

WHAT IMPACT, POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE, HAS BEING AN OPEN AND PROUD ADVOCATE FOR NEURODIVERSITY HAD?

There's an element of self-interest in my decision to be open about this, my neurodiversity is still new to me so talking about it helps me process this new part of my identity.

Neurodiversity is invisible unless we talk about it. I flag barriers I've faced and how I get over them in the hope that others will find it easier next time. I've found colleagues approach me and share similar experiences about themselves and relatives.

Charities like <https://geniuswithin.org/> and <https://neurodiversityinbusiness.org/> are making huge strides. There's still a lot of misunderstanding and myths about neurodiversity and I'd encourage everyone to visit these websites to learn how they support themselves and others.

As a recruitment organisation, I'd be particularly interested to hear about your experience during interview and wider employment processes, both good and bad. Have you had any difficulties during these processes? Or positive experiences you'd like to share?

The bad – ignoring requests for reasonable adjustments, the email is left unanswered, and giving very short notice for interviews.

The middle – providing questions in advance when requested, but asking them in a different order or going off on unstructured tangents.

The good – prompting candidates throughout the process to request reasonable adjustments. Being responsive and understanding.

Sharing photos of the interview panel before the interview. Scheduling breaks if there are several assessment stages in one day, to reduce overwhelm. Offering flexibility on the format if a presentation is involved: instead of insisting on slides, ask instead "how would you prefer to share your views on this topic we'll be discussing?"

I've always felt the interview process needs to be reimaged. Interview panels are memory tests, you need examples prepared, the ability to recall those examples succinctly and adjust depending on how many examples are required. How many jobs actually require a strong memory?

If you look at standard interview tips, it's common to insist on maintaining eye contact, yet I do my best thinking looking off into the distance. There are so many logistical and sensory challenges for me attending an interview in person – these are not the best conditions in which I can thrive.

If an employer has a rigid or vague interview structure, as a candidate I know I won't feel psychologically safe in your culture and I won't be able to demonstrate my strengths.