

Dyslexia Friendly tips for speakers

If you are presenting to or training a group that includes adults or young people with dyslexia, here are some ideas that may help to ensure that the audience can get the most out of the session.

Remember that each individual with dyslexia is different and some will not need or want any alterations. If it is possible to contact participants beforehand to find out what would help them, this would be preferable.

Possible difficulties and solutions

Difficulty	Possible solutions
Slower speed of processing information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Give participants advance notice of having to take part in group discussions so they have time to prepare what to say.Handouts – give these out at start of session. This helps guide the presentation and allows participants to read the information while listening to it and make notes if necessary.Give participants the option of using a digital recorder.
Inability to concentrate for a great length of time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Don't make the session too long.Ensure regular breaks, at least once an hour.Break down information into manageable chunks, maybe broken up with more interactive exercises.If possible ensure that the venue is quiet and distractions such as busy roads outside are reduced.



Written materials

When producing documents and worksheets it is important to focus on the presentation and layout to ensure that information is easily accessible. The following suggestions may be helpful.

- Use pastel shades of paper (cream is a good alternative to white).
- Matt paper reduces 'glare'.
- Avoid black text on a white background and light text on a dark background.
- Use text at font size 12 or above.
- Use fonts which are clear, rounded and have a space between letters, such as:

Century Gothic

Comic Sans

Arial

Verdana

Tahoma

- There are also fonts that are similar to a handwritten style, or ones that might be more 'dyslexia friendly' such as:

DK Cool Crayon

Dyslexie font

(You can find free or low costs fonts like these in Microsoft Word or online)

- Use 1.5 or double line spacing.
- Use wide margins.
- Use lower case rather than capital letters where possible.
- Use numbers or bullet points rather than continuous prose.
- Avoid using background graphics with text over the top.
- Use text boxes or borders for headings or to highlight important text.
- Avoid underlining and italics which can make words 'run together'.
- Use bold text for titles, sub-headings or to draw attention to important information and key vocabulary.
- Colour-code text – for example, block information in one colour, questions in another.



- Include flow charts, illustrations and diagrams to break up large sections of text and to demonstrate a particular procedure.
- Make sure that data, charts and diagrams are easy to follow.
- Sentences and written instructions should be short and simple.
- Keep paragraphs short – dense blocks of text are difficult to read.
- Avoid too much text on the page. Make sure that it isn't too cluttered.
- Remember to leave plenty of space on a worksheet for people to write their responses.

Alternatives to exercises involving writing

It can be quite easy to make sure that participants do not have to do a lot of writing.

For example, if the exercise involves people writing things on post-it notes, somebody can be given the job of writing the words down so that the people who are not confident with writing are not singled out.

Written evaluation forms

Evaluations should be in an accessible format as above.

Could you develop an alternative?
For example, writing your questions on flip charts with number responses so participants can stick a sticker on the response that they want to give.