

Neurodiversity in the guest services world

March 17, 2023



Bianca Angelico, director and chief DayMaker, [On Verve](#), discusses her experiences with neurodiversity and how it has impacted her work in the world of guest services.

My journey with neurodiversity has certainly been a bumpy one. I was diagnosed with dyslexia at a young age, and my school did not know what to do with me. I was then placed in a special needs school which only lasted about a week. I felt like I didn't belong, because I was advanced and confident enough that I didn't need to be in a special education facility, but I wasn't able to get the support I needed in my normal school.

Eventually, I had a teacher that understood where my difficulties were coming from and mentored me through my remaining time at school. When I reached my early twenties I was diagnosed with a reading disability that placed me at the reading age of a 15-year-old whilst I was studying at university. It was tough, but I found audiobooks and podcasts were my saving grace for studying, as the lengthy academic journals and books were sometimes too overwhelming for me to digest.

My dyslexia has given me the strength to read people's emotions and situations extremely well. Since I struggle to skim read, I always give documents a very thorough read before anything is approved or sent on at work. I am a people person through and through and my understanding of empathy is strong as a result.

Building a neurodiversity-friendly business

My creativity that has come from my experiences with dyslexia have helped to build On Verve into the unique business it is. My aim with On Verve was to explore what I could bring to guest services that hadn't been seen before. The fact that we have such a diverse team is credit to the fantastic service we provide

to our clients that goes beyond the standard corporate receptionist.

I believe in hiring for the person and their skill set rather than the length of experience or how potentially relevant it is. By undertaking this mindset, we have been able to construct teams for our clients that fulfil their needs and then some. We can build more meaningful connections and inadvertently offer a more bespoke service, creating the best experience for our client and the best working environment for our DayMakers.

Aspects of each individual candidate are always taken into consideration, including whether or not they are neurodiverse. I wanted to create an environment where people can bring their whole selves to work, and I think we've been pretty successful at that. We offer internal support for team members with neurodiverse conditions, including text to speech readers, screen tints, and other anti-screen distraction monitors. Simple things like this can help to alleviate anxieties for neurodiverse team members and ensure they know support is there for them if they need it.

Fara Painter, a DayMaker at one of our Manchester client offices, said: "At On Verve, I feel extremely supported in my condition. When Bianca found out I had dyslexia she encouraged me to download Grammarly, a spelling and grammar checker that acts as an extension to your website browser, so it will check my emails and other online documents as I write. She's always willing to proof-read my work to make sure what I've said has been worded correctly on paper.

"I was unsure about mentioning my neurodiversity on my application, but I knew it was important to be open and honest about all aspects of my abilities. Since then, On Verve has been extremely supportive in offering additional help across all areas of the business if I feel I need it, which has been great."

Churchill Group joins the Neurodiversity in Business charter

In recent news, our parent company Churchill has recently signed the [Neurodiversity in Business](#) charter, an industry forum created to support the participation of neurodivergent individuals in the workplace launched at the Houses of Parliament in 2021. The organisation, led by Dan Harris, Chief Executive Officer, draws upon the cumulative knowledge of neurodivergent experts and leading companies to share best practices and improve the employment and experience of the neurodiverse workforce.

Churchill's commitment to promoting equal opportunities and creating a neurodiverse-friendly work environment encapsulates the workplace we are aiming to achieve at On Verve. I look forward to how the future of work will further reflect the needs of neurodiverse individuals in society, including both the physical workplace and how their work is supported.