

APPENDIX THREE

Presentations from Field Experts

Dyslexia in the Workplace

Margaret Malpas – Co-Chair of the British Dyslexia Association (BDA) and Founder of Malpas Flexible Learning Ltd

Background

- Dyslexia affects the working memory; being organised
- England is 22nd for literacy and 21st for numeracy out of 24 OECD countries (OECD, Oct 2013)
- The study shows that there are 8.5 million adults in England with the reading literacy of a 10-year old.
- Equality Act (2010) states that reasonable adjustments must be made to provide fair access to services

Reasonable Adjustments

- In work, for employees with dyslexia and other SpLD which generally include:
 - Assistive technology
 - 1:1 coping strategy training
 - Awareness training for colleagues and managers (Access to Work will fully pay for awareness training in the workplace)
 - Potentially a support worker (this could also be a colleague/manager)

What is Reasonable?

- An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves:
 - Unreasonable costs
 - Timeframes
 - Affects the security or integrity of the assessment

Access to Work

- UK Government scheme providing funding for adjustments beyond which the employer should make
 - Communication support for interviews etc.
 - Assistive technology; awareness training; coping strategy coaching; support workers
- The faster you access this scheme, the better it is
- BDA provides:
 - Workplace Assessor's Accredited Training which includes online training for your organisation, dyslexia assessors and champions, solutions covered by 'Access to Work' funding
 - Employer's Guide
 - Coping strategies will be fully funded

BDA Workshop: Workplace Assessor Programme

- British Dyslexia Association's Workplace Assessor Programme:
 - Group cost £4,000 to £6,000; individual £1,400 (9 month programme)
- Dyslexia – common challenges
 - Difficulty in prioritising and sequences
- Workplace Challenges:
 - Report writing
 - No support from colleagues, isolated
 - No correct tools
- Future Workplace Challenges:
 - Lots of changes in new role(s)
 - Lack of coping strategies
 - Alien environment
 - Partnership working
- Full diagnostics assessment can be quite costly, especially in London
- Workplace Needs Assessment can be done through 'Access to Work' or organisational workplace assessment

Reasonable Adjustments

- Multi-sensory approach; checklist; pneumonics; get someone else to proofread/check work; proofreading technique (read backwards); voice activated software (for those who are keen on IT equipment)
- 1:1 coaching
- Colour coded notebooks
- Over-lays
- Organisational training
- Different trays to distinguish priority; audio device
- Teach processes

Outcome

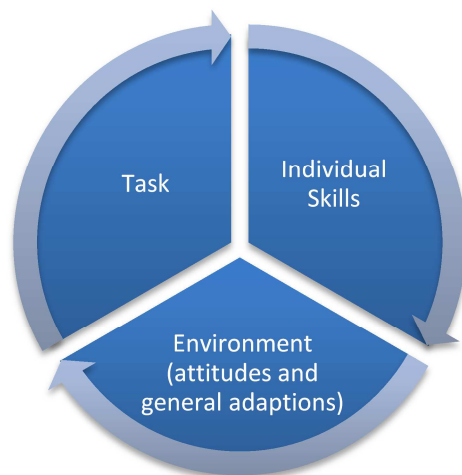
- Helping employer understand and implement reasonable adjustments/support framework

Developmental Coordination Disorder

Professor Amanda Kirby – GP, Patron of the Dyspraxia Association in New Zealand, Advisor to the Dyspraxia Association in Ireland, Medical Advisor to the Dyspraxia Foundation in the UK, Founder of Movement Matters UK and Chief Executive of Do-IT Solutions Ltd

Background

- Around 10-15% of the population have Specific Learning Disabilities (SpLD)
- Reasonable adjustments around attitudes – particularly line managers
- Developmental Coordination Disorder – international term as DCD
- National organisations – Dyspraxia in the UK; Dyspraxia Foundation
- Individuals may vary in how their difficulties present
- Key areas of difficulties: fine motor skills, balance, organisation and time management, anxiety and depression (much more common with hidden impairments)
- Challenges faced: learning new tasks
- Someone with dyspraxia may present:
 - Working much longer
 - Avoiding advancement/promotion
 - Increased anxiety and sickness
 - Interaction with disability and mental health
- Challenges may result if there becomes a mismatch with demand and coping skills



- Non disclosures:

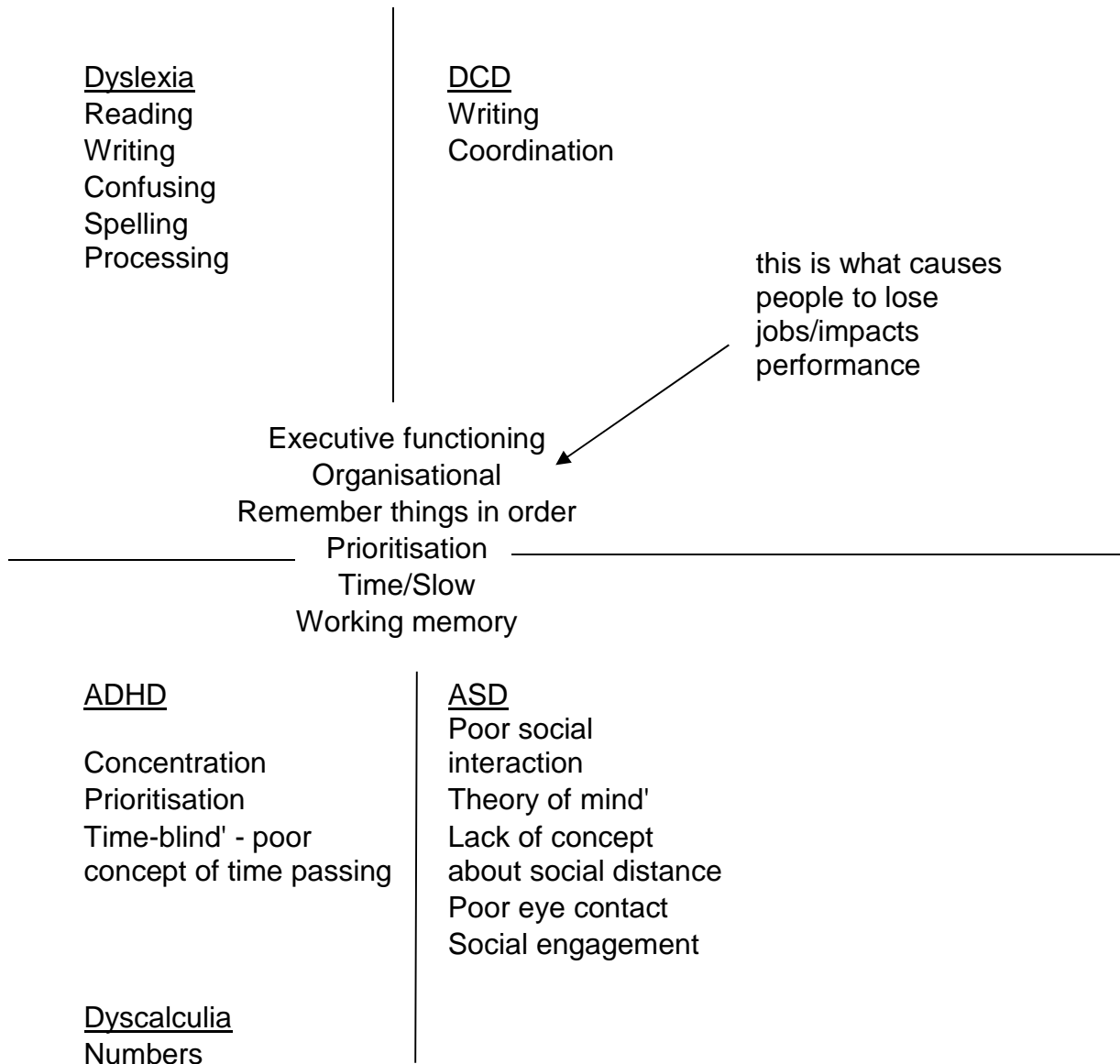


Suggested Adjustments

- Explain the task and the component parts
- Break down tasks and demonstrate it
- Giving adequate time and practice for learning new tasks
- Encourage accuracy first and speed up
- Avoid handwritten tasks (use templates, IT equipment, software)
- Organisational assistance
- Use mobile phone/diary/electronic system
- Do-IT Profiling Suite of Tools – screening tools and suggested reasonable adjustments
- Encourage people to go out and get fitter which will help with coordination

Workshop: Reasonable Adjustments for the Whole Person

- Need to be proactive under Equality Act



What stages can support be given?

- Application/registration processes
- Include SpLD on application process, and request assessments from previous workplace (Thames Valley Police)
- Website should be both text and voice enabled
- Timed out applications online are difficult
- Do you have a spell checker built in? Since you are checking if they can do the job, not just spelling

Reasonable Adjustments

- Organisation and time management

- Understanding and communicating
- Reading, spelling
- Writing
- Maths
- Physical fitness/driving
- Ginger – proofreading software (available for free) on www.boxofideas.org
- Response to intervention – more cost effective than just sending for documents

Getting Started

- Provide readily available information on the range of hidden impairments (not just physical)
- Have a named point of contact and publicise
- Reduce stigma

Possible Recruitment Adaptations:

- Avoiding handwritten forms to complete
- Stopping ‘time-out’ on website application forms
- Minimising text boxes, have ‘text to speech’ enabled, spell checker where possible
- Having accurate job descriptions to fit the job
- Follow up if disclosure made; give additional time
- Pre-interview protocol

Generic Principles

- Acronym dictionary helps the whole organisation
- Job description – write rules for people with ADHD
- Think about timed activities – is it realistic?

Induction/Training

- What’s the ‘real job’ – be explicit of the tasks expected and time taken
- Neurodiversity
- “None of us are simple individuals”

Best Practice

Hampshire Constabulary – Specific Learning Disabilities Project
Dyslexia Action Group

- Overlap of learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dyspraxia
- Increasing concerns that external ‘Access to Work’ assessments were not ‘fit for purpose’ – assessors look at the individual in their environment and not that of the candidate
- Lack of communication between internal departments
- “Postcode lottery”
- Hampshire Constabulary were vulnerable to challenge (employment tribunals)

- Screening tools: Quick Scan and Study Scan: carry out pre-employment
- Reasonable adjustments fitted into three categories (as laid out in the guidance provided by the British Dyslexia Association):
 - Personal Strategies (coping strategies), bespoke, carried out over a length of time, external person)
 - Assistive Technology (screen adjustments, stress aids)
 - Literacy and Numeracy (links with local educational establishments/organisations for courses); this can be done through self-referrals, management referrals, an assessor can be assigned to the individual
- Awareness training
- Process maps created
- Terms of reference
- Pilot

Aims & Objectives of Hampshire

- Provide consistent and credible support to staff bespoke to the needs of profession
- Joined up approach

Challenges

- “Corporacy”; processes and procedures (determining boundaries, advertising; what would the reasonable adjustments be; terms of reference
- Demand and resilience
- Assessor skill-base
- Communication (lack of ownership amongst departments i.e. IT)

How it progressed

- Pilot evaluation report
- Embedded as ‘business as normal’
- New assessors selected and trained (workplace assessors across all departments as volunteers)
- Department ‘buy-in’
- Staff awareness (get buy-in from line managers)
- Use of external providers and support (training days, e-learning, tutors, leadership courses)

Disability Assessment Group (DAG) Assessment

- What are the needs of individual
- Strengths of individual
- What would be needed (reasonable adjustments)
- Assessment then shared with line manager after getting individual’s consent

Outcomes

- Improved employee performance

- Significant increase in staff referrals
- Reasonable adjustments timely
- People Strategy and Equality Act compliance
- Strengthened relationships (internal and external)
- Cost savings (not just sending staff on training days)
- External funding opportunities maximised – ‘Access to Work’ as this can be reclaimed back
- Collaborative approach with external providers
- Significant support to other public sector organisations
- National acclaim

Best Practice at Transport for London (TfL)

- Dedicated staff member with a specialism in SpLD
- Specialist software for any staff member
- Weekly ‘English for dyslexic learners’ class
- An assessment service
- Regular awareness raising for any member of staff
- Advice on reasonable adjustments easily available to staff
- Recruitment team with embedded policies
- Dyslexia champions