

With Autism, With a Job: The Case for Neurodiversity in the Workplace

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A Housekeeping Note

This session strives to be as inclusive as possible! If you need to take a break, answer phone calls, stand up, twiddle your fingers, stim, or feel overwhelmed - this is a no judgment zone and feel free to do what feels best for you. 😊

What is Neurodiversity?

Neurodiversity is a concept where neurological differences are to be recognized and respected as any other human variation. Labels that fall under neurodiversity include autism, ADHD, dyslexia and other learning disabilities, Tourette Syndrome, and intellectual disabilities.



Benefits of Neurodiversity at Work

- Neurodiverse teams at SAP created a fix that saved the company nearly \$40 million
- 28% higher revenues than companies that do not employ people with disabilities (Accenture, 2019),
- Favorable public opinion of a business
- We benefit from working with all kinds of minds



Disability Unemployment Statistics

- 1 in 4 Americans has a disability (Center for Disease Control, 2018)
 - That's about 61 million people with disabilities
- Autistic adults have the lowest employment rate amongst all disabled people
- 85% of autistic college graduates are unemployed
- 36% of people with intellectual & developmental disabilities are paid employees (The Arc, 2017)
- Lawyers with disabilities make up 0.55% of the profession (National Association for Law Placement, 2019)
- 34.6% of women with disabilities are employed
 - In contrast, 82.5% of nondisabled women are employed (Respectability, 2017)

National Disability Employment Awareness Month 2019



Why the Employment Disparity?

- Despite the benefits of disability inclusion and neurodiversity at work...
 - Traditional hiring practices are biased against autistic and other neurodiverse candidates
 - Neurotypical people misinterpret autistic communication
 - Body language, eye contact
 - Gaps in employment
 - Disclosure and discrimination
 - Fear of the unknown

Disclosure on the Job

- When is the right time to disclose a disability?
- It depends on the person!
 - The cover letter
 - The interview
 - When you have an offer
 - When you need an accommodation



Unpacking “Openly Autistic”

“To me, being 'openly autistic' means not having to hide or mask my autism; it is the freedom to be exactly who I am.”

The Americans with Disabilities Act

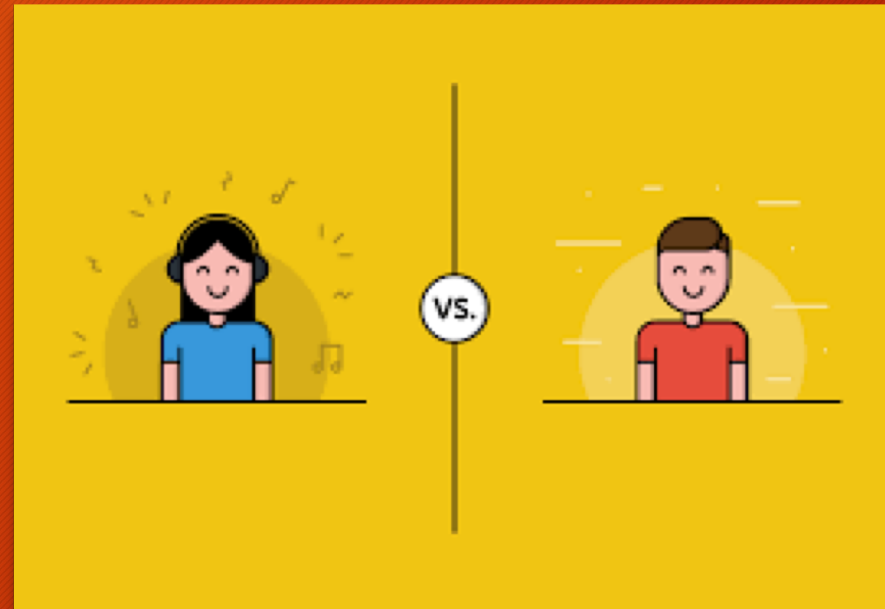
“Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits private employers, State and local governments, employment agencies and labor unions from discriminating against qualified individuals with disabilities in job application procedures, hiring, firing, advancement, compensation, job training, and other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment. The ADA covers employers with 15 or more employees, including State and local governments.”

Bridging the Gap Between Disclosure + Accommodation

- The Americans with Disabilities Act forbids employers from discriminating against applicants or employees on the basis of disability.
- Under the ADA, the general rule is you don't have to disclose until an accommodation is needed.
- Title I of the ADA requires employers provide reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities who are employees or applicants, except when it would cause an undue hardship.

Accessibility & Accommodations

- Employers think a lot of accommodations would cause undue hardship
- Accommodations generally cost \$500 or less (Department of Labor)
- What do accommodations look like for autistic people?
- How to go about getting accommodations
 - Asking, putting in writing
 - Collaboration employers and employees



Accommodating the Self-Employed Individual

- What happens when you don't have a boss?
- Self-accommodation and accountability
- Working client relationships



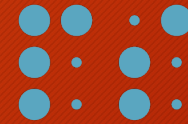
Combating the Employment Disparity



Autism at Work
recruitment and
hiring programs



Solving the I/DD
employment
paradigm



Breaking stereotypes
about autism
and other disabilities

Autism at Work

Large companies spearheading the efforts to purposely recruit people on the autism spectrum



Microsoft

JPMORGAN
CHASE & CO.

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EY

Solving the Employment Paradigm

- Is there place for people in all kinds of roles?
- The “Publix Problem”
- Do we have inclusion outside of sheltered workshops?
- Are people being paid fairly for their work?
 - 14(c) provision of the Fair Labor Standards Act
 - Allows authorized employers to pay below the federal minimum wage

Breaking Stereotypes

- STEM genius stereotypes
 - Assumptions that all of us must be computer geniuses
- Disabled people do not have to work in the field of disability
 - The calls and emails I get show this stereotype in full effect

What Does the Future Look Like?

- Neurodiverse leaders
- Evolving past Autism at Work
- Further collaboration
- Aligning people to strengths
 - All across the spectrum



Focus on the Strengths



Final Reflections

- How can we do better, across all professions, to make sure neurodiverse people are being recruited, hired, accepted, and supported at work?
- How can we make sure neurodiverse people succeeding in the workplace is a norm and not an exception?

Let's Continue the Conversation

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