

# DISABILITY DOESN'T TAKE A BREAK

*Living with disability can mean hard work, but with the right mindset your differences can be your strengths, writes Gordon Geraghty.*



*Gordon Geraghty is Digital Manager  
at Essence*

Disability means “different ability” to me because everyone with a disability has a different ability and is likely gifted in another way.

I have several neuro-disabilities/neurodivergences. Being aware of each one and how I can overcome it has enabled me to excel in both my personal and professional life.

Disability also means hard work. It means working on yourself and working harder to have what many people would describe as a “normal” life. Disability doesn't take a break and a person with a disability needs to constantly work at it and educate those around them of what they need.

## JUDGING A PERSON ON THEIR DISABILITY IS LIKE JUDGING A FISH'S INTELLIGENCE BASED ON IT'S ABILITY TO CLIMB A TREE

Opening up to others about a disability also opens yourself up to inequality and judgement. Judging a person on their disability is like judging a fish's intelligence based on its ability to climb a tree. Just because a person may not be able to perform one task as well as a colleague does not mean they are not skilled in other areas.

## I WANTED OTHERS TO BE AWARE I COULD DO MY JOB BEFORE ASSUMING THE WORST

Two months into my current role I told my line manager about my differences and they were so kind and accepting. I waited to open up as it's easy for people to make assumptions and I wanted others to be aware that I can do my job before assuming the worst. Having talked to more people in my role, it has made me very welcomed and appreciated for being different.

I used to be embarrassed or ashamed of my differences, but as time has passed, I've learned to see the positive side of each one and now see those differences as a strength.

I hope others can learn more and celebrate our differences. We can all start by completing the SBS Core Inclusion course, which includes a disability module.