



Advice for Dyslexic Workers



Helpline

0141 - 331 - 2121

www.dyslexiasw.com

Do You Tell Your Employer You're Dyslexic?

When you are thinking about whether to tell your employer, you should weigh up the advantages and disadvantages of doing so. Many employers are supportive and will do their best to provide help and support. They may be less supportive however, if you say nothing or choose to wait a long time before telling them, by which time, some damage may have been done.

However, some dyslexics may decide to say nothing and worry that their employer will interpret the dyslexia as a lack of intelligence and an excuse for poor work performance. Being reluctant to tell your employer is understandable, but at the same time, how can an employer be expected to make a correct assessment of your work, without having all of the facts?

If you do decide to tell your employer, it would be advisable to set up a meeting with your boss in which you discuss dyslexia and the effect it has on you at work.

The key to disclosing your dyslexia lies in **how** you tell them you're dyslexic. Your employer may be unaware of the symptoms and effects of dyslexia so it is important to provide them with as much information as possible and teach them what dyslexia is and what it's not. It's also a good idea to give them advice about how they can help you and also point out things they are doing which may be hindering your performance.

Hopefully, your openness will lead to improvements and a rise in your productivity - something your employer won't complain about.



Easy Workplace Improvements

Fortunately, making improvements doesn't have to cost a lot of money. Here are some hints and tips which you may help you at work.

Make your Work Easier

- Break things Down and Work in Stages
- Break tasks down in to small manageable chunks
- Keep a 'to do' list and cross things off as you do them

Take Breaks / Take it Slowly

Tiredness can affect a dyslexic person's ability to read, spell and do number work accurately.

- Try to organise your day so you are doing paperwork in the earlier part of the day when your brain is less tired and when it

should be easier to deal with visual and sequencing tasks.

- Remember to take regular breaks to refresh your concentration levels.
- Slow down. Taking longer to finish a task may reduce overall duration of a task which has to be redone due to errors.



Use Your Creativity to Organise Your Work

- Ask for instructions to be given in writing as they can be referred back to from time to time.
- If you are dealing with people on the phone, write down exactly what they ask for and read it back to them. This reassures customers.

- If possible, try to delegate work.



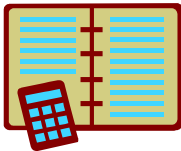
Organising your Work

- Use a calendar, diary or wall planner to mark meetings, deadlines etc. Highlight important events.
- Make a 'to do' list and cross tasks off once they are completed.
- Make a point of checking your lists at key times of the day - first thing in the morning, before lunch and at the end of the day.
- Plan your day so that you can vary your tasks into short manageable chunks. Half an hour of typing may be followed by a half an hour of telephone work.



Organising your Workspace

- Keep your desk tidy and free from clutter.
- Collect and store together similar kinds of paperwork: e.g. invoices and orders.
- Use coloured stickers to differentiate files, trays, drawers and boxes.



Working Methods

With a little thought, you may find that there are daily tasks that can be made a lot easier for you.

- If you have to use complex sets of figures, use a ruler or highlighter to mark numbers up and down and from left to right in order to make it easier to read columns of numbers.

- Break up long numbers. Eg 45698714587 is easier to deal with if you mark it with a series of breaks.

456 - 987 - 145 - 87

- As work piles up and deadlines approach, sit down with your manager and explain what work is a priority using a clear and rational tone. Use your diary to help you plan this.

Gadgets and Software for the Workplace

There are many gadgets and software which have been designed to make work easier.

Unfortunately, not all employers are in a financial position to invest in them and can only invest in equipment on a case by case basis.

- A small tape recorder or dictaphone to remind you of work to be done or dictate a report into to be typed later on.
- A word processor you can speak into which will do the typing for you.

- Texthelp Read and Write - provides a small box on the top of the screen which tries to guess the next word you are going to type. It suggests words you may like to type without you having to spell them and reads out loud your text to enable you to check for inaccuracies.
- A reading pen is available where you run the pen over a word and it will read the word out loud for you through a small earpiece.



Employers Guide to Dyslexia

The British Dyslexia Association (BDA) has produced an essential guide to dyslexia for Employers which offers information and advice about dyslexia in the workplace and how to make reasonable adjustments ensuring compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).

Useful Websites

The following websites offer, information, research and articles about dyslexia.

www.dyslexiasw.com

www.bda-dyslexia.org.uk

www.dyslexia-adults.com

The following websites contain information about software equipment, gadgets and books for people with dyslexia.

www.iansyst.co.uk

www.Dyslexia-institute.org.uk/shop.htm

www.spelling.co.uk

While we cannot recommend any particular company, we are happy to suggest that the products advertised on these sites are appropriate for dyslexics.

Finally, Dyslexia Scotwest can provide significant further information. You can ring our helpline on 0141 445 0001 and speak to one of our dedicated staff or volunteers who will be able to give you some good advice.

You could also visit our Resource Room which contains over 1000 different books, tapes, software and other items, all of which are related to dyslexia.

We can also arrange demonstrations of some of the various types of software that have been produced to help dyslexics. This service is by appointment only.

Following consultation with our Service users our leaflets are prepared in Comic Sans font, size 14 on coloured paper as this is considered to be the most dyslexic friendly format.

Open daily

Monday to Friday

9.30 am till 4.30 pm

Please phone before visiting our office to ensure that someone is available to see you

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While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this pamphlet, we cannot be held liable for changes that may occur.