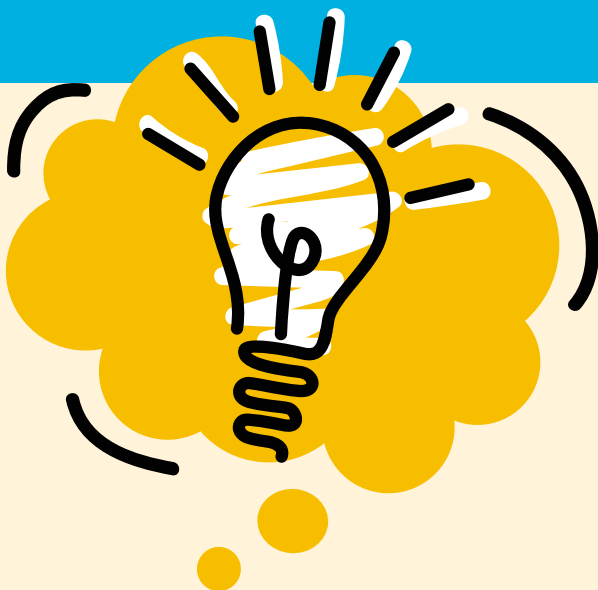
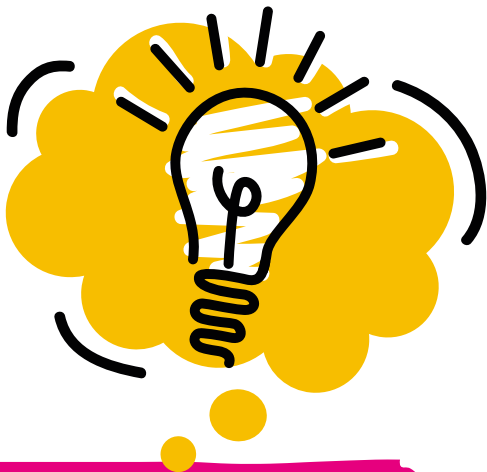


Top Tips for Employers



Breakthrough is a supported employment service in Bracknell Forest which helps people with a learning disability and/or an autism diagnosis to discover what type of jobs they like, prepare for, achieve and maintain meaningful employment.





People with a learning disability and/or an autism diagnosis want to work and do not want to be dependent on benefits. Paid employment can provide a sense of independence, both personal and financial, that they would not otherwise have. It allows them to make a wider circle of friends, earn money, put their skills to use in creative ways and achieve their full potential.

Our top tips for employers to consider when interviewing or employing anyone with autism or a learning disability.

Employers should prioritise understanding, flexibility, and reasonable adjustments when interviewing and employing individuals with autism or learning disabilities. This includes providing clear expectations, adapting communication styles, and offering support structures like mentorship or assistive technology.

Pre interview/during the interview process:

Provide structure and clarity:

Clearly outline the interview format, types of questions, and duration in advance, potentially in writing or with visual aids

Be mindful of communication styles:

Some individuals may prefer direct, literal communication and can be overwhelmed by social nuances. Allow extra time for responses and be prepared to rephrase or clarify questions.

Share interview questions ahead of time:

When you are interviewing someone with autism or a learning disability, it is a good idea to provide the interview questions in advance. Responding to questions quickly can be tough for some candidates, and having a bit more time to process the questions will allow them to answer thoughtfully.

Offer alternative assessment methods:

Consider “working interviews” or other practical assessments that highlight skills in a less traditional format.

Focus on abilities, not assumptions:

Do not let preconceived notions about disability influence your evaluation. Assess candidates based on their skills and potential to perform the job.

Discuss reasonable adjustments:

Enquire about any accommodations needed for the interview itself and the role, ensuring a fair and comfortable experience.

Consider the physical environment:

Social situations can feel intense for people on the autism spectrum, especially when there's pressure to keep eye contact or sit directly across from someone. A simple way to make things feel more relaxed is to sit at a 90-degree angle instead of directly facing them during an interview.

Be aware of disclosure:

Candidates may choose to disclose their disability at any point in the process. Respect their decision and be prepared to discuss potential adjustments.

During Employment:

Provide ongoing support:

Offer mentorship, job coaching, or other forms of support to help the individual integrate into the workplace and succeed in their role.

Make reasonable adjustments:

This could include flexible working hours, assistive technology, a quiet workspace, or modifications to tasks or communication methods.

Promote a supportive culture:

Educate other employees about autism and learning disabilities to foster understanding and inclusion. Recognise that having a diverse workforce can positively impact the entire team. Help the person feel part of the team.

Focus on strengths:

Recognise and leverage the unique skills and perspectives that individuals with autism and learning disabilities can bring to the workplace.

Offer clear and consistent communication:

Provide regular feedback, use clear and concise language, and be patient in explaining tasks and expectations.

Address potential challenges proactively:

Be prepared to address issues such as sensory overload, communication difficulties, or changes in routine by offering solutions like noise-cancelling headphones, alternative communication methods, or structured schedules, working from home, attending team meetings online instead of in person.

Job carving:

Job carving involves creating, modifying, or customising a job so it is suitable for a particular individual while simultaneously meeting the needs of an employer.

We encourage employers to consider being part of the **Disability Confident scheme**. Disability Confident is creating a movement of change, encouraging employers to think differently about disability and take action to improve how they recruit, retain, and develop disabled people.

Information about employing disabled people and how the Disability Confident employer scheme can help your business is available on the dedicated Government webpage below.

www.gov.uk/guidance/disability-confident-how-to-sign-up-to-the-employer-scheme

Our Support to Employers

Breakthrough Supported Employment partners with businesses to support individuals as they transition into new roles. We recognise that learning a job may take a bit more time or require a different approach, and we are here to help make that process smooth and successful. Our team works closely with both the employer and employee until the individual is confident and able to work independently. We remain just a phone call away, ready to provide ongoing support—whether it is for additional guidance, adapting to changes in the role, or offering advice on reasonable adjustments. Our goal is to ensure every individual has the opportunity to reach their full potential in the workplace.

How you can be involved with and support Breakthrough Supported Employment

We are always looking to build relationships with local employers and would love to hear from any employers that could offer:

- **Mentoring**
- **Work tasters**
- **Work experience**
- **Site visits**
- **Mock interviews**
- **CV reviews**
- **Employability workshops**
- **Paid employment.**

Useful Resources for you

Autism Berkshire

Email: contact@autismberkshire.org.uk

Telephone: 01189 594594

British Association for Supported Employment

www.base-uk.org

MENCAP

www.mencap.org.uk

Telephone: 020 7454 0454

National Autistic Society

www.autism.org.uk

See Ability

www.seeability.org

Email: enquiries@seeability.org

Telephone: 01372 755 000

Scope

www.scope.org.uk

Email: helpline@scope.org.uk

Telephone: 0808 800 3333

Acknowledgement

Resources and information for this information leaflet:

- Scope
- National Autistic Society
- See Ability
- National Development Team for Inclusion
- Breakthrough Supported Employment Team

How to Contact us

For more information, please email:

[breakthrough.employment](mailto:breakthrough.employment@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Telephone: 01344 307554

