

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS in the WORKPLACE

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Presenting a positive image

Because of stereotyped images of dyslexia and other SLDs, adults must learn to explain how they are affected and how they prefer to work OR risk a response based on ignorance.

Get into the habit of clearly saying what you need at work, e.g.

"I prefer to tape meetings rather than make notes"

"I have difficulty deciphering unfamiliar handwriting, can you type out the address?"

"I prefer to use a dictaphone when working with clients and write up reports at home"

Since SLDs vary, the strategies adopted will vary from person to person.

It is essential for you to **value and use your strengths** while being aware of areas of difficulty and **putting conscious strategies** in place to help overcome them.

In this way employees with SLDs can present themselves as mature individuals who are **able to compensate** for problem areas, given a sympathetic environment.

Study the chart below, highlighting what is personally relevant.

PROBLEM	SUGGESTIONS
difficulty reading large amounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* organise your work so that you allow yourself plenty of time* look at other ways of obtaining the same information* discuss the material with colleagues, ask for summaries / key points* ask someone to highlight the important parts of documents* make use of readback software to read computer files
difficulty with proofreading	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* use readback software on your work computer* ask a colleague to check through your work
poor short term memory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* use mnemonic devices, acronyms, associations and visualisation* organise details so that they can be referred to easily, using diagrams, or flow charts* program reminders onto phones and computers
muddling numbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* 'chunk' number sequences, reinforce by saying them aloud
difficulty remembering verbal instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* use a dictaphone to record important instructions* ask people to give you instructions clearly in a quiet location* ask people to write down important information* ask people to show (rather than tell) you what needs to be done* take notes as you hear directions, check these are correct* repeat instructions back and get confirmation that you are correct

organising yourself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * keep your area at work organised and tidy * always replace items in the proper place as soon as possible * prioritise what is important – check as needed, make a daily To Do list * use colour coding * use 'post-its' for urgent reminders - <u>always remove after the event</u> * for regular tasks (such as taking down phone calls, or taking notes at a meeting), create a layout / proforma with appropriate prompts * use a wall planner, daily calendar, desk diary, electronic organiser systematically. * allow extra time for unforeseen occurrences
grasping hidden meanings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * ask for direct instructions * ask for clarification or rephrase and repeat back in order to check
difficulty remembering appointments, deadlines, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * set an alarm watch or organise an alarm/diary feature on phone or computer * use a tickler file, which has a section for each month and each day, get into the habit of putting in reminders and reviewing it daily * get memos placed on your voice mail
easily distracted poor concentration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * try and obtain the quietest and least distracting location, for example, away from the doors and photocopier. Ask for a private place to work * if possible, arrange to work at home occasionally
difficulties coping with interruptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * use a <i>Do Not Disturb</i> sign * when interrupted, pause and write down what you were doing so that you can refer to it when resuming work * try do one task at a time and finish before starting another * arrange your time so that you are available to others for part of the day only. Stick to a routine so others know when you are available
difficulty writing by hand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * where possible use a computer with dictation or prediction software * if possible, phone rather than write, making a record of the conversation * use a dictaphone (if you have sufficient privacy) which links into a pc.
spelling and grammar errors coping in meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * use spellcheckers and predictive software on the computer * have work/reports proofread before submitting them * try and use proformas, refer to fair copies for routine written output * use a mindmap/spidergram approach. Ask for notes. Tape meeting
directional difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * use GPS * make a note of visual landmarks or photograph them on your phone

Contact [Access to Work](#) for an assessment of work-based needs and suitable technology.

[Reasonable adjustments](#) should be provided, according to the Equality Act, 2010.

Consider where your difficulties lie and how they would best be accommodated.