

INTERVIEWING NEURODIVERGENT CANDIDATES

As an employer, you base the majority of your decision over who you will recruit on a short 1 hour interview.

Therefore it is important that you get the best out of your candidates during this hour.

If you are interviewing neurodivergent candidates there are some simple things that you can do to make the process easier and more inclusive.

Below are some of our key tips for employers on how to make your interviews more accessible.

Is it clear what they are supposed to do when they arrive at your building, have you told them where to go and who to ask for?

Think about your waiting room, is it a noisy environment that could cause anxiety if a person is sat waiting a while?

If you are running late, make sure someone goes and speaks to the candidates to explain what is happening and offer them a quiet place to wait – make sure they know what will happen next.

Ask questions based on the candidate's real/past experiences e.g. Can you us tell what your key responsibilities where in your previous role?

Avoid hypothetical questions e.g. If you were to experience a difficult customer, how would you handle this? Instead ask – have you ever had to deal with a difficult customer and if so how did you handle this?

Be prepared to prompt the individual in order to extract all the relevant information and gather sufficient information – and do not mark them down for this, remember they are likely to be anxious and need more time to process the question – prompting is a reasonable adjustment for neurodivergent adults

Be aware that the individual may interpret language literally – think about what you are saying and how this might be interpreted. If you ask a question such as “do you feel you have the skills needed for this role” do not be surprised if you get a short answer “yes” as they have answered your question, if you want them to elaborate then let them know.

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Be aware that eye contact may be fleeting or prolonged, depending on the individual – this does not mean they are not interested but they may be struggling to look and listen at the same time but will be picking up on everything you are saying.

Give the candidate time to think between questions. Do not rush them as this could cause them to break their chain of thought.

Make sure you are clear on what will happen next at the end of the interview and stick to this. If you say you will call them tomorrow then make sure you do, even if this is just to say that the decision may take longer.

To find out more or to access our services: Visit: www.autismplus-employmentservices.co.uk
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