

# Working with disabled colleagues

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**We would like to thank our Partners and Members who as part of our external steering group provided us with such valuable advice during the writing of this guide.**

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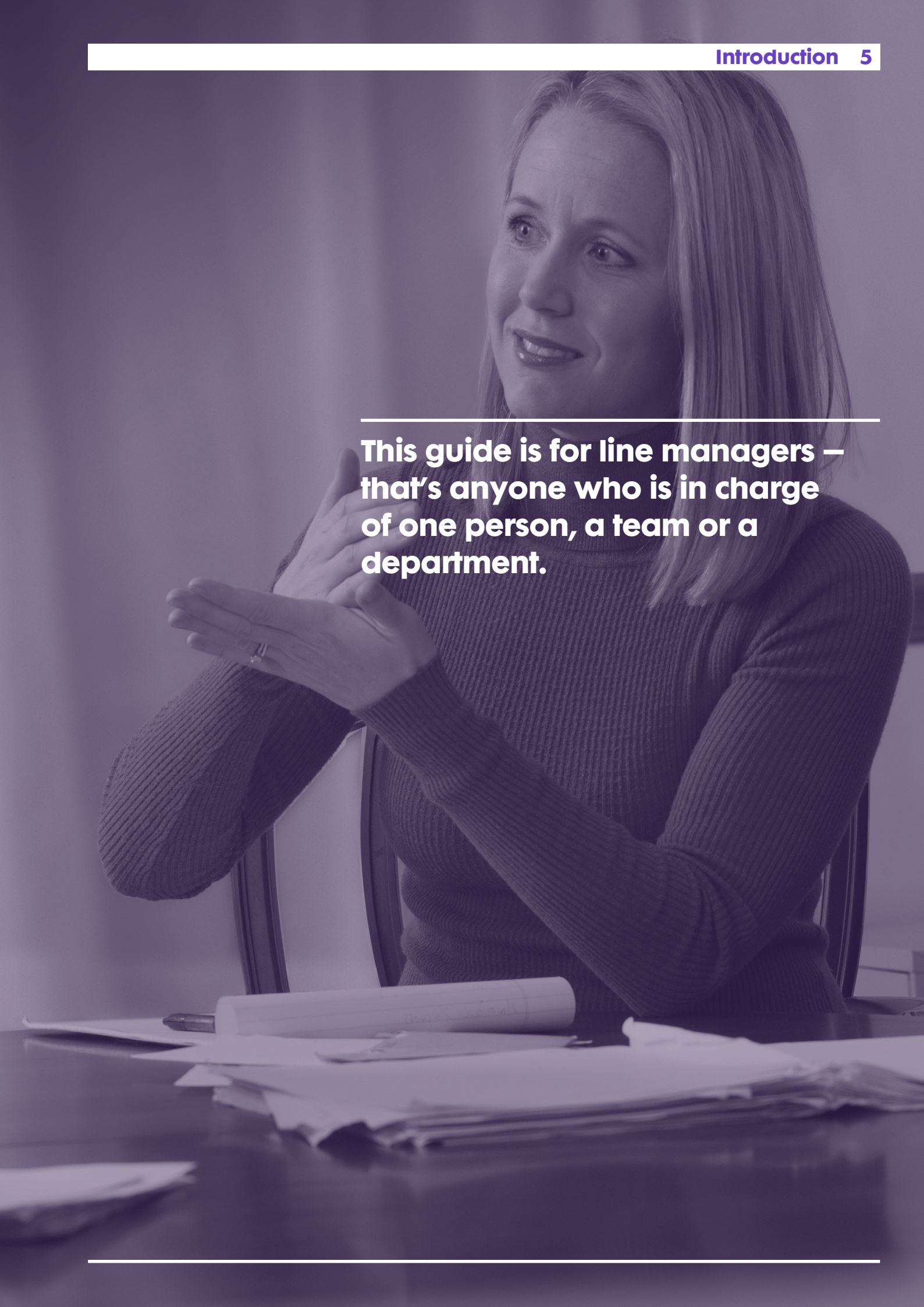
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# Introduction







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**This guide is for line managers — that's anyone who is in charge of one person, a team or a department.**

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# How will this guide help me?

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**As a line manager you have a responsibility to make sure your employees are treated fairly and have the same opportunities as their non-disabled colleagues.**

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## **Who are disabled people?**

The term 'disabled people' covers a wide range of different people with different impairments, which may or may not affect the way they do their job. People with disabilities work in all sectors of the economy and in all types of roles.

People with disabilities are protected against discrimination at work under the Equality Act 2010.

Under the law the term 'disability' is so wide that people who you might not think of as disabled and may not even think of themselves as disabled are protected by the law.

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## **Reasonable adjustments**

Awareness that everyone is different is key to becoming confident about managing disabled colleagues.

Recognising difference and knowing when and how to change the way work can be done is called making reasonable adjustments. A reasonable adjustment can be as simple as allowing a shop assistant with lower back pain to sit down while working.

Making reasonable adjustments will ensure that you can confidently recruit disabled people and keep them working for you. It is a term we will return to throughout this guide.

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### **This guide will make it easier for you to:**

- Be confident about managing disabled colleagues.
- Treat disabled colleagues you manage fairly.
- Recognise when someone might have a disability.
- Be aware of potential barriers faced by disabled people.
- Identify how work could be done differently to maximise the potential of your disabled staff – called making ‘reasonable adjustments’.
- Decide whether or not an adjustment is reasonable.
- Make sure you do not break the law by discriminating against disabled colleagues.
- Know where to go for more detailed help and advice.

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### **I don’t have any disabled people in my team – why should I read this guide?**

You might be surprised – in the UK 8% of the working age population have a disability, that’s 3.2 million people.

### **Why should I want disabled people in my team?**

You probably already have disabled people working for you – they may just have decided not to tell you about their disability. This could be because it doesn’t affect the way they do their job or because they are worried about how you might react.

In fact having disabled people working for you means you may be better able to understand what your disabled customers or clients need and this could well give you an edge over your competitors.

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### **Being seen as a manager and employer who treats disabled people fairly will also mean that you:**

- Get the best people applying to you for jobs – 6% of first class honours degrees are gained by students known to have a disability.
- Keep employees who have valuable experience and knowledge even if they become disabled.
- Reduce sickness absence levels and early ill-health retirements.
- Will protect you and your organisation from claims of unlawful discrimination.
- Don’t worry unduly about using the wrong words.

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**For more information about the Equality Act 2010 please see Business Disability Forum’s briefing papers ‘Disability and the Equality Act 2010’ and ‘Adjustments in employment’.**

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# I'm worried

**about doing or saying the wrong thing – are there any rules of etiquette?**

People often worry about saying the wrong thing when talking to disabled people. However, it's important to remember that a patronising, thoughtless or rude manner is far more offensive than actual language used.

If you are unsure about how to say something, ask the disabled person what they would prefer. Respectful language about disability and disabled people should be used regardless of whether a disabled person is present.

**Did you know? There are 11 million disabled people in the UK who have a spending power of around £80bn a year.**

# Disabled people

**or people with disabilities?**

Some people who see disability as an equality or rights issue prefer the term 'disabled people' because they regard themselves as people with impairments or medical conditions who are 'disabled' by a society that fails to remove unnecessary barriers.

Other people prefer the term 'people with disabilities' because it puts the person first.

Many people do not see themselves as disabled at all, for example some people who are pre-lingually deaf (i.e. deaf from birth or an early age) and use British Sign Language or those who have a long-term medical condition or illness.

As a rule of thumb you should describe people as they describe themselves and if in doubt, ask.

For more guidance on language and etiquette see Business Disability Forum's 'Disability communication guide'.



# What should I say?

**A few basic rules:**

- **Never describe people by their impairments, e.g. 'an epileptic' or 'a diabetic'.**
  - **Do not use collective nouns such as 'the disabled' or 'the blind'.**
  - **People without a disability should be described as 'non-disabled' rather than 'able bodied' as people with mental health problems or learning difficulties may also be described or describe themselves as disabled.**
  - **Don't be embarrassed about using common expressions such as 'see you later' in front of someone who has a visual impairment or 'you'll hear from me soon' to someone who is deaf or hard of hearing.**
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# Recruiting new team members





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**Barriers to recruitment must be removed**

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When recruiting a new member of your team you must ensure that all the processes are barrier free for disabled candidates. Barrier free means that disabled candidates have the same opportunities as those without disabilities and can show they are the best person for the job.

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### Writing job descriptions and person specifications

People with disabilities shouldn't feel excluded by the language used in job descriptions and person specifications. You should take time to consider what tasks and skills are really essential for the job. Also, think about any risks involved in doing the job and how these might be overcome.

Most importantly, concentrate on what needs to be done rather than how the work should be done. This is because a disabled candidate may be able to demonstrate they can do the work if reasonable adjustments are made.

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### Recruitment dos and don'ts

- Replace "must be able to touch type at 80wpm." With "must be able to produce accurate reports using a word processing package."
- Replace "must be able to drive and have a clean current driving licence." With "extensive travel throughout the UK to meet clients essential."

**Barrier free means that disabled candidates have the same opportunities as those without disabilities.**

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**Scenario – part 1**

Brenda, who is partially sighted, is 21 years old. She left school with one GCSE and has been unemployed since then. For the last two years, however, she has been doing voluntary work for a local charity on a project setting up drop-in advice sessions. One of the workers at the charity has seen an advertisement for a job as a projects' assistant and has encouraged Brenda to ask for an application pack.

**Scenario – part 2**

- When Brenda calls to ask for an application pack she is asked if she would like paper copy in the post or to have it in an alternative format such as on disk or by email. She asks for it by email because software on her computer will read it out to her. She confirms that she can fill in the application form on her computer and email it back by the closing date.
- When she gets the job description and person specification she thinks that she might be able to do the job. It asks for someone who is well organised, can produce accurate reports using a word processing package and is willing to travel to other offices in the UK and possibly abroad.
- Brenda has been using special software on her computer to produce reports for the charity and she has been praised on her planning and organisation skills on the drop-in project. She has always wanted to travel and is excited by the possibility of doing so for her job.

**Selecting the best candidate for the job****Remember:**

- Formal qualifications may not be an accurate indicator of capability because many disabled people have been disadvantaged by the education system.
- Gaps between jobs or courses could be disability related, e.g. rehabilitation after an accident or a long period of illness from which they have now recovered.
- Voluntary work and life experience can provide as valuable skills as work experience, e.g. practical problem solving and relationship skills.
- Spelling and grammar are only relevant if writing is an essential part of the job.

# Interviewing

## Make reasonable adjustments for all candidates

Ask every candidate, not just those who have told you that they have a disability, if they have any particular requirements for the interview, e.g. an interview time which means that they do not have to travel at rush hour.

### Be prepared to:

- Hold the interview in an accessible location, i.e. on the ground floor or in a room accessible by a lift.
- Organise a sign language interpreter – but remember to book one early as they can be very busy.
- Allow the person to be accompanied by a support worker.
- Consider alternatives to a standard interview, i.e. having only one interviewer or conducting the interview by telephone.

## Interview dos and don'ts – a checklist:

### Asking questions about health or disability prior to a job offer is unlawful so:

- Don't ask "how will the pressure of tight deadlines affect your disability?"

- Do ask "this job involves working under pressure to tight deadlines. Tell us about situations where you've been under pressure and how you ensured you met deadlines."
- Don't describe the tasks involved in the job or ask the candidate what they won't be able to do because of their disability.
- Do describe the tasks involved in the job and ask how the candidate will do the job.
- And don't ask "what happened to you – how did you get your disability?"

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## How will you know if a candidate has a disability?

The simple answer is that you may not always be able to tell. Many disabilities are not visible. The Equality Act does not require the candidate to tell you about a disability unless they need a reasonable adjustment.

In fact it is unlawful to ask a candidate if they have a health condition or disability before making a job offer. You can only ask questions about how they will do the job they've applied for.

If you have made the recruitment process as barrier free as possible and asked all candidates whether they need reasonable adjustments then interviewees will probably feel more comfortable about telling you if they have a disability.

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**Scenario – part 3**

- Alice, who is the line manager for the projects' assistant post, calls Brenda to invite her for an interview. Alice tells Brenda when and where the interview will be and who will be there. She also asks Brenda if she needs any changes to any of these or anything else to help her do her best at the interview. Brenda tells Alice that she has a visual impairment and cannot read print smaller than size 18 point.
- Alice agrees to send the letter inviting Brenda to the interview by email and makes sure that it contains clear directions of how to get to the office. Alice also checks that the receptionist and the other interviewers have had disability awareness training.

# Starting work

**Ensure all induction processes are accessible**

Before your disabled colleague starts work check that all induction processes are accessible. For example:

- Are all meetings with colleagues booked in accessible rooms?
- Is the IT department or equivalent aware of the software and hardware that the person will be using?
- Do training videos used have subtitles for employees who are deaf or hard of hearing or audio description for employees with visual impairments?
- Are colleagues aware of reasonable adjustments they need to make such as providing written information by email or in large print?

You may need to draw these things to the attention of other people in your organisation and get their help in ensuring that the induction is accessible.

## The first day – checklist:

- Discuss the job with the new employee, how they are going to do it and any adjustments they may need. It may be helpful to complete a 'reasonable adjustment request form' before doing so. This can be downloaded from the member resources section at [www.disabilitystandard.com](http://www.disabilitystandard.com).

Make sure you tell the employee what reasonable adjustments you have already made and what equipment you may be waiting for.

- Keep a note of how any reasonable adjustments made are working and improvements that may be needed - A tailored adjustment agreement is a good way of doing this, and can be downloaded from the member resources section at [www.disabilitystandard.com](http://www.disabilitystandard.com).
- Fix regular dates to review all reasonable adjustments.
- Finally, as with all new employees, make sure you let them know what you expect and to ensure that they understand your workplace policies and procedures.

# Training

You need to ensure that you take a proactive role in the training and development of your employees. Regular meetings to discuss work and progress should help you to identify any specific training needs that individual employees might have.

## Scenario- part 4

- Brenda was successful at her interview and has been offered the job.
- Alice, Brenda's manager, has spoken to her colleagues in the IT department who have confirmed that they can install the software Brenda needs on to her computer. Alice will let them know Brenda's proposed start date so they can have her computer ready.
- Alice has also checked the training video that new employees watch on office policies and procedures. The video does not have audio description and so Brenda will not know what is being shown on the screen. Alice talks to the human resources manager but it won't be possible to make this video accessible for Brenda in time.
- The human resources manager offers instead to talk Brenda through the policies and procedures video and makes a note to ensure that all future training videos have both subtitling and audio description.

You need to make sure that disabled members of your team can benefit fully from training. This means checking that all training providers (whether employed by or working for your organisation or for another external organisation) have received disability awareness training.

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### Barrier free training

You will also need to ensure that the training will be accessible for disabled people and that the trainers understand that they have a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments such as:

- Ensuring videos are subtitled and audio described.
- Booking sign language interpreters.
- Reading out information on PowerPoint slides.
- Sending written information out in advance in the format needed by the person taking the course.
- Ensuring that venues are accessible for people with mobility impairments and have accessible toilets.
- Ensuring regular breaks are scheduled.

#### Remember

**A disabled employee might need training on how to use a reasonable adjustment like voice-activated software.**

**Remember**

- If a candidate or colleague that you manage tells you that they have a disability be very careful about who else you tell. If you think someone else needs to know you must first ask for the disabled person's permission.
- Explain who you think you should tell and why, e.g. a co-worker to explain why the work is being done differently, or human resources because you need help making reasonable adjustments.
- In most cases you will not need to tell anyone else what the disability is but simply that the person has a disability and needs certain reasonable adjustments.
- Ask the person to sign a consent form, which states that they give permission for named individual(s) to be told about their disability. This is to comply with the Equality Act 2010.

**It's your responsibility to ensure that your team member has the equipment and adjustments needed to do their job and to keep this under review. You may need to keep checking on progress with colleagues in other departments.**

**Scenario- part 5**

- On Brenda's first day Alice and Brenda fixed a date to meet and review how Brenda was settling in for a week's time. At this review meeting Brenda tells Alice that the software has been installed on her computer but she is waiting for someone from the IT department to fix a problem with one database. Alice makes a note to check with her colleagues in IT and tells Brenda she will let her know by the end of the following day when this problem is likely to be fixed.
- Brenda also asks if her colleagues could remember to give her any written material either electronically or in size 18 point with black writing on white or yellow paper. Brenda and Alice agree that Alice will raise this at the next team meeting and Brenda will send her colleagues an email asking them to do this for her.
- Brenda and Amy agree to complete a tailored adjustment agreement that records the reasonable adjustments they have agreed that Brenda needs. Brenda will bring this agreement to their regular meetings so they can review whether or not the adjustments are in place and working effectively.

**For more guidance on recruiting the best candidate for the job see Business Disability Forum's briefing paper 'Managing recruitment'.**



# Managing performance





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**Understand the specific work  
needs of your employees**

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# Understand the needs of your employees

As a line manager you need to talk to all members of your team about their performance at regular review meetings, at the end of a probation period or at six monthly or annual appraisals.

At every meeting you should ask if there is anything you could do to make it easier for them to do their job, i.e. do they need adjustments to the workplace or working arrangements.

You should make reasonable adjustments if:

- The employee tells you that they have a disability, illness or injury.
- You think that the employee might have a disability.
- Making a reasonable adjustment would help the employee to do their job better, regardless of disability.

This approach will help you to:

- Meet your organisation's legal obligations to make reasonable adjustments.
- Encourage members of your team to tell you about a disability, illness or injury that they have.

- Get the best from your team because it should remove any barriers that prevent them from working to the best of their ability.

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## Making the appraisal process barrier free

Making the appraisal process barrier free means you may need to change the way you conduct the appraisal. In some cases you may need to speak to a senior colleague or the human resources department about making reasonable adjustments to the process if it places a member of your team at a substantial disadvantage.

Remember that you may need to:

- Allow extra time for the appraisal, both before the meeting to give the person time to prepare and at the meeting itself.
- Ensure that the meeting takes place in an accessible venue.
- Book a sign language interpreter for the meeting if needed (you will need to do this well in advance).
- Allow a support worker or friend to be present if requested.
- Provide forms in alternative formats.
- Forms should also be written in plain English and be easy to follow.

### Remember

**You should ask everyone you manage what they need to make their job easier, not just employees who have told you they have a disability.**

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## When improvement in performance is necessary

If an employee's performance deteriorates or is not as good as it should be always consider the possibility that they might have a disability. Examples of poor performance could be:

- Being persistently late.
- Poor or deteriorating relationships with colleagues.
- A negative attitude.
- Poor written or oral communication.
- Missing deadlines or forgetting to do work.
- Irritability or moodiness.
- Lots of short-term sickness absences.
- Long periods of sickness absence.
- Complaints of being tired or in pain.

### Scenario- part 6

- Over the last few months Alice has noticed a change in a previously reliable member of her team. Gary has been very negative in meetings and has also refused to help newer members of the team, saying he's too busy.
- He is often late in the mornings and has been taking odd days off sick. Alice also thinks that Gary has been drinking. Then last Friday he went out for a long lunch and came back drunk. Alice sent him home and now needs to decide what to do, as being drunk at work is a disciplinary offence.

Before reprimanding an employee ask them if they realise that their performance or behaviour is not of the standard required and discuss any possible reasons. You should ask if the working environment is making it difficult for them to do their job. Then you can think of ways – together and seeking advice from colleagues – to overcome these difficulties by making reasonable adjustments.

For example:

- An employee who is always late might have difficulty getting up in the mornings because they are taking medication that makes them sleep for longer and feel sluggish in the mornings. A reasonable adjustment might be to alter their working hours so that they start later and finish later.
- An employee, who seems to have a negative attitude and always gives reasons why they cannot do something, might have depression and be feeling overwhelmed and unable to cope or control their workload. A reasonable adjustment might be to have more regular meetings with their manager to order the work and agree priorities and deadlines.
- An employee who is irritable and moody might be in pain caused by the working environment. A reasonable adjustment would be to organise a workplace assessment, which might recommend a different chair, keyboard or desk or relocating a computer and files.



# Managing sickness absence

## Seek changes to enable a quicker return to work

First, make sure you know what your organisation's policy is on recording disability related sickness absence. It is best practice to record disability related sickness absence separately from other types of sickness absence. This means that, where reasonable, you can discount some or all of the disability related absences when making decisions like whether to start disciplinary procedures or consider someone for promotion.

If an employee is absent from work for a long time try to keep in touch with them. Ideally your contracts of employment should state that the person's line manager or a human resources manager will contact them if they are absent from work for more than two weeks.

When you are calling, writing to or seeing someone who has been absent for a long time:

- Ask them how they are and what their doctors have said about their recovery.

- Ask if you can make any changes to the way they work to enable them to come back to work sooner, e.g. coming in for a few hours to start with.
- Tell them about what has been happening at work and about their colleagues.
- Ask if they would like to receive minutes of meetings, newsletters or copies of work that is being done so that they can stay up to date.

## If an employee is absent from work for a long time try to keep in touch with them.

This will help the person feel less isolated and worried about returning. It should also remind them that they are missed by their colleagues.

Being absent from work for a long-time can lead to a loss of confidence which in turn can cause a reluctance to return.

When an employee returns from a long period of absence it is important to talk to them as you would with a new employee about what they are finding difficult to do because of their illness or disability or simply because they have been away for so long.

Ask if reasonable adjustments would help, e.g. extra supervision while they are settling back in. If adjustments are made, review these on a regular basis.

For more detailed guidance on recording sickness absence see Business Disability Forum's briefing paper 'Managing sickness absence' (or refer to your organisation's own procedures).

If a person you don't know is disabled is taking a lot of time off sick you should talk to them about why they are taking so much time off.

If they say they are feeling ill or seeing a doctor or specialist you should talk to your human resources department about referring them to an occupational health adviser who can provide a report for you after getting information from the person's doctor or specialist. This report should help you to decide what reasonable adjustments if any are needed or if adjustments already in place need to be reviewed.

For more detailed guidance on getting medical reports see Business Disability Forum's briefing paper 'Disability management and the medical adviser' (or refer to your organisation's own procedures).

**Did you know? An ageing population means you're more likely to have a disabled employee. Around 40% of the English population are over 45 – this is the age at which the incidence of disability begins to increase.**

# Ending employment





A woman with long dark hair and bangs, wearing a white blazer over a lace top, is sitting at a desk in an office. She is looking off to the side with a thoughtful expression. The background is a blurred office environment with desks and chairs.

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**Exit interviews will help identify  
ways to improve**

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# Disciplinary and grievance processes

Your organisation needs to ensure that its disciplinary and grievance processes are accessible. For example:

- Disciplinary and grievance procedures should be available in alternative formats and easily accessed by everyone.
- Hearings should be conducted in an accessible venue.
- Sign language interpreters, support workers or an accredited trade union official or work colleague may need to be present.
- Questions may need to be asked one at a time of the employee or provided in writing as well as asked verbally.

## Remember

Disciplining an employee for something arising out of their disability, e.g. poor attendance or performance is unlawful unless you can justify it. Disciplinary measures in these circumstances should only be taken after all possible reasonable adjustments have been made to try to improve the employee's attendance or performance.

It is lawful to discipline a disabled employee for reasons that are not related to their disability. You may nevertheless need to make reasonable adjustments to the disciplinary procedures and processes to ensure that they are accessible and so fair.

# Ending employment

An employee might leave your department or organisation because they have:

- Been promoted.
- Resigned.
- Been made redundant.
- Retired.
- Taken early ill-health retirement.
- Been dismissed.

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## Resignation

Every employee who resigns should be offered an exit interview. All employees, not just those who have told you they have a disability, should be asked if their decision to leave was influenced by a disability and if they think the organisation had failed to make reasonable adjustments for them or failed to allow their career to progress because of their disability.

**As a line manager you should read the notes of exit interviews with employees you have managed to see if there is anything you could do differently.**

## Redundancy

Disabled employees who are made redundant should be offered the same redeployment opportunities as everyone else. If there is a possibility that such an employee might be redeployed into your team consider reasonable adjustments that could be made to the way the job is done in the same way as you would for a new recruit.

### Remember

**Selecting a candidate for redundancy because of their disability is unlawful. Your organisation should ensure that criteria by which people are selected for redundancy are fair and objective and not unduly influenced by an employee's disability, e.g. disability related sickness absences, inability to work flexible hours or reasonable adjustments such as the use of a support worker or adaptive equipment.**



## Retirement

As on resignation, employees who retire should be offered an exit interview and asked if they felt that reasonable adjustments they needed had been offered and made for them. As a line manager you should read the notes from these interviews.

Employees are more likely to develop a disability after the age of 45. As a line manager it is your responsibility to offer and make reasonable adjustments if it appears to you that an older worker is having difficulty doing their job.

An employee who feels that they have to retire because reasonable adjustments have not been made for a disability that they have acquired, e.g. a hearing impairment, may have a claim for both disability and age related discrimination if they can show that they were treated less favourably because of their age.

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## Early ill-health retirement

Early ill-health retirement should only be considered if there are no possible reasonable adjustments, including redeployment that would enable the person to remain at work.

## Dismissal

As with all employees, unfortunately it may sometimes be necessary to dismiss a disabled member of staff.

Dismissing an employee simply because they have a disability is direct discrimination which cannot be justified.

Dismissing an employee for a reason arising out of their disability, e.g. sickness absence or poor performance, is discrimination but an employer might be justified if there is a very good reason for the dismissal. It will not be possible to justify such a dismissal, however, if reasonable adjustments could have been made to improve attendance or performance but were not implemented.

### Remember

Dismissing a disabled employee for a reason arising out of their disability is a last resort and should only be done after advice has been sought from occupational health, other doctors and experts, human resources and legal advisers.

It is, however, lawful to dismiss a disabled employee for reasons that are not related to their disability.

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## Promotion

Remember, the new manager will need to know what reasonable adjustments their new employee needs. You should ask the employee if you can pass on any assessments or reports on reasonable adjustments to their new manager. However, remember to get the employee's written consent before you do this as this is sensitive personal information that you will be passing on. A good way to do this is by using a tailored adjustment agreement which records the adjustments that you have agreed with the employee. This document is owned by the employee and so they can show it to their new manager as a starting point for discussing how they will do their new job.

It is the new manager's responsibility to discuss how the employee will do their job and to keep the reasonable adjustments under review.

### Scenario- part 7

Alice and Gary have been really pleased with the way that Brenda has developed and taken on more responsibility. A more senior manager also noticed Brenda's work and asked her to apply for a position in his team. Alice recruited more people on to her team and Gary's work has improved so much that they both encouraged her to apply for the promotion. She was successful and the first task in her new role will take her to Barcelona!

**You should ask the employee if you can pass on any assessments or reports on reasonable adjustments to their new manager.**

**However, remember to get the employee's written consent before you do this as this is sensitive personal information that you will be passing on.**

# Appendix

## Reasonable adjustments

**The Equality Act 2010 requires employers to change the working environment or working arrangements if they make it very difficult for a disabled person to do their job.**

**Examples of reasonable adjustments are:**

- Widening a doorway, providing a ramp or moving furniture so that a wheelchair user can get around.
- Giving some minor duties that a disabled person finds difficult to do to someone else.
- Allowing a disabled person to change their working hours to part-time or perhaps starting and finishing later so that they don't have to commute at rush hour.
- Moving a disabled person to a different office, shop or site closer to their home or onto the ground floor or allowing them to work from home.
- Allowing a disabled person time off during working hours for rehabilitation, assessment or treatment, e.g. physiotherapy or psychotherapy appointments.
- Providing additional training or mentoring for a disabled person.
- The disabled person's manager providing additional supervision.
- Acquiring or modifying equipment like voice activated software for someone with a visual impairment or digital recorder for someone who finds it difficult to take written notes.
- Making changes to tests and interviews so that a disabled person can show their ability to do the job.
- Providing sign language interpreters or readers who will read out documents for someone with a visual impairment or a support worker.
- Modifying disciplinary or grievance procedures.
- Adjusting redundancy criteria so that a person isn't selected unfairly for a reason relating to their disability.
- Moving a disabled person who can no longer do their current job even with any of the adjustments above to a different job that they can do – again with adjustments if necessary.

**There may be other adjustments that it is reasonable for an employer to have to make and often a combination of adjustments will be needed.**



Most adjustments cost nothing or very little. Where adjustments are expensive funding may be available from the government as part of the Access to Work scheme see page 34.

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### How do I know what's reasonable when making adjustments?

It can be difficult to assess what is reasonable. There are, however, a number of factors to take into account when making this decision. These are:

- Effectiveness of the adjustment in preventing the disadvantage.
- Practicability of the step.
- Financial and other costs of the adjustment.
- Extent of the organisation's financial and other resources.
- Extent of any disruption caused.
- Availability of financial or other assistance to help make the adjustment.
- Nature of your activities and the size of your organisation.

You may have the authority to make some adjustments yourself. For others you may need to ask colleagues in the human resources department or your manager for a decision in which case you should complete a 'reasonable adjustments request form' Providing them with this information will help them to decide what is reasonable and you should give your opinion in your recommendation.

It can be helpful to complete the form even if you have the authority to make the adjustment to help you to decide what to do.

A blank copy of this form can be downloaded from the member resources section at [www.disabilitystandard.com](http://www.disabilitystandard.com).

For more information on reasonable adjustments see Business Disability Forum's briefing papers 'Adjustments in employment' and 'Disability and the Equality Act 2010'.

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# Further information

## Access to work

The Access to Work programme is a government funding scheme run by Jobcentre Plus. It provides financial assistance towards the extra costs of employing someone with a disability. It is available to unemployed, employed and self-employed people and can apply to any job, full-time or part-time, permanent or temporary. The only exception is individuals that work for a ministerial government department, who have been excluded from the scheme since 1 October 2006.

Access to Work is intended to provide assistance towards covering the costs of adjustments which otherwise would not be reasonable. Employers still have a duty to make reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010.

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## Access to Work Operational Support Units (OSUs)

Contact details for the three OSUs that deal with applications and claims for Access to Work. Contact the OSU covering the area where you work by telephone, textphone, fax, email or by post. Please note that there are no walk-in facilities, these are postal addresses only.

### London

Contact this centre if you work in:

- South East England.
- London.
- East of England.

### Jobcentre Plus

Access to Work Operational Support Unit

Nine Elms Lane, London SW95 9BH

Tel: 020-8426-3110

Textphone: 020-8426-3133

Fax: 020-8426-3134

Email: [atwosu.london@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:atwosu.london@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk)

### Cardiff

Contact this centre if you work in:

- South West England.
- Wales.
- West Midlands.
- East Midlands.

### Jobcentre Plus

Access to Work Operational Support Unit

Alexandra House

377 Cowbridge Road East

Cardiff CF5 1WU

Tel: 02920-423-291

Textphone: 02920-644-886

Fax: 02920-423-342

Email: [atwosu.cardiff@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:atwosu.cardiff@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk)

### Glasgow

Contact this centre if you work in:

- Scotland.
  - North West England.
  - North East England.
-

- Yorkshire and Humberside.

#### Jobcentre Plus

#### Access to Work Operational Support Unit

Anniesland JCP

Baird Street

Glasgow G90 8AN

Tel: 0141-950-5327

Textphone: 0845-602-5850

Fax: 0141-950-5265

Email: [atwosu.glasgow@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:atwosu.glasgow@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk)

### Business Disability Forum products and services

#### Line manager guides

- Working with disabled colleagues
- Attendance management
- Reasonable adjustments
- Non-visible disabilities
- Performance management
- Mental health at work

All guides are available to purchase in hard copy or licensed for your organisation's intranet. Please contact the publications team on +44 (0)20-7089-2410 or email [publications@businessdisabilityforum.org.uk](mailto:publications@businessdisabilityforum.org.uk).

### Business Disability Forum membership enables you to:

- Participate in Business Disability Forum's Disability Standard, the only management tool that enables you to assess your organisation's performance on disability.
- Access specialist advice and training

on disability legislation and related employment regulations.

- Enhance your reputation with disabled people, employees, customers and government.
- Build your business case on disability confidence.

### Other Business Disability Forum products and services

#### Advice service

All employees of a Member or Partner organisation can contact us by phone or email to have all questions answered on disability as it affects their organisation; anything from reasonable adjustments for a disabled employee or customer to producing accessible communications. This unique member service offers you a one stop shop of best practice advice and guidance. Last year, 96% of all queries were answered within 24 hours.

For further information please contact us on +44-(0)20-7403-3020, [advice@businessdisabilityforum.org.uk](mailto:advice@businessdisabilityforum.org.uk)

#### Training and events

We run a comprehensive UK-wide programme of practical solutions-based training and events. Up to 20 events per year are free for members. Responding to members' needs, we make it easier to share best practice on disability and keep up to date on the most current issues relating to disability and employment. Our events are a mixture of face-to-face contact and virtual attendance from the comfort of your own workplace.

We also provide in-house bespoke training and consultancy services.



# Contact us

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**60 Gainsford Street**  
**London**  
**SE1 2NY**

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**Web: [www.businessdisabilityforum.org.uk](http://www.businessdisabilityforum.org.uk)**

**Business Disability Forum is committed to ensuring that all its products and services are as accessible as possible to everyone, including disabled people. If you wish to discuss anything with regard to accessibility, please contact us.**

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AtoS  
AvePoint  
BAML  
Barclays  
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BSkyB  
BT  
CGI  
Cisco Systems  
de Poel  
Deloitte  
Department for Transport  
Department for Work and Pensions  
Environment Agency  
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Fujitsu  
Gender Gap  
GlaxoSmithKline  
Home Office  
HM Revenue and Customs  
InterContinental Hotels Group plc  
Kingfisher plc  
KPMG  
Lloyds Banking Group  
Lorien Resourcing  
Tech Mahindra  
McDonald's Restaurants  
Microlink PC  
Microsoft Ltd  
Ministry of Defence  
Motability Operations  
NHS Scotland  
Nuance  
Oracle  
PricewaterhouseCoopers  
Royal Bank of Scotland Group  
Royal Mail Group  
Sainsbury's  
Santander  
Serious Organised Crime Agency  
Shell International Ltd  
Standard Chartered Bank Plc

**\*correct at the time of publication,  
visit our website for the current list.**

