

Neurodiversity in the Workplace Can Be A Competitive Advantage

London CBT therapists share the importance of creating accommodations to support employees with neurodiversity in the workplace.



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Neurodiversity is a word used to explain the concept that some people have natural variations in how their brain works. While most people's brains develop similarly, no two brains function alike. In the workplace, the latest figures show that around one in six working-age adults is neurodivergent in some way. Creating equal workplace opportunities that make everyone feel included can demonstrate a commitment to equity in the workplace.

About Onebright: <https://onebright.com/>

The case for accommodating neurodiverse thinkers is especially compelling given the skills shortages that increasingly afflict technology and other industries.

For example, according to a study by the Foundation for European Progressive Studies, the European Union faces a shortage of 8 million ICT specialists by 2030. The most significant deficits expect to be in strategically important and rapidly expanding areas such as data analytics and IT services implementation – tasks that are a good match with the abilities of some neurodiverse people.

Some neurodiverse characteristics can include:

- Skilled in pattern recognition.
- Excellent memory and recall.
- Exceptional mathematics skills.
- Superior ability to focus.

What conditions are neurodiverse?

Neurodiversity is an umbrella term that covers many mental disorders, including ADHD (sometimes referred to as ADD), autism, Asperger's, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, and Dyspraxia. An individual diagnosed with one or more of any of these disorders is considered to be

neurodiverse.

The term neurodiversity is not a medical term. Instead, neurodiversity helps to avoid using terms that are not inclusive when referring to how an individual learns, communicates, interacts and stores information.

How to spot neurodiversity in the workplace?

Most managers are very familiar with the advantages organisations can gain from diversity in the backgrounds, gender, culture, and other characteristics of their employees.

Benefits from neurodiversity are similar but more direct.

A [2021 report](#) by JPMorgan Chase found that neurodivergent employees in certain tech roles could be up to 140 per cent more productive than their neurotypical colleagues.

Some signs of neurodiversity in the workplace

Diversity of thought with alternative worldviews.

Close attention to small details.

Identifying errors.

Reliable, conscientious and persistent.

Loyal.

How can businesses attract more neurodiverse candidates?

When businesses ignore neurodiversity as a key part of their diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, it sends a message that neurodiversity is not valued. From there, creativity, resourcefulness, and critical thinking are all affected; without these, businesses can find it challenging to grow or innovate.

Use these tips to attract more neurodiverse candidates to the company:

Find ways to work neurodiversity into the business's mental health policy. Neurodiverse individuals often experience other mental health conditions, so outlining how the business will strive to achieve a workplace culture and environment that encourages everyone to feel safe can open the door.

Rewrite job descriptions. The job description may need to contain inclusive language that accurately reflects the open position. Avoid generic requirements or cliches that are not stating precisely what is expected from the role.

[Mental health training](#) to rethink the hiring process. Many line managers often have no idea how to interview someone with ADHD or on the autism spectrum. In most instances, the interview process involves a sit-down interview which will only sometimes allow every candidate to shine.

Rather than interview these candidates, organisations can consider a series of assessments or participation in a group project to gauge skills and company fit.

Ensure the work environment works for everyone. For example, this could mean speaking more literally in some instances, offering noise-cancelling headphones at work, or allocating quiet spaces to unwind.

Onebright offers adult ADHD and Autism diagnoses, treatment, and mental health training for employees.

Creating a workforce that celebrates and empowers those with a neurodiverse condition will require managers to take a step back, remove assumptions and communicate in a new way. The bottom line is that neurodiversity in the workplace is a positive thing for businesses.

Talk to Onebright about our neurodiversity services, including neurodiversity awareness training. These are delivered by an accredited mental health clinician and provide a safe space for everyone, including business leaders, employers, Occupational Healthcare associates, and managers, to ask questions about neurodiversity.

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