

Increasing Awareness of Neurodiversity

Neurodiversity describes an idea to embrace diverse neurological conditions as a result of normal variations in the human brain. Recently, increased awareness toward neurodiversity is encouraging organisations (including sport) to establish a framework to acquire a neurodivergent workforce.

What we're seeing

No "normal" type of brain

Conditions such as ADHD, ADD, dyslexia or autism are not "disorders" to be treated, but are viewed as different types of personality characteristics and natural differences in the brain in terms of learning and processing information. In a neurodivergent view, there is no single "normal" or "healthy" type of brain or mind, and no single "right" style of neurocognitive functioning. Instead, it is accepted that all humans vary in terms of our neurocognitive ability, just in the same way as we embrace diverse genders, ethnicities or cultures.

High unemployment

In most workplaces, stigmas, a lack of awareness, and insufficient infrastructure such as office settings or human management structures have caused exclusion of people with neurodevelopmental differences.

Neurodivergent features have certain strengths

Those with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) may have difficulties with organising things, but they often show high levels of passion, drive and creativity. People with dyslexia can perceive certain kinds of visual information better than those without the condition. Organisations that are fast to recognise this are actively matching neurodivergent talents with suitable positions. As awareness of neurodiversity increases, this is expected to strengthen in the coming future.

New norm in HR management

Building a working framework to hire neurodivergent people will become a new norm in human resource management. Aside from workplaces, understanding and embracing neurodiversity in schools, communities and in any other setting can improve inclusivity for all people. Diversity and inclusion are now "a must-have", not "a nice-to-have" anymore..

Perspectives in creating value

Employees with neurodivergent features often need to be allowed to deviate from established practices, and it requires support from employers and surrounding colleagues. However, companies that already tapped these unique resources in the workplace are gaining competitive advantages in many areas, such as productivity, innovation and creativity. Neurodiverse people may bring new perspectives to a company's effort to create or recognise value.

Neurodivergent more active

People with ADHD tend to prefer being active as it increases the number of neurotransmitters in your brain, reducing the severity of ADHD symptoms. Endorphins released during exercise also assists with focus for 2-3 hours post exercise. Intense focus from ADHD can assist performance of elite athletes, but medication to help ADHD is on banned substances list, posing problem for athletes - pursue sport at cost of medication that helps with symptom.

Potential implications

Create

- Increasing acceptance of individuality and varying identity
- Appropriate environments

Relate

- Work with the individual, not a stereotype
- Risks of increasing tensions between conservative and liberal views

Consume

- Governments and businesses supporting expressions of diversity

Degrade

- Moving away from social rigidity and simple classifications
- Doping regimes

Connect

- Language and how it is used influences interactions
- Increasing recognition of the benefits of diversity

Define

- Increasing complexities in how people define themselves

More information (links)

- [neurodiversity can be a workplace strength](#)
- [neurodiversity at work](#)
- [neurodiversity-work-inclusion-autism](#)
- [People with ADHD prefer to be active](#)
- [ADHD may be more common among elite athletes](#)
- [Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder in elite athletes: a narrative review](#)
- [I'm Not Ashamed of My ADHD, Says Olympian Biles](#)
- [ADHD Hasn't Stopped Michael Phelps from Winning Gold... Again](#)
- [Optimal Exercise & ADHD](#)
- [The Exercise Prescription for ADHD](#)

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/xsfml3yVh1g>