

Neurodiversity in the Workplace

- How to support
- Workplace Adjustments
- Resources

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How can you support - As an Individual



If a person shares their adjustment, neurodivergent status or medical condition, thank them and apply the '**ATP rule**'. **Ask The Person** questions like "What can I do to help you thrive at work?" and "How can I best communicate with you?"

Always **maintain confidentiality**. Where there is need to share this information, obtain their consent. Showing this respect will build connection, increase engagement, motivation and performance.

Educate yourself - Don't rely on the neurodiverse community to teach you everything about all neurodiversity – every individual's experience is different and there is plenty of information available online.

Question how can you contribute to their sense of **belonging**? Be conscious of bias, acknowledge their value and contribution, ensure team members are invited to all meetings, events, and environments meet accessibility needs.

Don't assume what someone can or cannot do.

Show up and acknowledge days of significance to the disability community, join/follow their network.

How can you support - As a People Leader



Build trust by demonstrating respect for difference, create a safe space for open conversation and support a culture of acceptance and curiosity towards neurodiversity.

Get to know the person and be led by them. Have regular check-ins with effective communication, ensuring team members have what they need (needs can change over time). Include the person in all conversations about them.

Support them in requests for workplace adjustments, be responsive and open-minded > if you are their reporting line let your team member know that you will find solutions together. Ensure you are informed about workplace adjustments in the dept and the jobaccess.gov.au (EAF) scheme.

Accommodate flex-work requests wherever it is possible nb: it is often easier for people to adjust their home environs to meet their sensory needs.

By following the above guidelines, you will learn about a person's strengths and challenges and be better equipped to best support their professional development and career progression.

How can you support - As an Organisation



Consider sensory needs when planning office spaces and seating arrangements. eg. desks with less traffic/noise and lower light will help the employee feel more at ease and less subject to distraction.

Demonstrate a commitment to the above through the provision of accessible office environments and the delivery of inclusive staff gatherings/workshops/meetings. i.e.. Break out areas /quiet spaces and at events ensuring that there is dedicated break out time without an expectation of networking.

Inclusive Recruitment – more accessible portal/search functionality for targeted roles, clear plain english listings, avoid multi-part questions at interview, provide questions ahead of time, offer alternative assessment methods, set the scene around what to expect.

Workplace Training – provide captions, regular breaks (to decompress and maintain focus), accommodate hybrid access, allow cameras off, post session supply collateral in writing and links to supporting resources.

Workplace Adjustments

Adjustment needs are best defined by the individual.

Common adjustments for ADHD and Autism could include:



Sensory Sensitivities - including being able to work from home where they can better regulate their surroundings, and the use of ear buds or noise cancelling headphones.

Flex work -structured breaks and some flexibility in work hours> this can i.e. support them to avoid burnout and allow them to work when they are most recharged and productive.

Ways of working – the use of task management apps/calendars/reminders and regular check-ins with a reporting line or buddy can help individuals stay on track.

Communication -the provision of clear, concise instructions in writing. Often there is a preference for visual aids, eg. diagrams, flow charts.

Understanding/Kindness –develop an understanding of ADHD traits and accept that there is a neurological difference, and that the needs stated are *not just a preference*.

Resources

[Department Compass page for Disability Inclusion](#) (internal) and [Principles for Disability Inclusion](#) (internal)

[ADHD and Autism](#) – the overlap graphic

[YouTube: Dr Russell Barkley](#) – Dr Barkley has been involved in ADHD research since 1973 and is considered one of the foremost

[Autism Fast Facts: Employment](#) – ‘Community Attitudes and Behaviours Towards Autism’ & ‘Experiences of Autistic People and their Families’

[Rejection Sensitive Dysphoria in ADHD and Autism](#)

[Executive challenges in ADHD and Autism](#)

[20 Workplace Accommodations for Neurodivergent People](#)

[What does an autism-friendly space or building look like?](#)

[The Integrated Employment Success Tool \(IEST\)](#) - An evidence-based guide for employers of autistic adults

[Embrace-Autism.com](#) > ‘Strengths and Kryptonites’ -

[Aspect](#) - ‘How an inclusive workplace helped me thrive’

[Reframing Autism](#) - Establishing Workplace Adjustments