



DIVERSITY PROJECT



Lessons learned from the pandemic: Practices that work for everyone

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Look! There's more than one way to get things done!



- Our COVID-19 experience has helped us recognise that there is more than one way to get things done.
- Successful neuroinclusion requires similar flexibility.
- How does the neurodiverse community suggest their 'new normal' to look like?

How to make it work: Flexibility



- Working from home allowed ND colleagues to take control of their day. In the office, they often felt judged for taking breaks or logging off early.
- Providing flexibility to leave the office on short notice and do reading assignments or quiet tasks from home can maximise efficiency.
- Another advantage when working from home was the ability to use read aloud apps.
- Flexible working hours can also help manage anxiety (avoid rush hour; work at weekends when the office is quiet).



How to make it work: Office environment



- Provide options to reduce sensory overload in the office. Allow everyone to wear headphones, to use quiet rooms, etc, so ND colleagues don't stand out.
- Hot-desking can be difficult for neurodivergent colleagues because of sensory overload.
- Many ND brains benefit from 'hyperfocus'. To allow them to make full use of this skill, limit distractions/interruptions at their desk. Consider sending a quick email to announce your visit or arrange a convenient time to chat?



How to make it work: Meetings



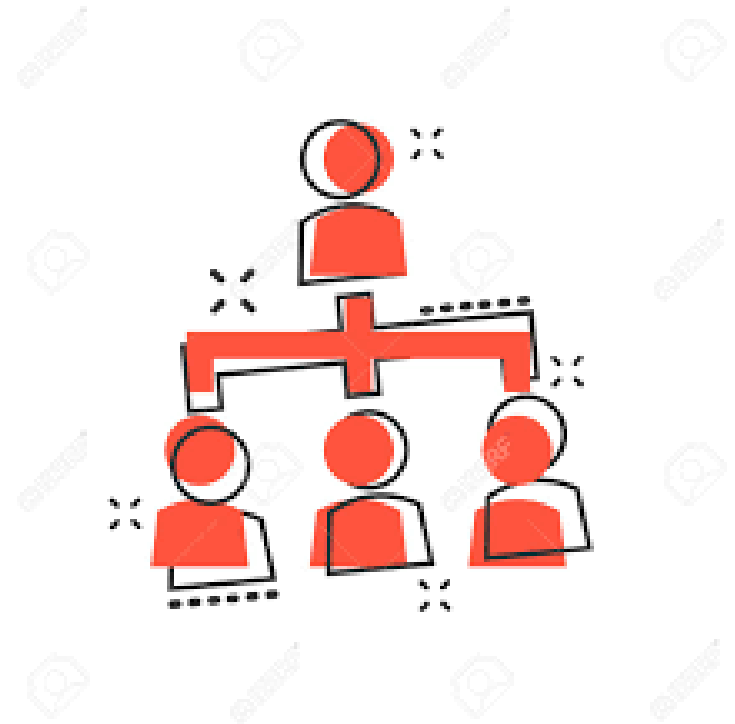
- Larger meetings are a source of anxiety for many neurodivergent colleagues. 1:1s or smaller meetings are often preferred. Try to use 'raise hand function' in larger in-person meetings?
- Many ND brains prefer to reflect on different points of view before forming an opinion. Provide the option to contribute via email after a meeting?
- Neurodivergent colleagues are great at thinking outside of the box. This also means that a proposal or idea can be out of scope of the meeting. An agenda and clear meeting objective help stay on track.



How to make it work: People management



- Provide structure. Give clear instructions of what is expected and by when.
- Regular 1:1s are a good way of providing informal feedback and identifying and resolving issues early.
- Focus on results, not process.
- Accept that sometimes help is needed for 'easy' tasks, such as managing a daily to do-list. Do not expect any improvement or 'learning success' in these areas.
- Please do not judge. There are many different ways of getting to right result.



Successful NeuroInclusion: Cracking the walnut



- Making your workplace more neuroinclusive is often inexpensive and benefits everyone.
- We all know what works for us and what doesn't, but often fear to articulate it. Create an environment where it's safe to say "I can't do this".
- The main asks from the neurodivergent community:
 - Please stop imposing 'normal' and acknowledge that everyone is different and will have different needs.
 - Please don't assess people by HOW they get the job done, but by WHAT they deliver. Results over process!





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