photographs
      - 5 existing images on our website/ week

# Case Study: PPCH Website Accessibility

- Assess
  - Shifting culture is an ongoing process.
    - Growth mindset- asking questions.
      - Not renewing current contracts for products that were inaccessible did not mean that we improved in our ability to ask the right questions to make future decisions.
        - Return to the "why" and build knowledge from there.
          - Building a series of questions to use in the vendor vetting process.
    - Find and share resources to boost learning and make it collaborative.
      - Office of Information Technology (OIT) has a great accessibility guide covering a variety of topics and what steps to take!
        - Document accessibility
        - Plain language
        - Fonts
    - Recommitment to our goal and adjusting plans.

# QUESTIONS?

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