

# PROTECTING PEOPLE AND PLACES



## Easy read

Understanding the work barriers that impact  
on workers - Conversation 3



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# What is this easy read guide about?

This is part of a series of 6 easy read guides HSE has developed to support disabled workers and workers with long-term health conditions in the workplace.

Managers could find the 'questions managers may ask' section useful to start conversations with disabled workers and workers with long-term health conditions.

This document will use the word 'disabled' to speak about disabled people and people with long-term health conditions.

In this easy read document, difficult words are in **bold**. We explain what these words mean straight after they have been used.

## What is the Health and Safety Executive?

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain's national **regulator** for workplace health and safety.

A **regulator** is an organisation that sets standards. HSE prevents work-related death, injury and ill health.

# Conversation 3: understanding the work barriers that impact on workers

This conversation tells you how your manager will work to remove any barriers that might make it difficult for you to do your job.

Here are some of the ways managers can remove work barriers:

- Managers can work to build trust so that you feel comfortable and do well in your job.



- If you are happy to, you can talk to your manager about your feelings or things you might find difficult.

For example, you might feel worried about hitting work targets.



- Managers can support you to do more at work rather than focus on the things you cannot do.



- Managers can have conversations with you to understand the different kinds of barriers that might affect you at work.

Barriers can be physical, organisational, attitudinal and social.



## **What are physical barriers?**

Physical barriers are things that block you because of the way they work or are built. Examples of physical barriers could be:

- A lack of disabled access into and around a building.



- **Video conferencing** without subtitles.

**Video conferencing** is where you can see and speak to people over the internet.



- IT that does not help you to read the text.



## What are organisational barriers?

Organisational barriers are work practices and rules that make it difficult for you to do your job.

Examples of organisational barriers could be:

- An example of an organisational barrier is a sickness policy that does not take into account that disabled people might need more days off work than a worker who is usually in good health.



## What are attitudinal barriers?

Attitudinal barriers are when people make an unfair judgement or exclude you because you have a disability or long-term health condition.

Examples of attitudinal barriers could be:

- When a disabled person does not get a promotion because co-workers think they cannot do the job.



## What are social barriers?

Social barriers are when you feel you are not part of a group.

Examples of social barriers could be:

- When you feel you are not part of a group.



- When people do not ask you to join for lunch because they think you may not be able to chat with other people.



## What managers can do to help you

- Managers can work with you to find ways to remove barriers to work.



- Managers can find solutions to the problems you are facing.



- Managers can support you when you start the job and throughout the time you work at the organisation.



- Managers can help you to get advice from **occupational health services at work.**

**Occupational health services** are teams, like nurses or counsellors, who can help you with any mental health or health problems.



- Managers can help you to get support if your problem cannot be solved at work.

For example, the manager could help you get support from the **Access to Work Scheme**.

**Access to Work** can help you get or stay in work with a health condition or disability.



# Questions managers may ask

The conversation your manager will have with you may show more can be done to create an **inclusive workplace**.

An **inclusive workplace** is a place where everyone can do their job well and feel safe.

The manager could ask:

1

Are there any barriers in the workplace that make your job more difficult? What can be done to reduce them?

2

How can **the team** help to reduce any barriers at work?

**The team** is the people you work with, such as your manager and co-workers.

**3**

Do you know how you can get support if you have a problem or barrier at work?

For example, do you know how employee assistance or occupational health can help you?

Are you able to access this support?

**4**

Do you think if you raised an issue it would be taken seriously?

What can be done at work to remove barriers and make you feel more included?

**5**

Can we set a date to review agreed changes?