



# **Neurodiversity Language Guide**

Communicating Inclusively at Work



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## **Introduction**

In many workplaces, language shapes the way we communicate, train employees, and support colleagues. However, inaccurate or outdated language can lead to misunderstandings about neurodivergence and how employees work and communicate. In workplace settings this can create barriers, particularly when policies, training, or everyday communication rely on unclear terminology.

## What Does Neurodiversity Mean?

Neurodiversity is a term that emerged from autistic advocacy communities in the 1990s. It describes the natural variation in how human brains think, learn, and process information. The concept highlights natural differences in thinking rather than viewing those differences only through a deficit-based lens. As a word, “neurodiversity” describes the whole of humanity.

## What Neurodiversity Doesn't Mean

- A trait an individual possesses.
- You don't “have” neurodiversity, and you're not neurodiverse, neurodiversity includes everyone. If the way your brain works differs from what society generally considers typical, you may be described as neurodivergent.

## Correct Usage

*“Our workplace embraces multiple training strategies to accommodate the neurodiversity of our employees.”*

## Incorrect Usage

*“My neurodiversity makes it hard for me to cope with work.”*

It's neurodivergence, not neurodiversity. An individual, by definition, cannot be “diverse” or “have diversity.”

*“Autism, ADHD, and dyslexia are forms of neurodiversity.”*

Neurodiversity includes everyone. Autism, ADHD, and dyslexia are forms of neurodivergence.

These distinctions matter in workplace communication because policies, training materials, and internal guidance often use these terms.

## About this Guide

This preview extract is taken from **Neurodiversity Language Guide: Communicating Inclusively at Work**. The full version runs to 11 pages and explains key terminology, correct and incorrect usage of common terms, and practical guidance for respectful workplace communication.

## Created by ADHD Pirates CIC

ADHD Pirates CIC is a UK-based social enterprise, founded and led by lived experience. We create practical, ADHD-friendly resources that help organisations embed neuroinclusion in realistic and sustainable ways.

Sales of our guides directly fund our community projects, including peer support groups and accessible resources for adults with ADHD.

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