# Vision & Blind / Low Vision

## Consultant Quick-Reference Sheet

*Use this guide when a client discloses a vision impairment or communicates a need for accommodation.*

**Your role as a Learning Loft consultant**
You are not expected to be a disability specialist. You are expected to be responsive, flexible, and professional. If a client discloses a vision-related need, this sheet gives you the steps and tools to serve them well.

## Step 1 — When a Client Discloses a Vision Need

If a client mentions they are blind, have low vision, or have difficulty with visual content during a session, respond with:

- Acknowledgment — thank them for letting you know
- A quick check-in — ask what works best for them
- Flexibility — be ready to adjust how you share information

**Sample language you can use:**
"Thank you for sharing that with me. I want to make sure our session is as useful as possible for you. Can you tell me a little about how you prefer to receive information? I'm happy to adjust how we work together."

## Step 2 — Session Format Adjustments

### For Blind Clients / Screen Reader Users

Many blind clients use screen readers (such as JAWS, NVDA, or VoiceOver) to navigate digital content. Here is how to make your sessions more accessible:

- Conduct sessions verbally — Google Meet works well since it is primarily audio/video based
- Do not rely on visual aids, charts, or shared screens without also describing what you are showing verbally
- If you share documents or resources, provide them in plain text or accessible PDF format rather than image-based files
- Avoid saying "as you can see here" or referencing visual elements without describing them — use descriptive language instead
- Speak clearly and descriptively — treat the session like a phone call with rich verbal explanation

### For Low Vision Clients

Clients with low vision may have some usable sight but need adaptations. Options to offer:

- Increase font size in any documents you share — use 16pt or larger as a starting point
- Use high-contrast formatting in written materials (dark text on white background)
- Offer to send session notes and materials in advance so the client can zoom in or use assistive tools at their own pace
- Ask if they are using zoom tools or magnification — this may affect how you share your screen

### Google Meet Accessibility Features for Vision

Google Meet includes several built-in features that support blind and low-vision users:

- Screen reader compatibility — Google Meet works with JAWS, NVDA, and VoiceOver
- Keyboard shortcuts — clients can navigate Meet without a mouse
- High contrast mode — available through Chrome browser accessibility settings
- Spoken feedback — available on Google Meet hardware devices

How to support a screen reader user in Google Meet:

1. Keep your meeting link simple and share it via email so the client can open it with their screen reader
2. Announce yourself when you begin speaking — screen readers do not always identify speakers automatically
3. If sharing your screen, narrate everything you are doing verbally in real time
4. Avoid using the chat window as your primary communication method — screen readers can access it, but verbal communication is more seamless

## Step 3 — Sharing Documents and Resources

Blind and low-vision clients may interact with documents differently. Follow these guidelines when sharing materials:

- Send documents as Word (.docx) or accessible PDF — these formats work better with screen readers than image files or screenshots
- Use clear headings and structure in any documents you send — screen readers navigate by headings
- Avoid sending information as images of text (such as a photo of a flyer or form)
- If you use a whiteboard or visual tool during a session, provide a written equivalent
- Always follow up with a written email summary — this gives the client something they can review with their assistive technology at their own pace

## Step 4 — During the Session

- Announce yourself at the start: "Hi, this is [your name]. I'll be your consultant today."
- Describe any visual information verbally as you reference it
- Do not rush — give the client time to navigate their tools
- Check in: "Is there anything I can do to make this session more accessible for you today?"
- Avoid background noise — clean audio is especially important for clients relying on sound

## Step 5 — After the Session

- Send a written session summary via email — use clear headings and plain language
- If you shared any resources during the session, attach them in accessible format
- Note the client's preferred format and communication style in your records for future sessions
- If you encountered a barrier you could not address, flag it to Learning Loft so we can improve our resources

**Important: What you should NOT do**

Do not cancel or discourage a client because of a vision impairment. Do not assume the client cannot navigate technology independently — many blind users are highly skilled with assistive tools. Do not send image-only documents. Always ask what works best rather than assuming.

## Quick Resource List

- Google Meet accessibility features: support.google.com/meet/answer/16175468
- American Foundation for the Blind: afb.org
- National Federation of the Blind: nfb.org
- WebAIM accessible document guide: webaim.org/techniques/word
- Learning Loft support: advising@learningloftadvising.com