

Celebrating neurodiversity in the workplace

Neurodiversity Celebration Week will run from 18-24 March this year. It's a chance to raise awareness of neurodivergence across all aspects of life and recognises the achievements of neurodivergent individuals.

Neurodiversity refers to the many different ways in which people's brains work, just as some of us are right-handed or have green eyes. How our brains work, and our place on the cognitive spectrum, are unique to each of us.

Around 1 in 7 people are *neurodivergent*, [note italics] which means behaving, thinking, processing and interpreting information in specific ways. The remainder are *neurotypical* [note italics] – which society has traditionally considered 'normal'. But who's to say what's normal? Instead, there are some people who are neurodivergent, and others who are neurotypical. And 'neurodiversity' includes everyone.

Why does this matter in our workplace?

At <<Company Name>>, employee welfare includes everyone. So, we want to support neurodivergent people to thrive here, and we want to celebrate their talents. Not only can they bring us fresh thinking and ideas, they can also encourage neurotypical people to broaden their thinking, too.

JPMorgan Chase found that employees with autism are up to 140* per cent more productive than 'neurotypical' employees and make fewer errors.

What are some examples of neurodivergent ways of thinking and behaving?

Neurodivergent conditions often exist on a spectrum and can affect people differently. They can include:

- autism
- attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- dyslexia
- dyspraxia
- dyscalculia
- dysgraphia
- tic disorders such as Tourette's syndrome

Supporting neurodivergent employees

We value the unique skills of our neurodivergent employees. We want to nurture their talents while supporting them through any challenges they may face at work. That's why we're committed to making any reasonable adjustments to support them, such as:

- understanding how they work best
- providing supportive technology and equipment
- being extra-clear in our communications
- offering mental health support, advice and guidance

For more information, check with <<Company Name>> to see what's available to you.

If you're a people manager, Bupa offers a guide to supporting neurodiversity in the workplace. <<HR Advice Service>> can provide more information.

Understanding of neurodiversity has improved recently, and there is appreciation for what being neurodivergent means – a different way of brain functioning, learning and processing of information compared to the “norm” expected by society. There are many benefits of garnering an inclusive work culture that promotes diversity of thought, and neurodiversity in the workplace refers to creating that environment that is supportive and inclusive of all neurodivergence, and in turn embracing this diversity will empower employers and employees to push the boundaries of innovation, creativity and agility. A one-size-fits-all approach will not be possible to accommodate neurodiversity in the workplace, and everyone has different needs that are unique to them in order to unleash their potential and mitigate any barriers faced. Ultimately, creating a workplace that celebrates and supports neurodiversity is a win-win for all.” – Dr Ravi Lukha, Medical Director at Bupa UK Insurance

The [Neurodiversity Celebration Week website](#) provides lots of information and resources to help people understand neurodiversity. Information and support are also available from charities such as the [National Autistic Society](#) and [British Dyslexia Association](#).

* <https://resources.vercida.com/jpmorgan-autism-at-work>