

The benefits of a neurodiverse workforce



Neurodiversity is the idea that people have different ways of thinking, different viewpoints, and different skill sets. Specifically, neurodiversity refers to people with conditions such as autism, ADHD, Dyslexia, Tourette's etc. The implication behind neurodiversity, and why it is important to consider for employers, is that these conditions should not always be thought of as disabilities or disorders. In the right context, these differences mean people can offer unique perspectives and powerful competitive advantages.

Why be inclusive?

In a recruitment market where competition for the best talent is intense, a commitment to inclusivity allows your company to draw from the widest pool of talent available and discover a variety of new, untapped skill sets, that neurodiverse employees possess.

Neurodiverse employees are often hardworking, loyal, and highly motivated creative thinkers and strategic problem solvers which means you can grow and keep a dynamic, innovative, and diverse team.

By creating equal opportunities that make everyone feel included, you also demonstrate a commitment to equity in the workplace and the desire to move past just being compliant. This will all help to improve the mental health and morale of your staff, making your workplace happier and more productive.

Neurodiversity in the workplace

About one in six people in the mainstream UK population are thought to be neurodivergent.

Neurodiversity means that everyone's brains are differently connected and the way we think, move, act, see, hear, and process information varies for us all. It is firmly in the interest of employers to put practices and procedures in place to cultivate and support an inclusive, neurodiverse workforce, so we have put together some of the best steps that you can take to support neurodiversity and foster a more inclusive workforce.

How to start

1 Greater Awareness

Implementing awareness training programmes, management plans and comprehensive workplace assessments for all staff are some of the best ways to support neurodiversity. For example, setting up a mentoring program provides neurodivergent employees with a safe space to express their feelings and seek advice if they are struggling. Neurodiverse information sessions and networks can be useful. Where necessary, the use of a specialist advisor who would be available to neurodivergent individuals as well as their line managers could also help.

2 Ensure your workforce know where to find help

In order to support your workforce it is of vital importance that they are aware of where they can find help. By providing peer-to-peer network support within your organisation, you are creating an environment in which all individuals, including neurodiverse individuals can feel more comfortable to discuss any issues they may be having at work.

3 Foster Personal Resilience

In larger organisations, the above steps may prove relatively straightforward to implement when the need for them has been recognised. However, in smaller organisations who have limited time and resources, it can be more of a challenge.

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This is why it is vital that you help all your employees to foster their personal resilience.

Managers can support employees in fostering personal resilience through five key pillars, which are emotional wellbeing, inner drive, future focus, relationships, and physical health. By helping them to focus on these key pillars, you encourage them to see challenges as an invertible part of life rather than an impossible obstacle or an undeserved hindrance. This all comes back to creating a culture where they feel empowered to make decisions and use their unique strengths to their advantage.



Written by Dr Gabrielle Pendlebury, Clinical Director, Psychiatric Services, Onebright.
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