

# THINK DIFFERENTLY ABOUT RECRUITMENT

Recruitment processes can be littered with obstacles which make it harder for neurodivergent people to be hired. That's such a waste of talent. It's time to think differently about your recruitment and consider the changes which could lead to more neurodivergent and neurotypical professionals working together to create transformational teams.

## 01 LEADERSHIP & CULTURE

Demonstrate you are an inclusive organisation by sharing across your marketing channels positive stories from neurodivergent employees.

Make your organisation's diversity and inclusion policies accessible by posting them on your website.

Evaluate your recruitment practices, measure effectiveness and seek feedback that supports continual improvement.

Implement neurodiversity awareness training for everyone involved in recruitment.

At every stage of the recruitment process ask people what they need to feel supported.

## 02 JOB DESCRIPTION

Use concise, clear language that everyone can understand. Two fifths of job descriptions contain jargon and buzz words like "dynamic" and "perform under pressure" which tend to discourage applications.

Lead with inclusion and minimise masculine language like "prestigious" and "major". Adopt a more appealing tone for eg: "We're an inclusive and supportive employer seeking an engineer to work in our friendly IT support team."

Avoid ambiguity by including the exact essential skills and experience required for the job. Review the:

- Duties and responsibilities to ensure they accurately reflect the actual role;
- Person specification and remove unnecessary generic skills and attributes;
- Qualification requirements, eg is a degree necessary for an entry level role?

Work to a length of 300 – 650 words, with short sentences of around 15 words. Don't over use bullet lists.

Outline the steps in the recruitment process.

Clearly state that your organisation welcomes neurodiverse individuals.

## 03 **ADVERTISE**

Simple format and clear presentation enhance readability, use sans serif Arial font size 14.

Include salary, location, support provided, inclusive policies and benefits early on in the advert.

Look beyond your usual advertising channels to reach a wider, more diverse audience.

Share clear guidance on what the applicant needs to provide on the application form.

Establish relationships with neurodiversity advocates and support groups to leverage their networks.

Broaden your graduate search beyond elite universities.

Highlight your commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in every advert.

## 04 **APPLICATION & SCREEN**

Streamline your application process so there's minimal duplication.

Consider multiple modes of application, providing alternatives to online application forms such as video or telephone applications.

CVs don't have to be black and white, screen based on skills and experience rather than style and format. Avoid tough criticism of spelling, grammar and work gaps.

For online applications indicate how many stages there are, how long the process might take and ensure information can be saved across multiple sessions.

Check if the job description and application process can be read by a text to speech reader.

Be mindful of unconscious bias when preparing your candidate selection matrix.

Be clear and responsive in all your communications.

## 05 INTERVIEW

Ensure interviewers and hiring managers are neurodiverse aware so they don't judge on neurotypical standards.

Send an email to confirm the interview time and location along with Google maps guidance on getting to the interview location. Describe the room in which the interview will take place. Provide the names, job titles and contact details of the interviewers along with an outline or agenda of what to expect during the interview as this will help to reduce the interviewee's anxiety.

Explain you want everyone to have the same equity of access and ask about any accommodations or support that would make the applicant more comfortable, helping them to bring their best selves to the interview.

Don't wing it, prepare competency-based interview questions for a better quality conversation. Ask precise questions to elicit precise answers, eg "Tell me about your experience and how it relates to this role."

Send the applicant the interview questions in advance.

Ditch stereotypes around what professional looks like. Don't evaluate on dress code, eye contact or small talk chat.

Stay on topic and evaluate on skills, personal values, character, work capability and talent.

Give applicants additional time to gather their thoughts before expecting an answer. Allow extra time to complete assessments.

Switch up the environment and format. Video interviews, presentations, a walk and talk style interview are simple alternatives. Choose a meeting room in a low sensory environment.

Introduce work-based assessments that align with the responsibilities of the job.

Where appropriate, ask to see a portfolio of work.

Direct feedback will support the person with their next application. Share your feedback without judgement.

## 06 WELCOME & ONBOARD

Day 1: ensure work equipment, logins and previously agreed adjustments and support are in place.

Assign a buddy to accelerate orientation and integration.

Ensure the onboarding process is broken down into clear stages and communicated in writing.

Check-in frequently.

Talk to the employee about what would help them, "What do you need to feel supported to do your job?"