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# Reasonable adjustments make all the difference to disabled workers

Austin was diagnosed with autism at the age of 4. He blogs about how reasonable adjustments in his workplace have enabled him to thrive in his job.

I started working for the civil service over 30 years ago in 1991. Back then, there was no such thing as reasonable adjustments. Everyone was treated the same way and was expected to deliver the same results, regardless of whether they were disabled.

It was very stressful as I was expected to achieve an unrealistic amount. I couldn't meet the generalised targets for the role I was in as I struggled with some of the elements without the adjustments that I need. My skills weren't being valued, and I found myself under performance review and receiving warnings.

I was eventually dismissed for poor performance, despite my good conduct. But after an internal appeal, I was re-instated but downgraded. When the law changed to protect disabled workers, I was able to apply, successfully, for my original grade.

I work in administration and I'm now in a role that is much more suited to me and what I can deliver. Management have been supportive of giving me reasonable adjustments and I have a workload that is reasonable and less pressured. An occupational health therapist tested me and made sure the job I had was suitable for me - allowing me to thrive. Having the right reasonable adjustments has meant I can stay on in my job and do my role well.

I've gone on to become a union rep myself and I now represent union members who need reasonable adjustments. It's so important to look at people's talents, take learning needs and disabilities into consideration, and see how we can maximise everyone's potential. Reasonable adjustments, implemented quickly and effectively, make all the difference to disabled workers.