

Employee Toolkit

Introduction:

The Autism West Employee Toolkit has been developed to help you increase self-awareness and understanding of your strengths and any challenges you may experience in relation to employment so you are better equipped to discuss requirements with your employer.

The Employee Toolkit compliments Autism West's Neurodiversity Online Audit Tool <http://autismwest.org.au/noat/> for employers and our recent Neurodiversity in the Workplace Forums.

The Employee Toolkit aims to:

- Help you identify and communicate your strengths and any challenges you may experience.
- Help you identify/develop strategies to address any challenges.
- Increase understanding between you and your future employers.

Content:

- **Section 1: Personal Profile**
Highlight strengths, values, interests, ambitions and any mental health concerns.
- **Section 2: Sensory Profile**
Overview of the senses including interoception, proprioception and vestibular profiles (Definitions page 3). Also covers the positive aspects of sensory sensitivities, fluctuations and influencing factors.
- **Section 3: Communication Profile**
Identifying your most preferred modes of communication.
- **Section 4: Executive Functioning Profile**
Identifies work skills required such as planning and organisation and time-management.
- **Notes for Employers**

Section 1: Personal Profile

Use this section to self-reflect. There are no right or wrong answers, the combination of these things is what makes you unique and many will be transferable to employment.

Name

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Interests (for example: movie making, painting, football)

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Ambitions (what is your ideal career?)

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Strengths and skills (use [this activity](#) to help identify your strengths and skills)

Strengths:	Skills:

Values (you can use [this activity](#) to help identify your values)

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Section 2: Sensory Profile

Sensory element	Does this apply to me? If so, how?	Strategy	Support
Sight			
Sound			
Touch/texture			
Taste			
Smell			

The Internal Sensory System

1. **Interoception:** this is how we interpret internal body signals, examples being hungry or when we need to move.
2. **Proprioception:** This sense relates to our bodies and can help inform strategies for room layout e.g. positioning furniture around the edge of a room to make navigation easier, being able to have personal space
3. **Vestibular:** how our bodies interpret movement, whether or not you're moving, how quickly, and then in what direction we're moving in.

Sensory elements	Does this apply to me? If so, how?	Strategy	Support
Interoception:			

Section 3: Communication Profile

Complete the assessment below and then, in order of strength with 1 being the highest, rank areas of your communication skills.

Communication	Rank (1 to 4)	Strategies I find helpful in a work environment
Sending clear messages		
Listening		
Giving and getting feedback		

In the following contexts, list how you prefer to communicate with others and how you prefer others to communicate with you. For example, communication can include but is not limited to:

- emails
- text
- calls
- face to face

Work context	Preferred communication method when interacting with others	Preferred communication method when others interacting with me
Meetings		
Allocating tasks		
Brainstorming ideas		
Getting advice		

Section 4: Executive Functioning Profile

Executive functioning skills help us manage our lives and achieve goals. Each descriptor below relates to an executive functioning skill. Read the descriptor and use the rating scale to indicate how well it describes you. For example, if the item does not describe you at all, then circle 1, *strongly disagree*. Be as honest as possible, there are no right or wrong answers.

Executive functioning skill	Descriptor	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Tend to disagree	4 Tend to agree	5 Agree	6 Strongly agree
Organisation	I keep my work space tidy and organised						
Time management	I finish work tasks on time						
Planning and prioritisation	I plan and prioritise my schedule appropriately. For example, complete important tasks first						
Response inhibition	I listen to and consider the facts of a situation before responding or acting						
Flexibility	I cope well with change and can adapt when things do not go to plan						
Emotional control	When upset or hurt, I can prepare my responses appropriately						
Metacognition	I reflect on situations and am able to identify when I've done well, what I can do better and think of ways I can improve						
Task initiation	I don't procrastinate and am able to meet deadlines						
Sustained attention	I am able to retain focus on a task despite distractions						
Goal-directed persistence	I am driven to work on and meet my goals even if there are things I would rather be doing						
Stress tolerance	I can work well under pressure and with uncertainty						
Working memory	I have a good memory for details, tasks, dates and processes						

Additional information:

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Once you have completed all four sections above, have a look at the top three areas of strength and three areas where you may need more support. For the areas you find challenging, have a think about strategies or accommodations that would be helpful in a work environment and use this as a starting point for discussions with your employer.

Executive Functioning Profile Summary

Executive Functioning Skill Strengths
1.
2.
3.

Executive Functioning Skill Challenges	Potential Strategies or Accommodations
1.	
2.	
3.	

Notes for Employers

What is the Employee Toolkit?

The Employee Toolkit provides an overview of an individual’s values, strengths and preferences relevant to the workplace. This relates to how they

- interact with their senses
- communicate and prefer to be communicated with
- organise things, react to things and get things done.

It is a way for the employer and employee to develop a mutual understanding of the individual, and for the individual to increase awareness around their strengths and potential challenges, so they are better placed to seek support for themselves within the workplace.

Why am I being provided with an Employee Toolkit?

Understanding the unique traits of a neurodiverse individual can provide a platform for open discussion and set expectations around how work and the working environment can be structured effectively for all. Each section of the Employee Toolkit links to content within Autism West’s Neurodiversity Online Audit Tool (NOAT) and our recent Neurodiversity in the Workplace Forums which were tailored to address the interests of employers championing workplace diversity, in particular neurodiversity.

‘If you want to build teams capable of innovating, you need diversity. Diversity enhances creativity. It encourages the search for novel information and perspectives, leading to better decision making and problem solving. Diversity can improve the bottom line of companies and lead to unfettered discoveries. Even simply being exposed to diversity can change the way you think’ (Senior Vice Dean Katherine Phillips, Columbia Business School).

How can I find out more?

The NOAT a free tool developed to help employers understand if their workplace is autism friendly. It is also essential pre-coursework for our employer training courses, increasing understanding of where the organisation’s opportunities for improvement lie. To access the tool, please click here:

<http://autismwest.org.au/noat/>.

Autism West also runs autism awareness training for organisations and can customise training services to suit the needs of your organisation. For more information visit <https://autismwest.org.au> or contact us directly on 08 9431 2111.

