Engaging with an employer

Selling the strengths of autism
The Diversity of Autism

• Autism varies greatly from person to person
• Each individual’s experience of autism is different
• The characteristics discussed today do not apply to every autistic person
• Learn what the condition means for each person
• Treat them on their merits
Autism and Unemployment

Autistic individuals have the highest level of unemployment or significant under-employment of any community in the world.

1 in 70
It’s estimated 1 in 70 people in Australia on the autism spectrum.
Or around 353,880 people

4 times
4 times more common in boys than in girls

31.6%
The unemployment rate for autistic people is 31.6%

54%
More than half of unemployed autistic Australians (54%) had never held a paid job

Statistics from:
Autism Spectrum Australia (ASPECT) 2018
AMAZE - Autism and Employment Research Report Released 28 March 2019
Autistic individuals have very high unemployment and underemployment rates despite being very capable workers.

Traditional recruitment and workplace management practices can eliminate autistic candidates even though they are highly skilled employees.

Adopting an autism friendly approach to recruitment and on-the-job support will mean your workplace will benefit from the valuable and creative skillset that autistic employees can bring.

What makes a role ‘autism friendly’ is more about how supportive the work environment is and the organisation’s willingness to accept different ways of thinking, than the role itself.
Autism strengths

Autistic employees’ strengths can include:

• A logical, data-driven approach
• Recognition of patterns and details others may miss
• The ability to remain highly focused
• A high tolerance for repetitive tasks

Autistic employees tend to thrive in roles that:

• Have sequential, linear, well-defined series of steps
• Have clearly defined responsibilities and expectations
• Emphasize quality and accuracy
• Involve structure and routine
• Focus on work capability and talent, not on personality
• Has clear rules
• Is within their social limitations (if any)
• Is within their sensory limitations (if any)
Strengths based job matching

Autistic employees tend to thrive in roles that are:

- Sequential, linear, well-defined series of steps
- Logical
- Have a well-defined goal or endpoint
- Focus on one task at a time, need a high level of focus
- Have clearly defined responsibilities and expectations
- Emphasize quality and accuracy over speed
- Involve structure and routine
- In a low sensory environment
- Within their social limitations
- Focus on work capability and talent, not personality
- Related to their area of interest

Skills Shortages in Australia

Organisations stating that they are having difficulty finding skilled employees. There is a strong demand for the following roles (to name just a few)

- Quality Assurance
- Auditors
- Engineers
- ICT Security Specialists
- Programmers
- Accountants

2021 Skills Priority List:
Examples of roles where autistic employees could thrive:

Sales associates - can become product experts, high attention to detail in stock counts, shelving stock, checking use by dates etc

Accounts: Solve complex problems, motivated by precision, follow procedures and rules, attention to detail, record keeping.

Warehouse: Logical structure, data driven, follow safety rules

Data entry: High level of concentration, accurate information, attention to detail.

Filing: Quiet environment. Very definite rules, high levels of accuracy, high level of concentration, very ordered. Does not require a great deal of social interaction.

Document/data comparison: Cross-checking document versions or data sets to compare changes. High levels of accuracy, high level of concentration. Flexible work times.

Librarian/Library Shelving: Working within an ordered cataloguing system and predictable shelving locations. Attention to detail. Quiet low sensory environment.

Working with animals (pet groomer, dog walker, trainer etc): Animal lover, attuned to the needs of animals, enjoys low stress of working with animals over people.

This is a guide only, as every autistic person is unique and has different strengths, interests, capabilities, and goals.
Strengths based job matching

Autistic employees can have difficulty in roles that:

• Don’t have clearly defined goals or a specific process of undertaking them (or lacking an ability or freedom to self-define new policies and procedures for these roles)
• Require a lot of social interactions (especially where ‘small talk’ is required)
• Places emphasis on the employee’s personality traits, rather than their work ethic and results
• Are constantly changing, interrupted, requiring analysis and decision making based on ambiguity

Disclaimer: General information only
There is vast diversity across the autism spectrum, as there is with non-autistic people. Every one of us has different thinking & working styles, strengths,
Why employing autistic employees is good for business

• Contributes to a more **inclusive workplace** with improved staff confidence and capability
• Makes good business sense for productivity, creativity and innovation
• Managers and leaders become better leaders and managers
• Acknowledge and appreciate that there are a lot of different ways to think, a lot of different ways to learn and a lot of different ways to be
• Often overlooked and misunderstood talent pool
• Autism inclusive work practices are good practices for all employees
• Increased morale of staff working with autistic team members
• Diversity of employees can lead to a more person-centred management approach
• Stability in your workforce
Autism awareness & education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewing an autistic jobseeker</th>
<th>Autism &amp; Inclusive Employment</th>
<th>Managing an autistic employee</th>
<th>Autism &amp; Mental Health</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Barriers to obtaining and keeping employment&lt;br&gt;• Autism inclusive interview tips&lt;br&gt;• Disclosure</td>
<td>• Different ways of thinking and processing information&lt;br&gt;• Strategies to use when working with different processing styles&lt;br&gt;• Workplace Accommodations</td>
<td>• Barriers to employment success&lt;br&gt;• Understanding behaviour&lt;br&gt;• Understanding different working styles&lt;br&gt;• Communication&lt;br&gt;• Tips for managers</td>
<td>• Sensory processing&lt;br&gt;• Triggers for anxiety at work&lt;br&gt;• Signs of anxiety at work&lt;br&gt;• Support strategies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Short recorded modules to be watched when convenient
Supporting resources

**Work Profile**
Individual work adjustments profile outlining any required workplace supports and preferences.

**Hidden Curriculum Modules**
Work Expectations and Social Skills Induction modules. Short modules designed to help autistic employees understand the hidden curriculum of the workplace. They also provide a framework for employers to have a ‘hard’ conversations with their autistic employee.

**Work Performance Questionnaire**
The Work Performance Questionnaire (WPQ) is a set of questions to assess an autistic employee’s performance and behaviour within the work environment. It helps initiate conversations around recognising good performance, identifying any areas for development and setting goals for growth.

https://www.neurodiversityhub.org/

and so much more...........

https://untapped.com
Thank you