



Neurodiversity In The Workplace: A Guide

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Neurodiversity refers to the concept that neurological differences, such as those seen in autism, ADHD, dyslexia and other conditions, are a natural and valuable form of human diversity, rather than a disorder or deficiency. This perspective views neurodiverse individuals as having unique strengths, abilities, and perspectives that should be respected and valued, rather than stigmatised or pathologised.

Advocates of neurodiversity argue that neurodiverse individuals should have the right to self-determination and the freedom to express their uniqueness, just like any other aspect of diversity. This perspective also calls for the development of accommodations, support and resources that allow neurodiverse individuals to fully participate in society and reach their full potential.

Neurodiversity in the workplace statistics [tell us that](#) neurodiverse people are more likely to be unemployed than people with any other disability. In fact, neurodivergent adults are **three times more likely to be unemployed** than people with a disability. In addition, they are **eight times more likely to be unemployed** than people without a disability.

And yet, neurodiverse people bring enormous benefit to the workplace, as I'll explore below, along with why you should be hiring with neurodiversity in mind and what makes the recruitment process a little different.

What is neurodiverse recruitment?

Neurodiverse recruitment is a hiring approach that seeks to [actively recruit](#) and support individuals with neurodivergent conditions. The goal of hiring neurodiverse candidates is to create a more diverse and inclusive workplace that recognises and values the strengths and abilities of neurodiverse individuals.

This type of recruitment may include outreach to neurodiverse communities, the use of alternative interview and assessment methods and the implementation of accommodations and support systems in the workplace.

By creating a supportive and inclusive environment, neurodiverse recruitment can help to address the underrepresentation of [neurodiverse individuals in the workforce](#). This will provide them with opportunities to contribute their unique skills and perspectives and help to improve the overall diversity and innovation of your organisation by creating a more inclusive and dynamic work environment.

There are [challenges to recruiting neurodiverse individuals](#), and you should be aware of the following key points:



1. Recognise the value of neurodiversity

Neurodiverse individuals bring unique strengths and perspectives to the workplace. By embracing neurodiversity, a company can tap into a wider pool of talent and benefit from the contributions of individuals with diverse ways of thinking and problem-solving.

2. Be aware of unconscious bias

Unconscious bias can often lead to the underrepresentation of neurodiverse individuals in the workforce. It's important to be aware of your own biases and make an effort to overcome them in the recruitment process.

3. Use alternative interview methods

Interviewing neurodiverse candidates in the traditional way may not accurately reflect their abilities. Alternatives, such as situational judgement tests and work sample tests, may provide a more accurate assessment of a neurodiverse candidate's skills and potential.

4. Accommodate neurodiverse candidates

Accommodations, such as extended time for tests, quiet interview rooms or the use of assistive technology, can help to level the playing field for neurodiverse candidates. This will ensure they have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their abilities.

5. Support and resources

Once hired, it is important to provide neurodiverse employees with the support and resources they need to succeed in their role. This may include access to training and development opportunities, flexible working arrangements, or access to an employee assistance program.



The benefits: Why employers should be hiring with neurodiversity in mind

There are several benefits to employers for hiring with neurodiversity in mind.

Firstly, you'll have access to a wider pool of talented individuals who can bring unique perspectives, experiences and skills to your workplace. Many neurodiverse individuals are highly logical and efficient workers, effective problem-solvers and hyper-focused. They can often help to fill skills gaps.

You'll also get more diversity of thought and an increased rate of innovation, since a diverse and inclusive workplace is more likely to generate new ideas and approaches to problem-solving.

Providing accommodations and support to neurodiverse employees can help improve their engagement and retention in the workplace. This in turn leads to higher levels of productivity and a more stable workforce.

Additionally, if you embrace neurodiversity and take a proactive approach to inclusion, you can enhance your reputation as an inclusive employer. This helps to attract and retain top talent and improves employee morale. Not only that, but it also gives you a [competitive advantage](#).

How to support neurodiversity in the workplace

[Supporting neurodiversity in the workplace](#) should start at the top and trickle down through your organisation. Getting high-level buy-in, educating all employees and encouraging them to be respectful, understanding and patient is critical to creating a culture of inclusivity.

But breaking down stigma is just one part of supporting neurodiversity. There are also a number of practical things you can do, including:

- ◆ **Offering accommodations**, such as flexible working arrangements, assistive technology, or quiet workspaces, to help neurodiverse employees succeed in their roles.
- ◆ **Encouraging open communication** between neurodiverse employees and their managers to ensure that their needs and concerns are being heard and addressed.
- ◆ **Providing opportunities** for neurodiverse employees to develop new skills and advance their careers.
- ◆ **Offering support resources**, such as an employee assistance program, a dedicated mental health first aider or access to a neurodiversity mentor.
- ◆ Consider **adjusting your recruitment practices** and using alternative interview and assessment methods.



How to manage your neurodiverse employees

Every neurodiverse individual is unique and may have specific needs that can help them succeed in their role. Investing the time and effort to understand these needs and work with them to find solutions that will work for everyone is critical.

[Managing neurodiversity at work](#) often requires you to be clear, precise and more direct than you're probably used to. It may help both you and your neurodiverse employees if you explain things to them in private. Providing support materials, such as checklists, can also help.

Additionally, neurodiverse employees may process information differently and need extra time to complete tasks. Be patient, understanding and flexible, and avoid rushing them or setting unrealistic expectations.

If you'd like to chat about how you can best recruit and support neurodivergent individuals in your workplace, [contact me directly](#) to schedule a call.



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