Get Great Employees Using
4 Simple 'Autism-Friendly' Strategies

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What is Autism?

Autism
- also known as ASD, Autism Spectrum Disorder or Autism Spectrum
- best approached as 'people-first'
- comes with challenges and strengths
- a different brain 'operation process' than people who do not have Autism
- is an experience that is unique and has diverse characteristics
- is often not visible
- like anyone, can learn and develop strategies to succeed
- is a lifelong condition - can't be cured
- is often valued for it's strengths

Understand

Build self-awareness
- tune-in to how you naturally set up your environment, structure work and interact with your employees
- consider new approaches

Use available resources
- take a 'person-first' approach
- don't assume and you can always ask

Keep in mind
- you don't have to be the expert
- experiment/solve problems together
- access the Employment Services network to help realize full potential

You might notice

Differences you might notice:

Body language
- facial expression, fidget, eye contact

Communication
- very direct and to-the-point
- speak/understand literally

Social interactions
- challenges with many social rules/cues
- others may misinterpret/take offence

Approach to work
- may prefer structured and routine
- may have a firm sense of rules

Welcome

Welcome their interest
- create accessible job postings
- use plain language to promote clarity
- be literal and avoid 'sayings' or jargon

Be mindful of your environment
- consider what your candidates will experience in your environment (sights, sounds, smells, touch)

Consider how you assess 'fit'
- think about what you need to assess
- offer alternative assessments like: demonstrations, portfolios or job trials

Train

Provide social support
- respect the person's disclosure choice
- select a supportive work-buddy
- create and include social connections

Communicate
- ask about needs/sensory preferences
- be literal and clear about expectations
- best feedback is frequent, brief, direct
- use visuals and verbal information

Support training
- breakdown job into smaller tasks
- create clear work routines
- be literal and don't assume

Retain

Use retention best practices
- consider human needs/whole person

Engage interests
- engage personal interests
- align interests to your business goals

Deal with change
- give as much notice as possible
- align changes to new routines

'Autism-friendly' performance review
- less formal and more frequent
- be direct and honest and literal
- give opportunity for 2-way feedback

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