



Dr Philip Friend OBE FRSA - Brief Biography

Phil Friend himself a wheelchair user, is acknowledged as the UK's foremost consultant on disability matters. A powerful and highly popular communicator, his company - *Phil & Friends* - provides consultancy to many of the country's best-known companies. In addition to his professional activities, he is also a respected champion for equal opportunities and diversity in general, where his special blend of humour and direct speaking has won admirers from around the world.

He has made many board presentations and speeches and provided consultancy on a wide range of disability and diversity related topics in the UK. He has also worked on disability and diversity projects in Estonia, Romania, Poland, Germany, Canada and the USA. He was awarded an OBE in 2001 for services to equal opportunities and disabled people and made a Fellow of the Royal Society for the Arts in February 2007. He was awarded an honorary Doctor of Science (Hon DSc) in 2009 in recognition of his outstanding contribution to equality and diversity from University of Hertfordshire.

Phil has had numerous articles published and is a regular contributor on national/local television and radio; he has also appeared in several video productions commissioned by the BBC, Sky, the Business Disability Forum, various Tourist Boards and Angel Productions. He is the co-author of "Why are you pretending to be normal?" a self-help book designed to help disabled people manage rather than cope with their disability.

His passionate commitment is to create a more equitable life for everyone by illustrating the practical and realistic steps that can be taken by both businesses and individuals to make a real difference.

He is a Director of Dining with a Difference and is also very active within the voluntary sector. He is the former Chair of Royal Association for Disability and Rights (RADAR) and Disability Rights (UK). Vice President of the Level Playing Field Association, a Commissioner on the Extra Costs of Disability Commission and a member of the Association of Disabled Professionals. He is also an Associate of the Business Disability Forum and a Trustee of RICA, and the English Federation for Disability Sport, a Churchill Fellow and a former chair of the Independent Advisory Group for Surrey Police.

Clients include:

Accenture, BAE Systems, Barclays, Bank of England, BBC, Buckingham Palace, Cabinet Office, Dept of Work & Pensions, Ernst & Young, Foreign & Commonwealth Office, General Medical Council, Goldman Sachs, Hertfordshire University, Home Office, ITV, KPMG, Lloyds Banking Group, NHSBT, PWC and Royal Mail. Various Police Forces, Trade Unions, Borough & County Councils and NHS Trusts.

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