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ADHD & Neurodiversity Workplace Awareness Training

Facilitator Guide



Facilitator Slide Chart – 3-Hour Workshop

Time	Slide s	Topic / Module	Activity Type	Facilitator Focus & Notes
00:00 – 00:10	1–2	Welcome & Course Overview	Intro & Icebreaker	Quick welcome, course outline, “What comes to mind when you hear neurodiversity?”
00:10 – 00:20	3	What Is Neurodiversity?	Mini-talk + pair chat	Define term, 15–20 % stat, highlight strengths.
00:20 – 00:25	—	Transition to Module 1	—	State aim: fair recruitment.
00:25 – 00:35	4–5	Why It Matters	Facilitator talk	76 % hide condition; interviews test confidence not skill.
00:35 – 00:45	6–7	Inclusive Hiring & Scenario	Group brainstorm	Redesign Jamie’s interview. 5-min share-back.
00:45 – 00:55	8	Onboarding Essentials	Quick examples	Visual packs, buddy system, clear expectations.
00:55 – 01:05	—	Break (10 min)	—	Refresh/stretch.
01:05 – 01:15	9–10	Common Challenges	Talk	Focus fluctuation, sensory overload, masking.
01:15 – 01:25	11–1 2	Adjustments & Scenario	Pair activity	Taylor’s noise issue → solutions brainstorm.
01:25 – 01:35	13	Manager Tools	Discussion	“What helps you work best?” conversations.
01:35 – 01:45	14–1 5	Performance = Outcomes	Talk	Shift from conformity → strengths.
01:45 – 01:55	16–1 7	Strength-Based & Scenario	Pair practice	Jamie (ADHD) creative → support reliability.
01:55 – 02:05	18–1 9	Feedback & Progression	Talk	Specific, kind, solution-focused feedback.
02:05 – 02:10	—	Break (5 min)	—	Short pause.
02:10 – 02:20	20–2 1	Team Dynamics & Culture	Talk	Neurodiverse teams = +35 % innovation.

02:20 – 02:30	22–23	Communication & Scenario	Group activity	Alex interrupts → channel energy constructively.
02:30 – 02:40	24–25	Inclusive Team Practices & Safety	Discussion	Build micro-safety signals, inclusion charter.
02:40 – 02:50	26–27	Managing Change	Talk	Predictability reduces stress; communicate early.
02:50 – 02:55	28–30	Change & Burnout Scenarios	Quick review	Identify early interventions for Sam (ADHD).
02:55 – 03:00	31–32	Retention & Growth Scenario	Brief discussion	Amira's promotion barriers → inclusive solutions.
03:00 – 03:10	33–34	Course Recap & Takeaways	Review	Revisit 5 modules, key insights.
03:10 – 03:20	35	Reflection & Next Steps	Individual reflection	Write one concrete action to apply next week.
03:20 – 03:30	36	Final Message & Close	Wrap-up	"Inclusion is daily practice." Collect feedback forms.

FACILITATOR GUIDE – ADHD & NEURODIVERSITY WORKPLACE AWARENESS TRAINING

SLIDE 1 – Title: ADHD & Neurodiversity Workplace Awareness Training

Purpose: Set the tone; create psychological safety.

Facilitator Talking Points:

- Welcome everyone and thank them for showing up — this training is about *understanding, inclusion, and growth*.
- “Neurodiversity” means recognising that all brains work differently. Conditions like ADHD, autism, dyslexia, and dyspraxia are part of natural human variation.
- The goal isn’t to “fix” anyone — it’s to build workplaces where different thinking styles thrive.

Tip: Open with a quick icebreaker – “What comes to mind when you hear ‘neurodiversity’?”

SLIDE 2 – Course Overview

Purpose: Explain what participants will learn.

Talking Points:

- Today we’ll explore five key modules:
 1. Inclusive Recruitment & Onboarding
 2. Supporting Employees Day-to-Day
 3. Performance & Development
 4. Team Dynamics & Culture
 5. Managing Change & Retention
- The course combines discussion, reflection, and scenarios from real workplaces.
- Encourage questions throughout; this is a collaborative learning space.

SLIDE 3 – What is Neurodiversity?

Talking Points:

- Coined by sociologist Judy Singer in the 1990s.
- Refers to natural brain differences in attention, learning, and social interaction.
- Around **15–20% of the global population** is neurodivergent (Deloitte, 2024).
- Common types: ADHD, Autism, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Tourette's, etc.

Example Prompt:

💬 “Think of a time you worked with someone who approached a task differently. What strengths did that bring?”

Key Message: Neurodiversity is about *strength through difference*, not deficit.

MODULE 1 – Inclusive Recruitment & Onboarding

SLIDE 4 – Module Title

Introduce focus: “Inclusion starts before Day One.”

Explain that fair hiring practices unlock access to untapped talent.

SLIDE 5 – Why It Matters

Data & Talking Points:

- **76% of neurodiverse candidates** hide their condition during recruitment (CIPD, 2024).
- Traditional interviews measure *confidence, not competence*.
- Neurodiverse applicants are **30% less likely to progress past interviews** (Harvard Business Review, 2023).
- Inclusion starts before Day One — recruitment signals belonging.

Facilitator Prompt:

“Why might someone hide their neurodivergence?”

Sample Answers: Fear of bias, stigma, or losing the opportunity.

SLIDE 6 – Inclusive Hiring Practices

Talking Points:

- Use **clear, jargon-free** job ads focused on essential skills.
- Replace or supplement interviews with **task-based assessments** (e.g., a short work simulation).
- Offer **multiple communication formats** (visual, written, verbal).
- Use **structured interviews** — all candidates get the same core questions, reducing bias.

Example: Microsoft’s Neurodiversity Hiring Program uses work simulations instead of traditional interviews.

SLIDE 7 – Scenario: The Overlooked Candidate

Scenario: Jamie struggles with verbal interviews but has strong experience.

Prompt: “How could this process be redesigned?”

Sample Responses:

- Provide written or visual questions in advance.
 - Offer alternative assessments (e.g., written test or portfolio review).
 - Train interviewers on neuroinclusive questioning.
 - Allow rest breaks or remote interviews.
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SLIDE 8 – Onboarding Essentials

Talking Points:

- Send welcome packs with **visual schedules**, role expectations, and maps.

- Assign a **buddy/peer mentor** for informal guidance.
- Provide clarity: what success looks like, who to contact for help.
- Avoid “information overload” during induction.

Example: EY’s “Neurodiversity Centre of Excellence” uses structured onboarding checklists and peer mentors — retention rates improved by 90%.

MODULE 2 – Supporting Neurodiverse Employees **Day-to-Day**

SLIDE 9 – Module Title

Explain the focus: practical adjustments to build daily inclusion.

SLIDE 10 – Common Challenges

Talking Points:

- **Focus fluctuation:** ADHD brains can hyperfocus or struggle to start tasks.
 - **Sensory overload:** Noise, light, or interruptions can affect performance.
 - **Task switching:** Rapid context changes drain working memory.
 - **Masking fatigue:** Hiding differences to “fit in” causes burnout.
 - **Stat:** 60% of autistic adults experience masking fatigue weekly (Autistica, 2024).
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SLIDE 11 – Workplace Adjustments

Examples:

- Flexible start times or “focus hours.”
- Quiet zones, noise-cancelling headphones, or dimmable lights.

- Written meeting notes and visual planners.
- Apps like *Todoist* or *Trello* for structure.

Prompt: “What small change could your team make tomorrow?”

SLIDE 12 – Scenario: The Distracted Analyst

Scenario: Taylor struggles with open-plan noise.

Sample Adjustments:

- Offer desk relocation or quiet room access.
- Allow headphones or hybrid work.
- Provide clear task lists with priorities.

Teaching Point: Adjustments are *individualised*, not one-size-fits-all.

SLIDE 13 – Manager Tools

Talking Points:

- Ask: “What helps you work best?” — open, respectful dialogue.
- Review adjustments **every 3–6 months**.
- Model transparency (e.g., share your own focus challenges).

Stat: Teams with inclusive managers are **87% more likely to report high trust** (Gallup, 2024).

MODULE 3 – Performance & Development Conversations

SLIDE 14 – Module Title

Fair, strength-based appraisals.

SLIDE 15 – Rethinking Performance

Talking Points:

- Performance ≠ conformity.
- Focus on *outcomes* and *impact*, not rigid process.
- Example: Someone may prefer working at night or using visual aids — results still matter.

Stat: 70% of neurodivergent workers perform better when appraised through outcomes, not attendance metrics (ADHD Foundation, 2024).

SLIDE 16 – Strength-Based Conversations

Framework: Celebrate – Collaborate – Commit

1. **Celebrate** what energises the employee.
 2. **Collaborate** to remove barriers.
 3. **Commit** to specific next steps.
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SLIDE 17 – Scenario: The High Performer with ADHD

Jamie is creative but misses admin tasks.

Discussion:

- Use automation tools or shared calendars.
- Pair with detail-oriented colleague.
- Redefine role expectations around strengths.

Key Insight: Support reliability *without crushing creativity*.

SLIDE 18 – Giving Feedback Inclusively

Talking Points:

- Be specific, kind, and actionable:
Instead of “Be more proactive,” say “Try drafting the weekly summary by Wednesday morning.”
- Ask preferred feedback style (written, verbal, visual).
- Provide *feed-forward*: focus on next steps.

SLIDE 19 – Inclusive Progression

Talking Points:

- Redefine leadership qualities — empathy, innovation, integrity count too.
- Offer lateral career pathways.
- Encourage mentoring and sponsorship.

Example: IBM’s neurodiverse mentoring increased retention by 47%.

MODULE 4 – Team Dynamics & Inclusive Culture

SLIDE 20 – Module Title

Foster belonging and collaboration.

SLIDE 21 – Understanding Neurodiverse Teams

Talking Points:

- Neurodiverse teams bring creative problem-solving.

- **Innovation improves by 35%** in diverse teams (HBR, 2024).
 - Prioritise *equity* (individual support) over *equality* (same for all).
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SLIDE 22 – Communication Mismatches

Facilitator Prompt:

“How might communication preferences differ?”

Examples:

- Direct, clear language helps neurodivergent employees.
 - Give thinking time before requiring responses.
 - Written recaps reduce misunderstanding.
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SLIDE 23 – Scenario: The Interrupted Meeting

Alex (ADHD) interrupts brainstorming.

Discussion:

- Set clear ground rules (e.g., “parking lot” for ideas).
 - Use visual brainstorming tools (Jamboard, Miro).
 - Channel enthusiasm: assign Alex to capture ideas or energise sessions.
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SLIDE 24 – Inclusive Team Practices

Tips:

- Share meeting agendas in advance.
- Use visual collaboration boards.
- Encourage feedback in multiple formats.
- Develop a *Team Inclusion Charter* — co-created rules for fairness.

SLIDE 25 – Psychological Safety

Talking Points:

- People thrive when they feel safe to speak up, fail, or ask for help.
- Managers create safety through tone, openness, respect.
- “Safety signals”: eye contact, genuine curiosity, follow-up actions.
Stat: Teams with high psychological safety outperform by 27% (Google Project Aristotle, 2023).

MODULE 5 – Managing Change & Retention

SLIDE 26 – Module Title

Long-term inclusion through stability and support.

SLIDE 27 – Change & the Brain

Talking Points:

- Predictability reduces stress.
- Sudden change triggers overload for many neurodivergent brains.
- Communicate *early, clearly, often*.

Example: Announce software rollouts in stages, with visual how-to guides.

SLIDE 28 – Scenario: The System Rollout

Discussion:

- Provide short tutorial videos.

- Offer “practice sandbox” environment.
 - Assign change champions for 1:1 support.
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SLIDE 29 – Preventing Burnout

Talking Points:

- Burnout is *three times more likely* in neurodivergent employees (Neurodiversity in Business, 2024).
 - Watch for signs: withdrawal, lateness, fatigue.
 - Focus on *energy management*, not time management.
 - Encourage rest, reflection, and flexible pacing.
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SLIDE 30 – Scenario: The Exhausted Innovator

Sam (ADHD) was once creative, now disengaged.

Discussion:

- Possibly burnout from overstimulation or lack of recovery time.
 - Support: reduce meetings, delegate admin, introduce wellness breaks.
 - Recognise effort and creativity publicly.
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SLIDE 31 – Retention & Growth

Talking Points:

- Establish mentoring/sponsorship programmes.
 - Normalise adjustments — they’re signs of good leadership, not “special treatment.”
 - Recognise varied contributions: innovation, empathy, accuracy.
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SLIDE 32 – Scenario: The Plateaued Performer

Amira (autistic) overlooked for promotion due to communication style.

Solutions:

- Redefine leadership pathways (technical, mentoring, or creative).
 - Offer communication coaching.
 - Use written performance evidence rather than presentation-based.
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CLOSING & SUMMARY

SLIDE 33 – Course Recap

Quick Review:

- Recruitment
- Day-to-Day Support
- Performance
- Team Culture
- Retention

Ask: “Which module resonated most with your team’s reality?”

SLIDE 34 – Key Takeaways

- Inclusion is proactive.
 - Communication builds safety.
 - Neurodiversity fuels innovation.
 - Retention proves inclusion is working.
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SLIDE 35 – Reflection & Next Steps

Facilitator Prompts:

- “What belief have you changed today?”
- “What action will you take next week?”
- “Who will you start a new conversation with?”

Encourage participants to write 1 practical action they'll implement.

SLIDE 36 – Final Message

End with energy and empathy:

“Inclusion isn't just policy — it's daily practice. Every small action creates a workplace where every mind can thrive.”

Optional Closing Exercise:

Ask participants to share one *commitment statement* aloud (e.g., “I'll review our job descriptions for clarity.”).