

UK businesses are missing out on the valuable skills of neurodivergent people due to discriminatory hiring practices

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UK businesses are missing out on the valuable skills of neurodivergent people due to discriminatory hiring practices and a lack of accommodations in interviews, say leading audit, tax and business advisory firm, [Blick Rothenberg](#).

Gail Cobley, a Partner at the firm, said: "Statistics from a study by Zurich Insurance in 2024 show that out of 1000 neurodivergent adults, half have been discriminated against while applying for a job. This is despite the fact that neurodivergent people are a boon in the workplace."

She added: "Neurodivergent people can bring diversity of thought to the workplace, a different way of looking at problems and finding solutions. They can also be good at cutting through superfluous information to focus on what is important."

Gail said: "However, to benefit from neurodivergent people, firms need to hire them. According to the study by Zurich, 51% of people feel they can't or shouldn't disclose their neurodiversity during the hiring process or in interviews due to stigma, and just one in six neurodivergent people were given the interview accommodations they requested. Simple changes to interview practices such as allowing people to have questions in advance or not treating a lack of eye contact as a negative can greatly help neurodivergent people."

She added: "The next step for businesses is a neurodivergent friendly workspace. It can be helpful to offer quiet working spaces, whether for one person or for groups as some neurodivergent people are very

sensitive to background noise. This change benefits everyone at the business, neurodivergent or not to have space to focus on their work without disturbance.”

Gail said: “Other reasonable adjustments which employers could offer are noise-cancelling headphones, standing desks and the ability to work flexibly. This might mean being able to take breaks in order to refocus, or to work from home to avoid sensory overload. These adjustments also benefit staff who need flexible work due to child care responsibilities or who prefer to stand at their desk for health reasons.”

She added: “To mark Neurodiversity Celebration Week the BRidge Network at Blick Rothenberg (Blick Rothenberg Inclusive Disability Group for Employees) held a talk, the latest in our “Disability and Me” series. In this talk a partner shared his experience of neurodivergence and the challenges that he had had to overcome. By making the hiring process and the workplace more accessible we can remove the barriers neurodivergent people face in employment.”