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## Question of the Week

November 5, 2025

### Question

How can we support employees with autism, ADHD, and other neurodivergent conditions?

### ANSWER

Supporting neurodivergent employees typically involves recognizing, respecting, and destigmatizing the different ways people think, process information, and interact with others in the workplace. It's about building flexibility into how employees do their jobs while holding them to appropriate and consistent performance standards. As with any effort to support employees, the goal is to enable them to do their best work. The following practices can be useful for anyone, neurodivergent or otherwise:

- Talk about neurodiversity as a common and normal experience in company communications and training.
- Use clear, predictable, and unambiguous communication. Follow up verbal directions with short written notes. Provide agendas for meetings, documentation for projects, and advance notice of changes.
- Normalize short sensory or mental health breaks without judgment, and let employees know they can ask for simple accommodations at any time.
- Encourage self-regulation by designating a quiet area for employees to decompress.
- Minimize distractions by allowing employees to use noise-canceling headphones or work in quieter areas.
- Remind employees that they can use sick days for mental health purposes.

- Consider offering employee resource groups centered on neurodiversity or mental health. Just make sure they're open to everyone.
- Train managers on your practices and expectations related to neurodiversity, including how to respond to accommodation requests, what not to ask employees, when to involve HR, and how to evaluate performance fairly.

While some neurodivergent conditions can rise to the level of a disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), you shouldn't assume someone is neurodivergent or ask whether they are, even if your intention is to offer them what you think might be a useful accommodation. If an employee or applicant requests an accommodation themselves, begin the interactive process as you normally would. You can learn more about the interactive process [here](#).

*This Q&A does not constitute legal advice and does not address state or local law.*