



## "Tapping The Hidden Talent Pool"

### **Starting the conversation around Neurodiversity in the workplace**

For many organisations and employers just starting the conversation around Neurodiversity in their workplaces can be daunting and at times scary. The chances are that in most organisations at an absolute minimum 1-2% of the workforce will most likely be Neurodivergent. The chances are that if your organisation had little or no training around Neurodiversity then two things will occur.

Firstly, Neurodivergent employees are less likely to disclose they are Neurodivergent for fear of judgement, discrimination and in extreme circumstances loss of employment. Secondly, it is likely that your organisation doesn't have a good culture of inclusion, integration and belonging as it relates to supporting Neurodivergent talent in your workplace. The consequences of this can lead to a discriminatory hiring process and business functions which are insular and contain employees where opaque thinking arises as everyone looks, behaves, and thinks the same. Thus, leading to a workplace where innovation and diversity of thought is discouraged and as a consequence severely limited.

Yet, this need not be the case. Consider what a Neurodivergent employees preferred way of working is. Perhaps, they thrive working autonomously, or in small groups or remotely from home. At the beginning of your Neurodiversity journey its important that as an organisation you listen more and ask questions. Avoiding assumptions and preconceived ideas plays an integral role in forming a good understanding of how to successfully Neurodivergent talent in the workplace. As a line manager or an employee working with someone who is Neurodivergent think about changes that you can make to the way you work to ensure that the working environment and team you are in is Neuroinclusive. Think about how their Neurodivergence impacts them on a daily basis and what reasonable adjustments need to be made to ensure that they thrive in your organisation. These are just some of

the changes that teams in organisations can make to foster a culture of inclusivity for all Neurodivergent employees.

## **Our Advice**

- Ask questions, there is no such thing as a wrong question.
- Implement agreed upon reasonable adjustments and review these regularly.
- Ensure that where appropriate and consent has been given share the employee's diagnosis.
- Allow for flexible working requests where possible.
- Hold listening groups across all business functions to better understand how to support Neurodivergent employees in your organisation.