

Tapping into Dyslexic Talent - What's to Come?



The changing world

The world of work is changing, and changing fast.

A revolution in the skills needed by both society and employers is already underway. There will be a significant growth in demand for flexible skills in a highly collaborative and interdisciplinary environment; a transformative approach is needed to build an increasingly diverse talent pool.

People with the ability to thrive in this new order are in high demand and short supply.

The value of dyslexia

With this backdrop of change, how does dyslexia fit in? Our research shows that dyslexic strengths provide a significant opportunity for organisations to harness a different, and widely untapped, pool of talent.

Dyslexia influences at least 1 in 10 people and is a genetic difference in an individual's ability to learn and process information. As a result, dyslexic individuals have differing abilities, with strengths in creative, problem solving and communication skills and challenges with spelling, reading and memorizing facts. Generally, a dyslexic cognitive profile will be uneven when compared to a neuro-typical cognitive profile. This means that dyslexic individuals really do think differently.

What does this mean in work? These varied cognitive profiles give dyslexic individuals natural abilities to form alternative views and solve problems creatively. Heightened cognitive abilities in certain areas, such as visualisation and logical reasoning skills and natural entrepreneurial traits can bring a fresh, often intuitive perspective.

Untapped talent

Dyslexic strengths align closely with business needs and can become part of the solution. A greater awareness of these strengths, neuro-diverse abilities and of the skills needed in the future, can help educators facilitate and employers capture untapped talent.

However, dyslexia is commonly viewed for its challenges, rather than strengths. In education and employment, there can be a negative perception of dyslexia as a result, which can influence dyslexic individuals from reaching their full potential, and some organisations from realising the full value of dyslexic strengths.

A change in perception of dyslexia can help build a talent pipeline that is flexible and adaptable to the changing world of work. Over time, we would like to think that a strengths-based approach would become part of day-to-day life.



The way forward

First we must recognise and maximise the strengths that dyslexia brings and avoid focusing on just the relative challenges. This should be a priority for leaders. Clear leadership is a core building block in creating a psychologically safe environment in which dyslexic strengths can flourish.

The next step is to improve the availability of, and access to, dyslexia screeners, assessments and information about dyslexia. These can greatly assist dyslexic individuals with self-help and provide a useful resource for recognising, understanding and supporting dyslexic abilities in education and employment.

Finally, employers should implement a neuro-diverse talent strategy, and adopt a strengths-based approach to hiring, talent, and work on a day-to-day basis, focusing on four levels:

1. **Build capability** — Determine how dyslexic strengths can be deployed in the organisation to help meet business objectives.
2. **Target performance** — Use assistive technologies, tailored processes and a specific strengths-based performance criteria to enable dyslexic individuals to perform exceptionally in roles.
3. **Drive motivation** — Adjust workplace design and provide the support, coaching and mentoring schemes to build dyslexic confidence.
4. **Enhance efficiency** — Train managers to recognise, facilitate and accompany dyslexic strengths to achieve greater organisational and individual productivity

Reference:

The Value of Dyslexia-Dyslexic Strengths and the Changing World of Work
In association with *Made by Dyslexia* and *Ernst and Young*
Adapted for a global audience by *Get Into Neurodiversity*