



## "Tapping The Hidden Talent Pool"

### **Processing Speed and Learning**

When we think of processing speed it is an important factor in time management in the workplace. This is because for many employees in the workplace regulating your processing speed allows you to control how quickly or slowly you complete tasks during your working day. Processing speed can be impacted by a variety of factors such as the feeling of being in cognitive "slow motion" when emotionally distressed or the mad dash that ensues when a deadline for a project or task is due and you have yet to even commence work on it.

It is worth noting that some Neurodivergent employees with slow processing speed will often appear focused but may struggle to be productive. Factors to consider might include the ability to process substantial amount of information, being overwhelmed by this information and not knowing where to start or perhaps needing more time to make decisions or give answers. However, it is worth factoring in that processing speeds can be influenced by an individual's knowledge and experience of a particular subject or topic. So, for some Neurodivergent employees they might be able to seamlessly process certain types of information such as computer coding, diagrams, and technical data, perhaps more quickly than their neurotypical counterparts.

How we process information is a key determinant in how quickly we learn. Neurodivergent individuals may learn through direct experience and may have to do something repeatedly before it makes sense, They will often tend to be visual learners, who often absorb information through analysing details or individual parts that interest them the most. It might take a Neurodivergent employee time to integrate those details into a specific concept that they can visualise and implement. Yet, once they have worked it out the chances are they will be able to work very efficiently as a consequence

## Our Advice

- Allow extra time when accessing new company products and new organisational processes. Consider allowing Neurodivergent employees the opportunity to access new products and processes before other employees.
- Ensure that they are given only the relevant information needed when learning a new task. Bitesize chunks of information will help ensure that they are able to process information more successfully as a result.
- Manage competing demands for work that needs to be delivered in the organisation and ensure that there is a clear matrix of which work needs to be prioritised to reduce the likelihood of information overload. Do this in the interim particularly if there are changes to processes and policies in your organisation.
- Be patient, tolerant, compassionate, and understanding when supporting a Neurodivergent employee with processing speeds. Listen and address their concerns and working styles to help get them up to speed with any changes to ways of working in your organisation.
- If necessary create to do lists with large tasks divided into smaller task and agree with the Neurodivergent employee the estimated time needed per task.